

Bloor West Village Avenue Study-Status Report

Date: May 17, 2018

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District

Ward: Ward 13 – Parkdale-High Park

Planning Application Number: 17 103255 WSP 00 TM

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the study process to date and the next steps required to finalize the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. The report also provides an overview of the consultant retained to undertake the study, DTAH, findings and recommendations for the Bloor West Village Avenue study area.

At its meeting of July 8-11, 2014, City Council adopted Member Motion MM54.16 which directed that a Planning Study be undertaken for the area of Bloor Street West between Keele Street and the Humber River. The study was initiated in December, 2016.

The study area is approximately 2.7 kilometres in length, stretching from Keele Street in the east to the Humber River in the west. There are over 260 properties in the study area, with the great majority being both narrow and shallow, and with direct address to Bloor Street West. The study area includes lands designated *Mixed Use Areas, Neighbourhoods* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods* in the Official Plan. Bloor West Village is a long-established main street and is located along the Bloor Street subway line. There are five TTC Stations within or directly adjacent to the study area

City Planning retained DTAH to undertake the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. The study was awarded through a competitive Request for Proposal process to a multidisciplinary consulting team led by DTAH that includes sub-consultants R.E. Millward + Associates Ltd., WSP | MMM Group Limited, Swerhun, Taylor Hazell Architects and J.C. Williams Group. DTAH has completed its review and submitted the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study to the City for consideration. The consultant's report contains study findings and recommendations for an appropriate policy framework to accommodate and manage future growth in the area.

DTAH's report recommends that the City should consider undertaking the following actions to implement the study recommendations:

- Amend the Official Plan to: remove the Avenues overlay from the Humber Gateway Character Area and the south side of the High Park Frontage Character Area; implement the land use policies resulting from the study; include maximum building heights, expressed in number of storeys, for each character area based on the recommendations of the study; and add two *Neighbourhoods* designated properties to the *Mixed Use Areas* designation due to their anomalous built form relationships, current use and context within the Village Main Street Character Area.
- Amend the Zoning By-law based on the recommendation of the report to: allow for as-of-right permissions compatible with the built form; include maximum building heights, expressed in metres and number of storeys, for each character area; establish maximum retail sizes for each individual overall unit and unit at grade; amend zoning boundaries to resolve zoning inconsistencies for a number of properties that are currently subject to two or more different zones; and remove density numbers from the zoning for all properties within the Study Area as building envelopes should be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations.
- Update and replace applicable sections of the 2010 Mid-Rise Performance Standards and the 2016 Addendum to the Mid-Rise Performance Standards with area-specific design guidelines for the Study Area to reflect the recommendations of the study.
- Continue on-going monitoring of community services and facilities needs as development proceeds within the Study Area.
- Continue to work with the community to address concerns raised throughout the Avenue Study process regarding High Park's natural heritage and water resources.

It is recommended that City staff be directed to bring forward a draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendment and draft Urban Design Guidelines for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study area in the first quarter of 2019, giving consideration to the findings and recommendations contained in the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study prepared by DTAH and after consulting with the Local Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Etobicoke York Community Council direct staff to continue the consultation with the Local Advisory Committee on the draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendment and draft Urban Design Guidelines for the lands included in the Bloor West Village Avenue Study, together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Etobicoke York Community Council direct staff to bring forward a draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendments and draft Urban Design Guidelines for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study area in the first quarter of 2019 after giving consideration to and refining the findings and recommendations contained in the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study prepared by DTAH and after consulting with the Local Advisory Committee.
3. Notice for the public meeting under the *Planning Act* be given according to the regulations of the *Planning Act* for the draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments.
4. City Council direct Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff to review the current High Park Woodland and Savannah Management Plan to identify the scope of work and associated timing of an update to that Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting held on July 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2014, City Council adopted MM54.16 requesting the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to:

- Undertake a review of the current built-form, density, height, and heritage value of the properties on Bloor Street West between Keele Street and the Humber River;
- Consult with the community, including landowners and other stakeholder groups, together with the Ward Councillor, to understand the community's concerns and develop a vision for future development in the study area; and

- Report back on the findings of the review and provide recommendations for changes, if necessary, to the planning framework for the study area.

The motion may be found at the following link:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.MM54.16>

In 2016, City Planning retained DTAH to undertake the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. The study was awarded through a competitive RFP process to a multidisciplinary consulting team led by DTAH that includes sub-consultants R.E. Millward + Associates Ltd., WSP | MMM Group Limited, Swerhun, Taylor Hazell Architects and J.C. Williams Group. The study scope was amended to include a review of the natural heritage and hydrological issues which were identified through the community consultation meetings. DTAH retained the services of Dougan and Associates to undertake the natural heritage review and WSP | MMM Group Limited to undertake the hydrological investigation.

Other Studies

The Bloor West Village Avenue Study area is also subject to a Heritage Conservation District Study (HCD). The purpose of the HCD Study is to identify and assess the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the study area and to develop a strategic approach to their conservation. This will involve determining if the study area, or areas within the study area, warrant designation as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The study has commenced and it is expected a report on this work will be submitted Toronto Preservation Board likely in the first quarter of 2019. The first Open House meeting for the study was held on February 15, 2018. Information related to this study can be found at the following link: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/bloor-street-west-heritage-conservation-district-study/>

Directly north of High Park and north of the Bloor West Village Avenue Study boundary, staff are undertaking an area based character study of the area designated *Apartment Neighbourhoods*. The study is evaluating the existing physical characteristics of this Apartment Neighbourhood to identify appropriate principles, policies and guidelines that will direct and guide future change and compatible infill development in the area. The study commenced in October 2017 and it is expected a Final Report on this study will be presented at the June 6, 2018 Etobicoke York Community Council meeting that will include a Site and Area Specific Official Plan Policy for this area. Information related to this study can be found at the following link: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/high-park-apartment-neighbourhood-area-character-study/>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Purpose

The Bloor West Village Avenue Study is a comprehensive planning and urban design assessment of Bloor Street West between Keele Street and the Humber River intended to establish an appropriate policy framework for accommodating and managing future growth in the area. The intent of the study is to develop recommendations to implement the policy framework, which could include area-specific planning tools and policies, area-wide zoning changes, area-specific urban design guidelines, infrastructure improvements and a Community Services and Facilities Strategy.

Study Area

The study area for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study is bounded by Keele Street / Parkside Drive to the east and the Humber River to the west (see Attachment 1: Bloor West Village Study Area). The study area is approximately 2.7 kilometres in length and includes over 260 properties that have frontage on Bloor Street West.

The original study area boundary was adjusted in October 2017, to resolve planning inconsistencies and rationalize the boundary between the Apartment Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhoods designation in the High Park area. In addition, two properties south of Bloor Street West were included that currently operate as commercial businesses within the Neighbourhoods designations, but are within a context more consistent with the Mixed Use Areas designation on Bloor Street West. This added 20 other properties to the previous 240 in the original study area.

The character of the study area is varied along its length with a range of land uses within and adjacent to the study area, including: residential; commercial; parkland; and open space. There are four subway stations within the study area including: Jane; Runnymede; High Park; and Keele stations. Although not within the study area boundary, there are two significant natural features at each end: the Humber River immediately west of the study area and High Park bordering the southeast segment of the study area. High Park is an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) and includes an Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) as defined by the Province of Ontario. Other defining characteristics of the study area include the middle portion of the Avenue that is defined predominantly by a traditional main street and retail character, and the northeast segment, which has an Apartment Neighbourhoods designation.

There are also a number of heritage properties and resources located within and adjacent to the study area.

Provincial Land-Use Policies: Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Provincial Policy Statements and geographically specific Provincial Plans, along with municipal Official Plans, provide a policy framework for planning and development in the Province. This framework is implemented through a range of land use controls such as zoning by-laws, plans of subdivision and site plans.

The Provincial Policy Statement (2014) (the "PPS") provides policy direction province-wide on land use planning and development to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. It includes policies on key issues that affect communities, such as:

- The efficient and wise use and management of land and infrastructure over the long term in order to minimize impacts on air, water and other resources;
- Protection of the natural and built environment;
- Building strong, sustainable and resilient communities that enhance health and social well-being by ensuring opportunities exist locally for employment;
- Residential development promoting a mix of housing; recreation, parks and open space; and transportation choices that increase the use of active transportation and transit; and
- Encouraging a sense of place in communities, by promoting well-designed built form and by conserving features that help define local character.

The provincial policy-led planning system recognizes and addresses the complex inter-relationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning. The PPS supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning, and recognizes linkages among policy areas.

The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and all decisions of City Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by City Council shall also be consistent with the PPS.

The PPS is more than a set of individual policies. It is to be read in its entirety and the relevant policies are to be applied to each situation.

The PPS recognizes and acknowledges the Official Plan as an important document for implementing the policies within the PPS. Policy 4.7 of the PPS states that, "The official plan is the most important vehicle for implementation of this Provincial Policy Statement. Comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning is best achieved through official plans".

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) (the "Growth Plan") provides a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental

protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which the City forms an integral part, including:

- Establishing minimum density targets within strategic growth areas and related policies directing municipalities to make more efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure to reduce sprawl, cultivate a culture of conservation and promote compact built form and better-designed communities with high quality built form and an attractive and vibrant public realm established through site design and urban design standards;
- Directing municipalities to engage in an integrated approach to infrastructure planning and investment optimization as part of the land use planning process;
- Building complete communities with a diverse range of housing options, public service facilities, recreation and green space that better connect transit to where people live and work;
- Retaining viable employment lands and encouraging municipalities to develop employment strategies to attract and retain jobs;
- Minimizing the negative impacts of climate change by undertaking stormwater management planning that assesses the impacts of extreme weather events and incorporates green infrastructure; and
- Recognizing the importance of watershed planning for the protection of the quality and quantity of water and hydrologic features and areas.

The Growth Plan builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

In accordance with Section 3 of the *Planning Act* all decisions of City Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform with the Growth Plan. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by City Council shall also conform with the Growth Plan.

Provincial Plans are intended to be read in their entirety and relevant policies are to be applied to each situation. The policies of the Plans represent minimum standards. City Council may go beyond these minimum standards to address matters of local importance, unless doing so would conflict with any policies of the Plans.

All decisions of City Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS and shall conform with Provincial Plans. All comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by City Council shall also be consistent with the PPS and conform with Provincial Plans.

Policy 5.1 of the Growth Plan states that where a municipality must decide on a planning matter before its official plan has been amended to conform with this Plan, or before other applicable planning instruments have been updated accordingly, it must still consider the impact of its decision as it relates to the policies of the Growth Plan which require comprehensive municipal implementation.

Toronto Official Plan

The City of Toronto Official Plan through its growth strategy and land use designations supports and compliments the PPS and the Growth Plan. It provides a comprehensive policy framework to direct and manage physical, social and economic change. The Official Plan encourages population and employment growth, recognizing that directing growth to appropriate areas is critical to Toronto's future. Chapter Two sets out the growth management strategy to guide reurbanization and direct job and population growth to certain "growth" areas shown on Map 2, Urban Structure, including the Avenues.

The Official Plan also sets out a policy framework that ensures the City will meet its population and employment targets by directing growth to the City's priority growth areas while protecting the City's stable areas.

The Urban Structure Map (Map 2) of the Official Plan identifies the portion of Bloor Street West within the study area as an Avenues. The Official Plan states that 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. It is noted that the Avenues will be transformed incrementally and the change will occur building-by-building over a number of years. The framework for new development on each Avenue will be established through an Avenue Study which will create a vision and framework for growth which may result in recommended changes to the zoning by-law and/or design guidelines. The growth and redevelopment of the Avenues should be supported by high quality transit services, including priority measures for buses and streetcars, combined with urban design and traffic engineering practices that promote a street that is safe, comfortable and attractive for pedestrians and cyclists.

The study area is located on Land Use Plan Maps 15 and 18 of the Official Plan. The majority of the study area is designated *Mixed Use Areas*. A portion of the study area west of South Kingsway is designated *Neighbourhoods*. The north side of Bloor Street West facing High Park is designated *Apartment Neighbourhoods*.

The *Mixed Use Areas* designation provides for a range of residential, commercial and institutional uses, in single use or mixed-use buildings, as well as utilities,

parks and open spaces. The Official Plan states that "*Mixed Use Areas* will absorb most of the anticipated increase in retail, office and service employment in Toronto in the coming decades, as well as much of the new housing." However, not all *Mixed Use Areas* will experience the same scale or intensity of development. The policies of *Mixed Use Areas* require new development to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale.

Development in *Mixed Use Areas* is subject to a number of development criteria. In *Mixed Use Areas*, developments will:

- Locate and mass new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale;
- Provide appropriate setbacks and/or stepping down of heights, particularly towards lower scale *Neighbourhoods*;
- Locate and mass new buildings to adequately limit shadow impacts on adjacent *Neighbourhoods* particularly during the spring and fall equinoxes;
- Provide good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors;
- Provide an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment;
- Locate and screen service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and
- Provide indoor and outdoor recreation space for building residents in every significant multi-unit residential development.

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 four 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*. New development will respect and reinforce the existing physical character.

Apartment Neighbourhoods are comprised of apartment buildings and parks, local institutions, cultural and recreational facilities, and small-scale retail, service and office uses that serve the needs of area residents. This designation does not anticipate significant growth within these areas, however compatible infill development may be permitted on a site containing an existing apartment building that has sufficient underutilized space to accommodate one or more new buildings while providing good quality of life for both new and existing residents. New development will be located and massed to provide transition to adjacent areas of differing scale, limit shadow impacts, and provide ground-floor uses that enhance safety, amenity and animation of adjacent streets.

A small portion of the study area west of Jane Street is subject to the Swansea Secondary Plan. Lands within this area are designated *Mixed Use Areas* and *Neighbourhoods* in the Official Plan. Policy 2.1 of the Secondary Plan states:

“Where the Zoning By-law permits apartment buildings in areas designated *Neighbourhoods*, any apartment building will respect the zone height and density limits.” The Swansea Area Secondary Plan also provides direction to lands outside of the Secondary Plan area to protect views to Lake Ontario. Policy 5.3(b)(i) directs that any development “will enhance views of Lake Ontario” from the lands “at the rear of 2155 Bloor Street West” (the present No Frills Parking Lot).

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>.

Official Plan Amendment 320

As part of the City's ongoing Official Plan Five Year Review, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 320 (OPA 320) on December 10, 2015 to strengthen and refine the Healthy Neighbourhoods, *Neighbourhoods* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods* policies to support City Council's goals to protect and enhance existing neighbourhoods, allow limited infill on underutilized *Apartment Neighbourhoods* sites and implement the City's Tower Renewal Program.

In addition, OPA 320 adds new criteria to existing Healthy Neighbourhoods policy 2.3.1.2 in order to improve the compatibility of new developments located adjacent and close to *Neighbourhoods* and in *Mixed Use Areas*, *Apartment Neighbourhoods* and *Regeneration Areas*. The new criteria address aspects in new development such as amenity and service areas, lighting and parking.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs approved and modified OPA 320 on July 4, 2016, and this decision has been appealed in part. On December 13, 2017 the OMB issued an Order partially approving OPA 320 and brought into force new Policies 10 and 12 in Section 2.3.1, Healthy Neighbourhoods and Site and Area Specific Policy No. 464 in Chapter 7. Other portions of OPA 320 remain under appeal, and these appealed policies as approved and modified by the Minister are relevant and represent Council's policy decisions, but they are not in effect. More information regarding OPA 320 can be found here: www.toronto.ca/OPreview/neighbourhoods.

Zoning

There are three zoning by-laws that apply to the study area: City-wide Zoning By-law No. 569-2013, former City of Toronto Zoning By-law No. 438-86, and former City of York By-law No. 1-83. While By-law No. 569-2013 is approved and in force on the majority of the lands within the Avenue, some sites remain subject to Zoning By-laws Nos. 438-86 and 1-83.

Under Zoning By-law No. 569-2013, all properties in the study area are zoned CR ('Commercial Residential'), R ('Residential') or O ('Open Space'). At the western end of the study area, a number of properties fall under either former City of York By-law No. 1-83 or former City of Toronto By-law 438-86. These properties are zoned either CR or R under these by-laws. As-of-right height permissions range from 9 metres for the R zones on the western portion of the study area to 14 metres in the CR zone of Bloor West Village and up to 23 meters in the R zones of the eastern portion of the study area. The 23 metre R zone corresponds to the Apartment Neighbourhoods designation of the Official Plan. A number of site specific zoning by-laws currently exist within the study area, that accommodate larger, more recent developments.

Design Guidelines

Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study and Performance Standards

City Council adopted the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study and an addendum containing performance standards for mid-rise buildings. They identify a list of best practices and establish a set of performance standards for new mid-rise buildings. Key issues addressed include maximum allowable building heights, setbacks and stepbacks, sunlight and skyview, pedestrian realm conditions, transition to *Neighbourhoods* and *Parks and Open Space Areas* and corner sites. The link to the Guidelines is here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/design-guidelines/mid-rise-buildings/>.

City Council also adopted a revised Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Addendum, for staff to use together with the 2010 approved Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards in the preparation of area studies or during the evaluation of development applications, where mid-rise buildings are proposed and Performance Standards are applicable, until such time as City Council adopts updated Mid-Rise Building Design Guidelines. Its decision is here: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PG12.7> and <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-92537.pdf>.

Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines

A comprehensive update of the Townhouse Guidelines is underway. Updated Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines further clarify and expand upon the City Council approved 2006 Guidelines to reflect a broader range of multi-dwelling development up to four storeys in height. The latest draft of the Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines is here: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/964c-townhouse-low-rise-guidelines-02-2017.pdf>.

Prior to presenting a finalized version of these Guidelines for Council adoption, staff are refining and consulting upon the draft Guidelines, in part through their use during the review of development applications.

Study Process

The process for the study was outlined in the Terms of Reference and work plan. The purpose of the Avenue Study is to identify opportunities for future growth through extensive stakeholder consultation and detailed analysis of: Official Plan policy; land use designations; existing built form, density, height, lot size and configuration; community services and facilities; heritage resources; streetscape and public realm conditions; parks and open space considerations; building massing and shadow studies; pedestrian, cycling and traffic conditions; and infrastructure assessments. This study commenced in December 2016. Extensive and well attended public consultations were key components of this study. Stakeholders and the community-at-large contributed to the overall vision and helped inform the outcome.

The study was conducted in four phases. The first phase was to introduce the study to the community, understand the local context and issues, and develop a vision for the study area. In the second phase, a range of alternative options were explored, tested and confirmed, while in the third phase the draft recommendations were presented. The final phase consisted of synthesizing the input received through the entire process and preparing the final report.

DTAH has completed its review and submitted to the City the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. The consultant's report contains the study findings and recommendations for an appropriate policy framework to accommodate and manage future growth in the area. Attachment 6 to this report provides the Executive Summary of the DTAH report.

This report recommends that staff be directed to bring forward a draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendment and draft Urban Design Guidelines for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study area, giving consideration to and refining the findings and recommendations contained in the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study prepared by DTAH and after consulting with the Local Advisory Committee.

Indigenous Engagement

The Avenue Study area is located within the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee, the Huron-Wendat and the Métis people, and is home to many diverse First Nations and Inuit peoples.

Early in the study process, City staff sent out letters to notify the following First Nation groups of the Avenue Study: the Huron-Wendat, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

At that time, staff received one reply from the Nation Huron-Wendat who requested information on the study area boundary and asked if there was any archaeological assessment that would be undertaken as part of the study. Staff advised that an archaeological assessment would not be completed through the study, however it would be undertaken on a site by site basis for properties within the Interim Screening Areas for Archaeological Potential identified in the Archaeological Master Plan of the City. Any such archaeological assessment would be submitted at the time a development application for a property is submitted.

The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation subsequently requested a briefing from staff on the study which occurred on February 8, 2018. Discussions centred on issues regarding water and natural heritage. Staff will continue discussions as the implementing Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines are further developed.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

A comprehensive consultation process was undertaken for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study that included a variety of engagement techniques including the development of a web page on the City of Toronto web site that was updated throughout the study process with links to information as it was released. Stakeholders and the community were involved in all phases of the Avenue Study process, which included: four Local Advisory Committee (LAC) meetings; three public open houses; a community design charrette; a community stakeholder meeting; a landowners meeting; a heritage focus group meeting and two presentations to the City's Design Review Panel.

January 23, 2017	Heritage Focus Group Meeting
February 8, 2017	Property Owner Meeting
February 9, 2017	Community Stakeholder Meeting
February 27, 2017	Community Consultation Meeting (Number 1)
April 8, 2017	Community Design Charrette
April 21, 2017	Design Review Panel Presentation (First Review)
April 24, 2017	Local Advisory Committee Meeting (Number 1)
June 12, 2017	Local Advisory Committee Meeting (Number 2)
June 26, 2017	Community Consultation Meeting (Number 2)
October 18, 2017	Local Advisory Committee Meeting (Number 3)
November 27, 2017	Local Advisory Committee Meeting (Number 4)
December 4, 2017	Community Consultation Meeting (Number 3)
December 12, 2017	Design Review Panel Presentation (Second Review)

The main concerns expressed through the consultation process included:

Overall:

- Provide a clear explanation of the purpose of the Avenue Study, including how it will influence future development and connect to other policy tools.
- Develop strong policies to accompany the recommendations of the Avenue Study.
- The study and proposed recommendations should demonstrate consideration of indigenous rights and knowledge, especially in terms of water and natural heritage.

Built Form:

- Balance growth with the area's village feel and its infrastructure constraints.
- Develop strong recommendations to protect sunlight and sky views on Bloor Street West.
- Development on Bloor Street West should be sensitive to adjacent neighbourhoods.
- Angular planes should not exceed 45-degrees.
- Provide a clear rationale for recommended building heights and transitions.
- Building designs and heights should maintain a human scale and the village feel in Bloor West Village.

Land Use:

- Midblock connections and laneways should be safe and comfortable with pedestrian access.
- Support and promote small-scale local retail uses along Bloor Street West by restricting retail shop sizes.
- Maintain the village feel in Bloor West Village by creating a vision for balanced growth that supports the population and respects the area's history.
- Remove the Avenues overlay from the Humber Gateway and the north side of High Park.
- Support the protection of office and employment uses by restricting the conversion of office uses.

Street Design and Transportation:

- Congestion and parking are key issues that should be addressed in the Avenue Study.
- The study recommendations should help alleviate congestion and improve traffic flow.
- General support for future cycling infrastructure with suggestions to study the economic impacts of cycling infrastructure, especially on local businesses.
- Ensure the study recommendations enhance pedestrian safety.

- Require new developments to provide adequate on-site parking. Concern that inadequate on-site parking could result in increased on-street parking in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Natural Heritage and Hydrogeology:

- High Park's distinct contributions and environment need to be studied and considered.
- The cumulative impacts of development on High Park needs to be considered in the Avenue Study.
- Strengthen the protection of natural heritage in the guiding principles.
- Integrate the natural heritage, water and functional servicing studies.
- Protect and enhance underground and surface water.
- Protect Chimney Swifts and other threatened bird species.
- Ensure the annual prescribed burns carried out by City staff to maintain the Black Oak Savannah habitat in High Park can be continued.
- More work is needed to understand the impacts of development on natural heritage and hydrogeology, especially in High Park.

A detailed account of the community consultation process and comments, which were prepared by Swerhun, DTAH's public engagement sub consultant, can be found at the following link:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/bloor-west-village-avenue-study/meetings-events-bloor-west-village-avenue-study/>.

Future Consultation

The Local Advisory Committee (LAC) has provided valuable feedback on the study, and staff are recommending that an additional LAC consultation meeting be held to review the draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendment and draft Urban Design Guidelines prior to the Final Report being scheduled for a statutory public meeting.

Natural Heritage and Hydrogeology

There was a strong interest and concern expressed by the community about future redevelopment and the potential adverse impacts on sensitive natural systems, specifically High Park. In response to these concerns, staff expanded the scope of the Avenue Study to include a desktop study of the hydrogeology and natural heritage features in the broader study area. The Natural Heritage Impact Study was undertaken by Dougan and Associates Ecological Consulting and Design and the Hydrological Investigation was undertaken by WSP. The natural heritage and hydrogeological reports are included in the final report from DTAH on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study.

These supplemental studies will inform the recommendations in the final report for the Avenue Study. In addition, the studies identified considerations for future planning exercises outside the boundaries of the study area such as High Park and its environs.

High Park

High Park, which is outside the boundaries of the Avenue Study, is located south of Bloor Street West to the west of Parkside Drive. High Park is a large urban district park located within proximity to a number of densely populated neighbourhoods. Over the years, the park has experienced increased pressure as its unique character, natural diversity and numerous recreation opportunities have attracted visitors from across the City. While only moderate local intensification is anticipated in the adjacent Bloor West Village Study Area (approximately 1,000-2,000 new residents over the next 20 years), it is expected that High Park will continue to draw an increasing number of visitors given overall citywide growth and the park's role as a recreational destination for people within the City and beyond.

The current High Park Woodland and Savannah Management Plan was prepared in 2002 to guide the ongoing management of the natural areas of the park. This Plan provides a comprehensive framework for the ongoing management of the Park's valued ecosystems through adaptive management approaches and techniques and is intended to be a working document that is updated as required. As a result of increasing pressures on the park, staff have identified the need to review the Management Plan to address management of both the natural and active areas of the park and better identify ways to mitigate the potential impacts of a growing number of park users on the on-going sustainability of the park. Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff are recommending that a review of the current High Park Woodland and Savannah Management Plan be undertaken to identify the scope of work and associated timing of an update to the Plan.

The Consultant's Report on Bloor West Village Avenue Study

DTAH has completed its review and submitted to the City the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. The consultant's report contains their findings and recommendations for an appropriate policy framework for the accommodation and management of future growth in the area. The Executive Summary of the Final Report is attached as Attachment 6. The full report can be found at the following link:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/bloor-west-village-avenue-study/>

The Final Report provides an overview of the four phases of the study process and resultant findings from the sub-consultants, as well as incorporating the feedback from the extensive community consultation process.

The following sections of this report provide an overview of the key components of the study and highlights the recommendations and staff actions contained in the DTAH report.

DTAH's Final Report identifies five character areas within the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. These character areas are informed by the prominent uses/activity, prevailing built form, heritage potential and public realm condition. The character areas helped structure and inform the Avenue Study recommendations (see Attachment 5: Character Areas).

The guidelines and standards being recommended are structured in two parts: those that apply to the entire Study Area, and those specific to each of the five character areas and are grouped under the following elements:

- Resilience and Sustainability;
- Structure Plan;
- Parks and Open Space;
- Views and Vistas;
- Land Use;
- Built Form;
- Setbacks;
- Angular Planes and Transitions;
- Height;
- Stepbacks;
- Building Design;
- Community Services and Facilities;
- Street Design and Transportation; and
- Natural Heritage and Water.

Character Areas Recommendations

Humber Gateway

The Humber Gateway is at the western end of study area from the Humber River to Riverside Drive. All properties have residential land uses with a variety of housing forms, including low-rise apartment buildings and multi-family units designed to give the appearance of single- detached homes. The Official Plan designates these lands *Neighbourhoods*. As the study progressed, it was determined that changes to maximum building height or land use were neither anticipated nor appropriate for this Character Area.

The report recommends that Official Plan Map 2 Urban Structure be amended to remove the *Avenues* overlay from the Humber Gateway Character Area.

West Village

The West Village extends from Riverside Drive to Jane Street. The properties vary between the different sides of the street. North side properties are generally wider, deeper and contain larger buildings. South side properties are closer to the traditional main street in lot depth, but vary in width. Recent development consists of taller buildings than the original context and existing zoning.

The report recommends amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to implement the recommended built form and land use policies. The report recommends that the City should consider:

- Requiring existing office uses on each site to be replaced as it redevelops;
- Limiting the size of retail units to support the prevailing character of fine grained retail and to ensure infill retail strengthens the continuity of the streetscape and the scale of retail units; the maximum gross floor area for individual retail units at grade should be limited to 1,750m²;
- Retail units with gross floor areas larger than 1,750m² should be required to be located on the upper floors with smaller retail spaces at grade;
- Limiting the maximum gross floor area for individual retail units to 3,500m², with a maximum floor plate of 1,750m² at grade;
- Limiting maximum lot frontages at 8 metres for individual retail bays at grade to reinforce the existing character;
- Requiring developments containing 20 or more residential units to provide a minimum of 25% of the units as large units (10% should be 3 bedroom units and 15% should be 2 bedroom units);
- Removing the density numbers from the zoning permissions as building envelopes should be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations;
- Permitting maximum building heights of 30 metres (9 storeys);
- Requiring minimum building heights of 10.5 metres (3 storeys);
- Requiring a minimum step back of 3 metres at the street wall height of 20 metres (5 to 6 storeys);
- Requiring the provision of a front angular plane measured from the property line extending at a 45 degree angle beginning at a height of 24 metres;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the north side of Bloor Street West and adjacent to existing neighbourhoods and parks extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 10.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the south side of Bloor Street West extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 13.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;

- Requiring a minimum front yard setback to achieve a minimum 6 metres sidewalk zone measured from the face of the existing or future curb to the primary building face;
- Requiring a minimum flank setback to achieve a street sidewalk zone of 5 to 6 metres measured from the face of the curb to the building face; and
- For larger buildings (typically one third the width of the block or greater), requiring a mid-block connection to enhance the pedestrian network and provide opportunities for further animation with uses at grade.

Village Main Street

The Village Main Street runs from Jane Street to Glendonwyne Road, and is closely associated with the current Bloor West Village Business Improvement Area boundary. Properties on the north side have predominately narrow frontages, shallow lots and have buildings of a similar era of construction between 2 and 3 storeys in height. This condition results in a relatively consistent street wall and pedestrian supportive scale. Properties on the south side have generally wider frontages but are also shallow in depth similar to the north side. Buildings are predominately between 2 and 3 storeys in height and vary more in their era of construction. The only currently listed heritage building in the study area are within this Character Area is Runnymede Library. Runnymede Theatre is a designated property.

The report recommends amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to implement the recommended built form and land use policies. The report recommends that the City should consider:

- Requiring existing office uses on each site to be replaced as it redevelops;
- Not permitting residential uses at grade;
- Limiting the size of retail units to support the prevailing character of fine grained retail and to ensure infill retail strengthens the continuity of the streetscape and the scale of retail units; the maximum gross floor area for individual retail units at grade should be limited to 400m²;
- Retail units with gross floor areas larger than 400m² should be required to be located on the upper floors with smaller retail spaces at grade;
- Limiting the maximum gross floor area for individual retail units to 3,500m², with a maximum floor plate of 400m² at grade;
- Limiting maximum lot frontages at 8 metres for individual retail bays at grade to reinforce the existing character;
- Requiring developments containing 20 or more residential units to provide a minimum of 25% of the units as large units (10% should be 3 bedroom units and 15% should be 2 bedroom units);
- Removing the density numbers from the zoning permissions as building envelopes should be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations;
- Permitting maximum building heights of 20 metres (6 storeys);

- Requiring minimum building heights of 10.5 metres (3 storeys);
- Requiring a minimum step back of 3 metres at the street wall height of 14 metres (4 storeys);
- Requiring the provision of a front angular plane measured from the property line extending at a 45 degree angle beginning at a height of 16 metres;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the north side of Bloor Street West and adjacent to existing neighbourhoods and parks extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 10.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the south side of Bloor Street West extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 13.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties adjacent to TTC Stations and Corridors, and City-owned parking lots extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 13.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
- Requiring a minimum front yard setback to achieve a minimum 4.8 metres sidewalk zone measured from the face of the existing or future curb to primary building face, however given the fine grained nature of the Village Main Street, the setback of a new building should also relate to the alignment of primary façades on adjacent properties;
- Requiring a minimum flank setback to achieve a sidewalk zone of 5 to 6 metres measured from the face of the curb to the building face; and
- For larger buildings (typically one third the width of the block or greater), a mid-block connection should be provided to enhance the pedestrian network and provide opportunities for further animation with uses at grade.

East Village

The East Village is to the east of the Village Main Street, from Glendonwyne Road to Clendenan Avenue. This Character Area includes a mix of residential and commercial uses and a range of building types and scales. This segment has experienced change over the past several decades, with several larger buildings and two recent projects either under construction or having received development approvals. A few larger potential redevelopment sites exist within this segment.

The report recommends amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to implement the recommended built form and land use policies. The report recommends that the City should consider:

- Requiring existing office uses on each site to be replaced as it redevelops;
- Limiting the size of retail units to support the prevailing character of fine grained retail and to ensure infill retail strengthens the continuity of the

- streetscape and the scale of retail units; the maximum gross floor area for individual retail units at grade should be limited to 1,750m²;
- Retail units with gross floor areas larger than 1,750m² should be required to be located on the upper floors with smaller retail spaces at grade.
 - Limiting the maximum gross floor area for individual retail units to 3,500m², with a maximum floor plate of 1,750m² at grade;
 - limiting maximum lot frontages at 8 metres for individual retail bays at grade to reinforce the existing character;
 - Requiring developments containing 20 or more units to provide a minimum of 25% of the units as large units (10% should be 3 bedroom units and 15% should be 2 bedroom units);
 - Removing the density numbers from the zoning permissions as building envelopes should be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations;
 - Permitting maximum building heights of 27 metres (8 storeys);
 - Requiring minimum building heights of 10.5 metres (3 storeys);
 - Requiring a minimum step back of 3 metres at the street wall height of 21.6 metres (5 to 6 storeys);
 - Requiring the provision of a front angular plane measured from the property line extending at a 45 degree angle beginning at a height of 20 metres (6 storeys).
 - Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the north side of Bloor Street West and adjacent to existing neighbourhoods and parks extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 10.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
 - Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the south side of Bloor Street West extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 13.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
 - Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties adjacent to TTC Stations and Corridors, and City-owned parking lots extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 13.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
 - Requiring a minimum front yard setback to achieve a minimum 6 metres sidewalk zone measured from the face of the existing or future curb to the primary building face;
 - Requiring a minimum flank setback to achieve a sidewalk zone of 5 to 6 metres measured from the face of the curb to the building face; and
 - For larger buildings (typically one third the width of the block or greater), require a mid-block connection to enhance the pedestrian network and provide opportunities for further animation with uses at grade.

High Park Frontage

The High Park Frontage is at the eastern end of the study area, from Clendenan Avenue to Keele Street/Parkside Drive. The entire southern side of this character area is High Park, with the north side an Apartment Neighbourhood. Land use on

the north side is predominately residential with house and low-rise apartment building forms. Recent consolidation and redevelopment has taken place on a few sites, with larger scale and more intense building forms compared to the prevailing context. The majority of properties have buildings set back from the right-of-way to provide a green front yard condition.

The report recommends amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to implement the recommended built form and land use policies. The report recommends that the City should consider:

- Requiring developments containing 20 or more units to provide a minimum of 25% of the units as large units (10% should be 3 bedroom units and 15% should be 2 bedroom units);
- Removing the density numbers from the zoning permissions as building envelopes should be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations;
- Permitting maximum building heights of 27 metres (8 storeys);
- Requiring minimum building heights of 10 metres (3 storeys);
- Requiring a minimum step back of 3 metres at the street wall height of 20 metres (6 storeys);
- Requiring the provision of a front angular plane measured from the property line extending at a 45 degree angle beginning at a height of 17.5 metres;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the north side of Bloor Street West and adjacent to existing neighbourhoods and parks extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 10.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
- Requiring the provision of a rear angular plane for properties on the south side of Bloor Street West extending at a 45 degree angle, beginning at 13.5 metres above the ground, 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
- Requiring that a minimum front yard setback of 4.5 metres be provided for properties fronting Bloor Street West;
- Within this front yard setback, permitting a maximum 1.5 metre projection zone from the principal building face for porches, bays and stoops, up to 30% of the primary façade area;
- Requiring a minimum 3 metres flank setback;
- Requiring a 9 metre flanking setback for properties flanking High Park Avenue to maintain and reinforce existing built form relationship to the street and enhance views towards High Park;
- For larger buildings (typically one-third the width of the block or greater), require a mid-block connection to enhance the pedestrian network and provide opportunities for further animation with uses at grade;
- Requiring a minimum 2.0 metre building setback from the shared side property line;

- Not permitting below grade structures within the building setbacks so that trees and other planting can grow to a mature size; and
- Amending the Official Plan Map 2 Urban Structure to remove the *Avenues* overlay from the High Park frontage even though these lands are not within the study area.

Study Area Recommendations

Natural Heritage and Water

The report provides recommendations for mitigating the potential impacts of development on natural heritage features and water, both above and below ground. The recommendations are informed by the natural heritage and hydrogeology supplemental studies, and a surface water review by Toronto Water staff. Overall, the impacts due to new development are anticipated to be limited and generally understood within the Study Area.

The potential natural heritage impacts would depend on the location and nature of development, and could include: tree canopy loss; slope impacts; increased hazard of buildings to migratory and breeding birds; removal of habitat for Species at Risk; construction impacts to wildlife (i.e. nest removal, mortality); changes in downstream water quality and quantity; light pollution; and increased impacts on High Park.

The potential groundwater and surface water impacts include: an increase in imperviousness that may inhibit groundwater recharge and/or result in rapid and increased release of stormwater increasing the risk of water quality degradation and watercourse erosion, as well as raise urban flooding concerns; the possible extraction and discharge of groundwater to sewers as the result of sub-surface structures (e.g., parking garages); and the potential for deep sub-surface structures to impede groundwater flow.

The study provides recommendations for enhancement and mitigation, identifies existing policies and guidelines, and suggests several new policies and guidelines.

Recommendations are also provided for mitigation and enhancement outside of the study area. Further recommendations provide direction for potential further study following the conclusion of the Avenue Study.

Community Services and Facilities

A detailed survey of City Divisions and community agencies was conducted seeking input on priorities for improving existing and future community services and facilities to serve the local area population.

The findings recommend a number of specific improvements to be implemented as development proceeds, in particular ensuring adequate parks and open

spaces, community recreation centres, libraries, child care, schools, human services, and community agencies to serve the growing population. Ongoing monitoring of community services and facilities needs and priorities is also recommended.

Servicing

The study includes a high-level hydraulic analysis of the local municipal servicing infrastructure, and characterizes the constraints and opportunities to improve servicing infrastructure through the application of development guidelines and best management practices.

The report concludes the local municipal sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water supply systems do not require specific improvements to accommodate the anticipated future growth within the Study Area. The local storm sewer system is currently operating at capacity under the City's design storm event. However, performance is expected to improve over time with the continued adoption of the Mandatory Downspout Disconnection By-Law, further compliance with the Wet Weather Flow Management Guidelines, and the introduction of green infrastructure solutions defined within the Toronto Green Street Technical Guidelines.

No specific improvements are required for the local municipal combined sewer system to accommodate the anticipated growth. However, the report recommends that the City should construct a dedicated storm sewer system within Bloor Street West between Clendenan Avenue and Keele Street as a part of future corridor improvements for this segment. Further, the future reconstruction of the Bloor Street West corridor would benefit from an informed assessment of deficiencies identified through the Basement Flooding Protection Plan Environmental Assessment processes.

Lastly, it is recommended that the corridor improvements for Bloor Street West within the Study Area be coordinated with the infrastructure improvements identified in these reports.

Street Design and Transportation

The study considered the potential impact of the proposed level of intensification that could be accommodated within the proposed built form alternative on the transportation system and provides direction for initiatives related to balancing access for all modes of transportation. The study concludes the proposed level of intensification anticipated can be accommodated within the existing road network.

The study also tested the feasibility of introducing safe cycling infrastructure within the Bloor West Village Avenue Study area. It is important to note that no change to Bloor Street West is anticipated in the near future (given recent major capital works in 2012), or will likely take place until reconstruction is required.

The report contains a preferred road cross section which accommodates the cycling infrastructure. The report indicated this option balances the available right-of-way width among the different users and uses and provide safe space of adequate capacity for each. The preferred option would also have the least adverse traffic and surface transit impacts to Bloor Street West, provide the greatest number of on-street parking spaces (available during off-peak periods only) and provide the safest environment for cyclists.

Conclusion

Final Report prepared by DTAH provides a recommended policy and design framework for future development within the study area including:

- Amend Official Plan Map 2 Urban Structure to remove the Avenues overlay from the Humber Gateway Character Area and the south side of the High Park Frontage Character Area.
- Amend the Official Plan to implement the land use policies resulting from the Avenue Study.
- Amend the Official Plan to include maximum building heights, expressed in number of storeys, for each character area based on the recommendations of the study.
- Amend the Official Plan to redesignate two *Neighbourhoods* properties to *Mixed Use Areas* due their anomalous built form relationships, current use and context within the Village Main Street Character Area.
- Amend the Zoning By-law to allow for as-of-right permissions compatible with the built form recommendations. This would allow desired development to proceed as-of-right, shortening the development approval process.
- Amend the Zoning By-law to include maximum building heights, expressed in metres and number of storeys, for each character area based on the recommendations of the study.
- Amend the Zoning By-law to remove density numbers from the zoning for all properties within the study area as building envelopes should be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations.
- Amend the Zoning By-law to establish maximum sizes for each retail space in individual units and in each unit at grade.
- Amend zoning boundaries to resolve zoning inconsistencies for a number of properties that are currently subject to two or more different zones.
- Update and replace applicable sections of the 2010 Mid-Rise Performance Standards and the 2016 Addendum to the Mid-Rise Performance Standards with Area-Specific Design Guidelines for the Study Area to reflect the recommendations of the study.
- Continue on-going monitoring of community services and facilities needs as development proceeds within the study area.

- Incorporate the recommendations from the Main Street Retail Study commenced in November 2017 to support small independent businesses.
- Continue to work with the community to address concerns raised throughout the Avenue Study process regarding High Park's natural heritage and water resources.

Planning staff will give consideration to and refine the findings and recommendations contained in the Final Report on the Bloor West Village Avenue Study prepared by DTAH and will consult with the Local Advisory Committee. It is expected staff will submit a recommended draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendments and Urban Design Guidelines to a public meeting before Etobicoke York Community Council in the first quarter of 2019.

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ATTACHMENTS

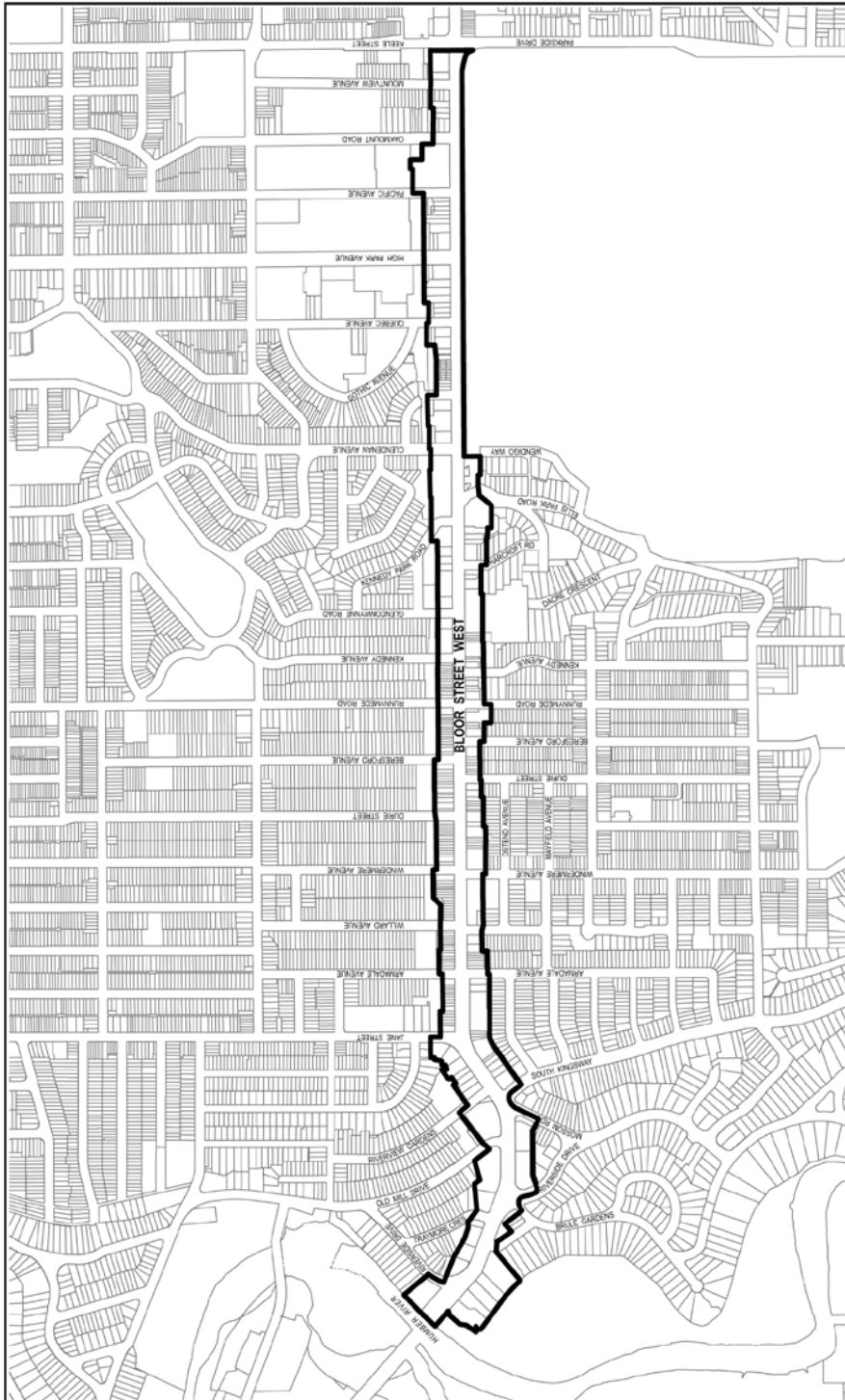
City of Toronto Data/Drawings

Attachment 1: Bloor West Village Study Area
Attachment 2: Official Plan- Map 2 Structure Plan
Attachment 3: Official Plan
Attachment 4: Zoning

Consultant's Drawings

Attachment 5: Character Areas
Attachment 6: DTAH's Final Report, Bloor West Village Avenue Study,
Executive Summary

Attachment 1: Bloor West Village Study Area

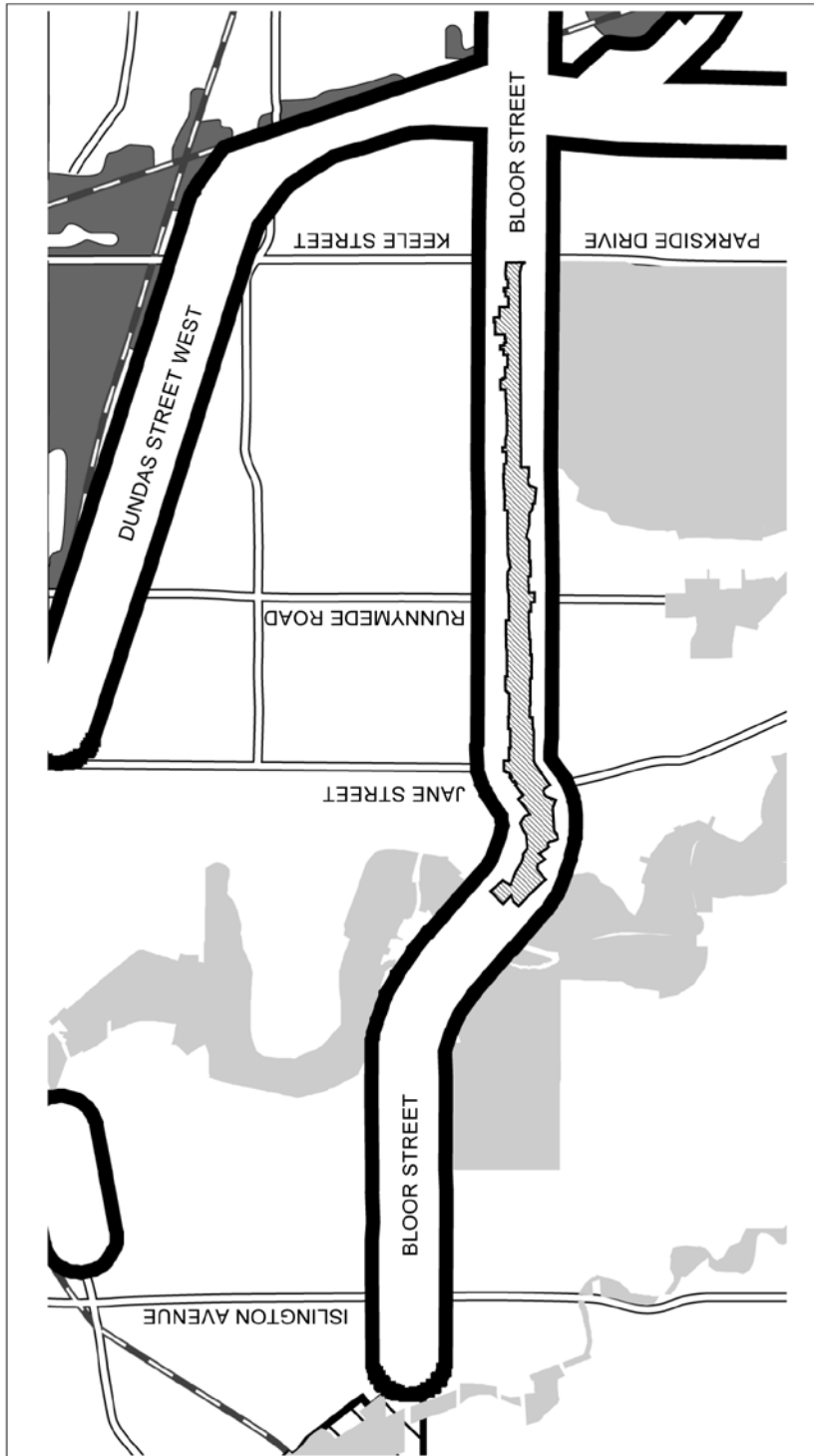


Bloor West Village Avenue Study



Not to Scale
Date: 04/11/2018

Attachment 2: Official Plan - Map 2 Structure Plan



Extract from Urban Structure Map 2

Bloor West Village Avenue Study

File # 17 103255 WSP 00 TM



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Not to Scale
03/01/2018

Attachment 3: Official Plan



Toronto
Extract from Official Plan

Toronto
Bloor West Village Avenue Study

File # 17 103255 WSP 00 TM

-  Site Location
-  Neighbourhoods
-  Apartment Neighbourhoods
-  Mixed Use Areas
-  Parks & Open Space Areas
-  Natural Areas
-  Parks

↑
Not to Scale
03/01/2018

Attachment 6: DTAH's Final Report, Bloor West Village Avenue Study, Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bloor West Village is a well-established and important part of our city. Future change should complement and enhance what makes this place special.

BACKGROUND

The Bloor West Village Study Area is home to an established and vibrant main street, the first Business Improvement Area in the world (1970), residential neighbourhoods of varied building types, and is defined by significant topography and natural features (High Park & Humber River). In recent years, the area has become the focus of redevelopment interest with the scale of individual projects increasing in size.

While some Avenue Studies seek to stimulate pedestrian life where it has yet to take hold, Bloor Street West serves local needs with a variety of small-scale commercial businesses and services in traditional storefronts. Maintaining the character, quality and local scale of retail is vital to the success of this Avenue's future development. Future change must further improve this special place in the city, not diminish what makes it great today.

Study Area

The Study Area is approximately 2.7 kilometres in length, stretching from Keele Street in the east to the Humber River in the west. The Study Area includes over 260 properties, with the great majority being both narrow and shallow, and with direct address to Bloor Street West. The Study Area includes Mixed Use Areas, Apartment Neighbourhoods, Neighbourhoods and Open

Space. Bloor Street West is one of the few Avenues identified in the City's Official Plan that is located along a subway line. There are five TTC Stations within or within walking distance of the Study Area.

Purpose

In recent years, the area has become the focus of redevelopment interest with the scale of individual projects increasing in size. There is a need to establish an area specific planning and design framework to guide change. The section of Bloor Street West from the Humber River to Keele Street was identified by City Council and staff as a priority for an Avenue Study.

This Avenue Study will direct and guide on-stream and future development with clear standards that ensure a comfortable, convenient, safe and high quality public realm. It will also establish the quantitative requirements for the transportation, site servicing and community services infrastructure to support the existing and future population and employment.

This Avenue Study will consider (but not make recommendations for) Neighbourhoods or Apartment Neighbourhoods adjacent to the Study Area. Different from all previous Avenue Studies, it will also make recommendations for Parks, Open Spaces Areas, and Natural Systems beyond the Study Area as part of the Natural Heritage and Hydrogeology supplemental desktop studies.

Study Process

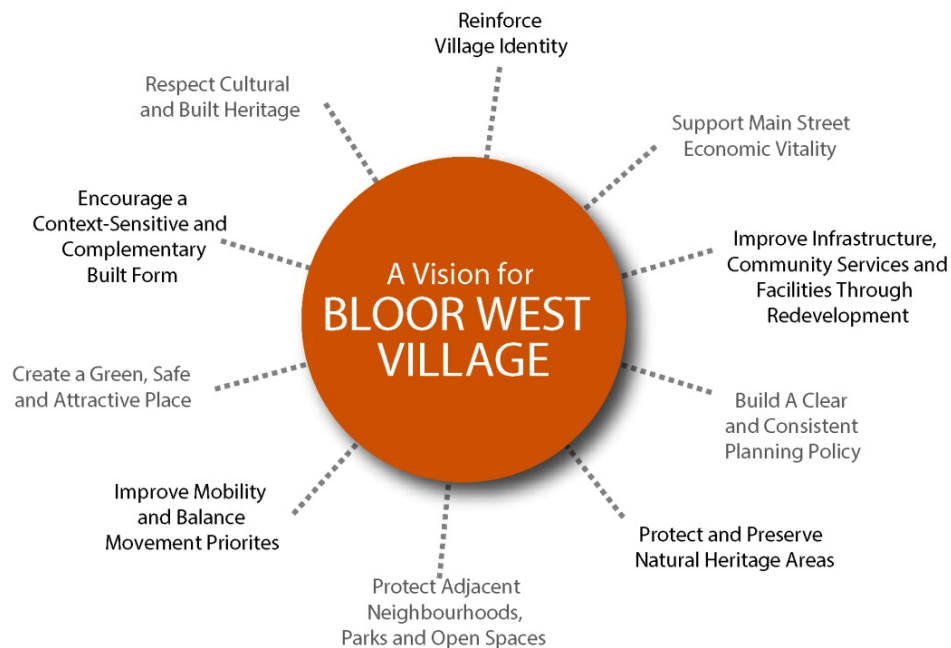
This Study began in December of 2016 and concluded in December 2017. Extensive and well attended public consultation activities were key aspects of this Study. Stakeholders and the community-at-large contributed to the overall vision and helped to inform the outcome.

The overall project was conducted in four phases. The first phase was to introduce the project to the community, understand the local context and issues, and develop a vision for the Study Area. In the second phase, a range of alternative options were explored, tested and confirmed, while in the third and final phase the draft recommendations were presented, and input received through the entire process was synthesized and documented in the final report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholders and the community were involved in all Phases of the Avenue Study process, which included:

- Four Local Advisory Committee (LAC) meetings
- Three public open houses
- A community design charrette
- A community stakeholder meeting
- A landowners meeting
- A heritage focus group meeting
- Two presentations to the Design Review Panel



The vision for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study is best summarized in the guiding principles for the project, developed through consultation with the public which in turn informed the process and recommendations.

POLICY CONTEXT

The Study Team considered a range of existing City and Provincial policy documents in making its recommendations.

The City of Toronto Official Plan provides an Urban Structure , in which Bloor Street West from the Humber River to Keele Street is defined as an Avenue. The lands within the Study Area are designated as Mixed Use Areas, Apartment Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhoods in the Official Plan.

There are three zoning by-laws that apply to the Study Area: the city-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013, the former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86, and the former City of York By-law 1-83. While By-law 569-2013 is approved and in-force, its status before the Ontario Municipal Board means that the underlying by-laws 438-86 and 1-83 still apply. As such, any amendments made to By-law 569-2013 will also need to be made to 438-86 and 1-83.

Under By-law 569-2013, all properties in the Study Area are zoned either the CR ('commercial residential'), R ('residential'), or O ('open space') zones. At the western end of the Study Area, a number of properties fall under either Former City of York By-law No. 1-83 or Former City of Toronto By-law 438-86. Again, these properties are zoned either CR or R under these by-laws. As-of-right height permissions range from 9 metres for the R zones on the western portion of the Study Area

to 14 metres in the CR zone of Bloor West Village and up to 23 meters in the R zones of the eastern portion of the Study Area. The 23 metre R zone corresponds to the Apartment Neighbourhoods designation of the Official Plan. A number of site specific zoning by-laws currently exist within the Study Area, to address the more recent developments.

OPTIONS

Informed by an understanding of the existing policy context, public input during Phase 1, and the community design charrette, the Study Team developed a planning and design framework to assist with the development of options. The framework identifies a pattern of built form, parks and open spaces, views and vistas, and special places within each of the character areas.

Following from the Planning and Design Framework, the Study Team explored a range of potential options for the different character areas. The options compared the existing condition to as-of-right zoning permissions, a typical Avenues approach applying the Mid-rise Performance Standards, the 2016 Mid-rise Addendum and context-sensitive options specific to Bloor West Village. All of the options were demonstrated with a 3-D digital model.

Each of the initial options was presented to City Staff, the Local Advisory Committee and public for their review and comments. Based on feedback received, the Study Team considered and refined the options to better reflect the community informed vision and guiding principles.

The preferred option was informed by an analysis of existing conditions and policies, public and stakeholder consultations, ongoing reference to the Guiding Principles, the testing, evaluation and iterative development of the options, and the Study Team's professional expertise.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Character Areas

Five character areas have been identified specifically for the Bloor West Village Avenue Study Area. These character areas are informed by prominent uses/activity, prevailing built form, heritage potential and public realm and help to structure the Avenue Study guidelines and recommendations.

Resilience and Sustainability

Techniques and opportunities are identified to ensure the healthy evolution of the Study Area, and to improve resilient innovation and sustainability. In the long term, issues such as water quality (above and below grade), natural heritage, energy conservation and use of sustainable materials and design are integral to good design and city building. The appropriate care and management of the natural heritage areas present an excellent early opportunity to demonstrate such a commitment to forward thinking design practises to ensure a healthy system for the future.

Structure Plan

The Structure Plan represents the preferred alternative, the result of advanced and detailed development of the options explored. The Structure Plan envisions a range of uses in street related buildings, provides for a walkable environment, identifies placemaking opportunities, and supports an enhanced green character for the Study Area. The Structure Plan aims to build on the fine grained, pedestrian oriented scale of the Study Area to enhance the resident, employee and visitor experience, and to reinforce a unique sense of community and place. This includes supporting an attractive, livable community with a mix of uses, walkable streets, distinctive neighbourhoods and access to a variety of open spaces.

Parks and Open Space

The Parks and Open Space Framework recommends new parks and public spaces as part of the redevelopment of larger sites to provide a civic focus and strengthen the sense of the Village. On-site parkland dedication will be sought on large sites and where opportunities exist to link to or enlarge an existing park and improve pedestrian connections. Smaller privately owned publicly accessible urban plazas are also recommended at key placemaking locations. In the Village character area, mid-block connections are recommended to improve pedestrian movement and offer opportunities for additional activity at street level. In the High Park Frontage character area, broad landscape setbacks and “green fingers” between

buildings will support an improved green character. Streetscape improvements throughout the Study Area will include tree planting to improve the urban forest canopy.

Views and Vistas

View corridors and vistas play an important role in reinforcing a distinct identity for the Study Area and assist with orientation and placemaking. In their building design new development will consider key views and vistas towards special features such as prominent sites, landmarks, parks and heritage features, Lake Ontario and at visual termini along Bloor Street West.

Land Use

No major changes are recommended for the land use designations, although modest refinements are required in some of the character areas to align policy, zoning and property boundaries. Mixed Use Areas will include retail at grade, residential, service commercial and office employment uses. Apartment Neighbourhoods will include primarily residential uses with some service and retail. Neighbourhoods will include primarily residential uses.

Built Form

Mid-rise or low-rise built form is appropriate for all parts of the Study Area. Within the Village Main Street character area, development will respect and relate to the predominant lower scale built form context. In the East and West Villages, development will have taller heights sensitive to the existing and emerging context, and will serve to provide a sense of arrival and transition to the lower

scale Village Main Street character area. In the High Park Frontage character area, development will have a more residential character than other parts of the Study Area.

Setbacks

A range of mandatory building setbacks is proposed for all blocks within the Study Area to permit wider sidewalks, retail amenity space, sufficient space for outdoor seating, landscape improvements, or green space in front or between buildings.

Angular Planes and Transitions

This Study applies front and rear angular planes informed by the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Performance Standards but refined for the Study Area context. Angular planes are one of the tools to manage built form transition, as well as sunlight and shadow. In no instance within the Study Area are angular planes used to define the overall height of buildings. Instead they are used in conjunction with maximum permitted building heights.

Informed by the options developed and tested as part of this Study, each character area has a different front angular plane to define the placement and transition of upper floors above the stated streetwall maximum height. There are also several different rear transition conditions in the Study Area. All properties will require transitions to the public rights-of-way and adjacent uses such as Neighbourhoods, parks, transit stations and corridors, and parking lots.

Height

Height restrictions are informed by an understanding of existing and emerging context and policy direction for the Avenues. Midrise buildings in three of the four character areas are limited in height equivalent to the right-of-way onto which they front. In the Village Main Street character area, midrise buildings are limited to a maximum height of six storeys, or 75% of the right-of-way width. The maximum height for any part of the Study Area may be further limited by site conditions, such as lot dimensions or transition requirements.

Stepbacks

Stepbacks are required for all mid-rise buildings above 4 storeys in height. The stepbacks will enhance the pedestrian experience and allow for light penetration and sky view. Additional intermediate stepbacks are also possible to further articulate built form and respond to adjacent context including Heritage properties.

Building Design

Building design guidelines provide further direction for the expression and articulation of projects beyond the mass and bulk of a building. They inform how a building should contribute to the public realm, and provide sufficient design flexibility to allow a project to appropriately respond to its immediate context and the planning policy for the Study Area.

Future development should respect and fit within the prevailing fine grained main street nature of the Study Area. An appropriate fit is determined by

several key elements: the overall scale and design of the building, pedestrian experience at street level, frequency of entrances, transparency at street level and above, vertical rhythm of building elements, horizontal expression of floors and how they relate to adjacent properties, party wall conditions, and the scale of uses at grade.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

A detailed survey of City Divisions and community agencies was conducted with follow-up interviews as necessary. Questionnaires were designed to seek input on priorities for improving existing and future community services and facilities to serve the local area population.

The findings recommend a number of specific improvements to be implemented as development proceeds, including ensuring adequate Parks and Open Spaces, Community Recreation Centres, Libraries, Child Care, Schools, Human Services, and Community Agencies to serve the growing population. Ongoing monitoring of CS&F needs and priorities is also recommended.

STREET DESIGN AND TRANSPORTATION

This Avenue Study provides recommendations for how to transform Bloor Street West to a more complete street that supports the Village as a place. One purpose of the Study was to consider the impact of the preferred land use and built form alternative on the transportation system and to provide direction for initiatives related to balancing access for all modes of transportation. Another

purpose was to test the feasibility to introduce safe cycling infrastructure within the Bloor West Village Avenue Study Area.

The preferred option balances the available right-of-way width among the different users and uses and provide safe space of adequate capacity for each. The preferred option would also have the least adverse traffic and surface transit impacts to Bloor Street West, provide the greatest number of on-street parking spaces (available during off-peak periods only), and provide the safest environment for cyclists.

It is important to note that no change to Bloor Street West is anticipated in the near future (given recent major capital works in 2012), or will likely take place until reconstruction is required. However, the existing road network and transportation system can accommodate the potential intensification of the Study Area as defined in this Study without reconstruction.

We are in a dynamic time for transportation. The rise of autonomous vehicles, declining auto sales in Ontario, and rising proportions of trips made by walking, cycling and transit suggest that what works or doesn't work today will likely change in the coming decades. By the time the street is again reconstructed, transportation demands may be substantially different than at the time of this study. There are many uncertainties and other options could potentially work in the future.

A detailed transportation report is included as an appendix to this Avenue Study report.

SERVICING INFRASTRUCTURE

This Avenue Study includes a high-level hydraulic analysis of the local municipal servicing infrastructure, and characterizes the constraints and opportunities to improve servicing infrastructure through the application of development guidelines and best management practices.

In summary, the local municipal sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water supply systems do not require specific improvements to accommodate the anticipated future growth within the Study Area. The local storm sewer system is currently operating at capacity under the City's design storm event. However, performance is expected to improve over time with the continued adoption of the Mandatory Downspout Disconnection By-Law, further compliance with the Wet Weather Flow Management Guidelines, and the introduction of green infrastructure solutions defined within the Toronto Green Street Technical Guidelines.

No specific improvements are required for the local municipal combined sewer system to accommodate the anticipated growth. However, the City should construct a dedicated storm sewer system within Bloor Street West between Clendenan Avenue and Keele Street as a part of future corridor improvements for this segment. Further, the future reconstruction of the Bloor Street West corridor would benefit from an

informed assessment of deficiencies identified through the Basement Flooding Protection Plan Environmental Assessment processes.

Lastly, it is recommended that the corridor improvements for Bloor Street West within the Study Area are coordinated with the infrastructure improvements identified in these reports.

A detailed servicing infrastructure report is included as an appendix to this Avenue Study report.

NATURAL HERITAGE AND WATER

This Avenue Study provides recommendations for mitigating the potential impacts of development on natural heritage features and water, both above and below ground. The recommendations are informed by the Natural Heritage and Hydrogeology desktop supplemental studies, and a surface water review by Toronto Water staff. Overall, the impacts due to new development are limited and understood within the Study Area.

The potential Natural Heritage impacts depend on location and nature of development, and could include: tree canopy loss, slope impacts, increased hazard of buildings to migratory and breeding birds, removal of habitat for Species at Risk, construction impacts to wildlife (i.e. nest removal, mortality), changes in downstream water quality and quantity, light pollution and increased usage and potential impacts on High Park.

The potential groundwater and surface water impacts include: an increase in imperviousness that may inhibit groundwater recharge and/or

result in rapid and increased release of stormwater increasing the risk of water quality degradation and watercourse erosion, and raising urban flooding concerns; the possible extraction and discharge of groundwater to sewers as the result of sub-surface structures (e.g., parking garages); and the potential for deep sub-surface structures to impede groundwater flow.

This Avenue Study provides recommendations for enhancement and mitigation, identifies existing relevant policies and guidelines, and suggests several new policies and guidelines. Recommendations are also provided for mitigation and enhancement outside of the Study Area. Further recommendations provide direction for potential further study following the conclusion of the Avenue Study.

IMPLEMENTATION

The City should undertake the following actions to implement the Avenue Study recommendations:

- Update Official Plan Map 2 Urban Structure to remove the Avenues overlay from the Humber Gateway character area and the southside of Bloor Street West along High Park.
- Amend the Official Plan to implement land use policies resulting from the Avenue Study.
- Amend the Official Plan to include set maximum heights, expressed in number of storeys, for each character area based on recommendations of this Study.

- Update the zoning bylaw to allow for as-of-right permissions compatible with the built form recommendations. This allows desired development to proceed as-of-right, moving forward the development approvals process.
- Remove density numbers from the zoning for all properties within the Study Area as building envelopes will be controlled by height, setback and angular plane regulations.
- Update the zoning bylaw to include set maximum heights, expressed in metres and number of storeys, for each character area based on recommendations of this Study.
- Update the zoning bylaw to include angular planes specific to the north and south sides of the Study Area for each character area to address appropriate transitions.
- Establish maximum retail sizes for each individual overall unit and unit at grade.
- Update zoning boundaries to resolve zoning inconsistencies for a number of properties that are currently subject to two or more different zones, and to add to Mixed Use Areas two Neighbourhoods properties due to their anomalous built form relationships, current use and context within the Village Main Street character area.

- Update and replace applicable sections of the 2010 Mid-Rise Performance Standards and 2016 Addendum to the Mid-rise Performance Standards with Area-Specific Design Guidelines for the Study Area to reflect the recommendations from this Study.
- Continue on-going monitoring of community services and facilities needs as development proceeds within the Study Area.
- City should construct a dedicated storm sewer system within Bloor Street West between Clendenan Avenue and Keele Street as part of future corridor improvements for this segment.
- Incorporate the recommendations from the Main Street Retail Study commenced in November 2017 to support small independent businesses.
- Continue to work with the community to address concerns raised throughout this Avenue Study process regarding High Park's natural heritage and water resources.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

This report loosely follows the chronological format that the Study itself took, and should be read in order. It begins with an outline of the Process, including the key messages received from public consultation. The analysis of Policy Context and Existing Conditions follow. The Guiding Principles broadly describe the Study Team's vision for Bloor West Village, while Option Development and Evaluation explains how a preferred design concept was reached.

The key design recommendations are described in Recommended Guidelines and Standards. Each individual recommendation is itemized and numbered for reference. Where necessary to explain and communicate the recommendations, diagrams, photographs, and views of the Demonstration Model are included. The Demonstration Model presents an illustration of built form within Bloor West Village, showing one possible outcome of the recommendations. The Guidelines and Standards allow for creative exploration and expression without being too prescriptive. The eventual results may differ yet still follow the intent of the recommendations.

Summaries of the Transportation Report, Servicing Infrastructure Report, Water and Natural Heritage Reports are included for the convenience of readers.

To implement the recommendations, the Study Team has also suggested a series of approaches that are outlined in Implementation, alongside a list of items for future study.

The Appendices of this report include the full Transportation Report, Servicing Infrastructure Report, supplemental studies for Hydrogeology and Natural Heritage, a Toronto Water Staff Technical Memo, and detailed reports on the public consultation events.