

### **Parkdale Hub Project - Feasibility Study**

**Date:** December 5, 2019

**To:** Executive Committee

**From:** Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and Deputy City Manager,  
Community & Social Services

**Wards:** Ward 4 - Parkdale-High Park

#### **REASON FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

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This report deals with a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the City of Toronto.

#### **SUMMARY**

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This report responds to City Council's request in 2017 for the three Deputy City Managers to convene an interdivisional agency table to determine the feasibility of a coordinated plan for City-owned properties located at 1313, 1303 Queen Street West and 220 Cowan Avenue. An interdivisional team of staff coordinated through the City-wide Real Estate Model has now completed the first phase of a feasibility study, which included due diligence investigations, vision development with stakeholder groups, community engagement and a high-level design study to identify possible approaches to redeveloping these properties, together with the Toronto Parking Authority surface parking lot at 1325 Queen Street West (collectively, the "Parkdale Hub site"), in a coordinated manner. This report provides an overview of the preliminary findings of the feasibility study and makes recommendations for next steps in advancing the Parkdale Hub project as a transformational City-building opportunity that maximizes social benefit and affordable housing.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and Deputy City Manager, Community & Social Services recommend that:

1. City Council direct CreateTO to lead and collaborate with City Real Estate Management, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Toronto Public Library, Housing

Secretariat, and Toronto Parking Authority in Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, which will include the development of the following:

- Schematic design,
- Heritage impact assessment,
- Construction phasing study,
- Operations and collaboration framework,
- Community engagement strategy,
- Programming model,
- Affordable housing model,
- Environmental studies, and
- Capital budget and financing model.

2. City Council direct CreateTO to work with an architectural team to advance the schematic design for the Parkdale Hub site, with consideration to be given to the Conceptual Design and Massing Study shown in Attachment 4 to this report, with a view to initiating a rezoning process for the site.

3. City Council direct CreateTO, to consult with community stakeholders, including Toronto Artscape Inc., in the development of Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study.

4. City Council authorize the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services to proceed with Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, within the overall budget of \$0.461 million, from the following sources:

- a. \$0.144 million from the Development Charges Reserve Fund for Subsidized Housing (XR2116), with a related increase to the 2020 Staff Recommended Operating Budget for Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, cost centre FH5417 in coordination with the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat for Council consideration through the 2020 Budget process; and
- b. \$0.318 million from the 2019-2028 Council Approved Capital Budget and Plan for Facilities, Real Estate, Environment & Energy (FREEE) under the Strategic Projects – Feasibility capital project account (CCA266-01).

5. City Council, subject to the adoption of Recommendation 6, authorize the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services, as part of the 2020 Budget process, to provide additional funding for Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, within an overall additional budget of \$0.247 million, from the following sources:

- a. up to \$0.162 million from the Development Charges Reserve Fund for Subsidized Housing (XR2116), with a related increase to the 2020 Staff Recommended Operating Budget for Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, cost centre FH5417 in coordination with the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat for Council consideration through the 2020 Budget process;
- b. up to \$0.085 million from the 2019-2028 Council Approved Capital Budget and Plan for Facilities, Real Estate, Environment & Energy (FREEE) under the Strategic Projects – Feasibility capital project account (CCA266-01).

6. City Council authorize the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management and CreateTO to initiate negotiations to acquire the property specified in Confidential Attachment 1 (the "Additional Property") for affordable housing purposes as part of the Parkdale Hub project, on the basis that any resulting transaction will be subject to approval by Council with a report that identifies budgeted funds being available for such purposes.

7. City Council direct CreateTO to examine opportunities to fund the acquisition of the Additional Property and to report back through the CreateTO Board on the feasibility of a strategic acquisition for the Parkdale Hub project no later than the second quarter of 2020, on the basis that any resulting transaction will be subject to approval by Council with a report that identifies budgeted funds being available for such purposes.

8. City Council request CreateTO, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to explore opportunities for increasing the density of affordable housing on the City-owned lands that comprise the Parkdale Hub site as well as on the Additional Property.

9. City Council authorize the public release of Confidential Attachment 1 following the completion of CreateTO's analysis on the Additional Property and the closing of any associated transaction(s).

10. City Council request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, in consultation with CreateTO, and the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, to include 1303 Queen Street West in the next group of Housing Now properties to be considered by City Council in 2020.

11. City Council direct the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services and the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to follow the guiding principles of the Housing Now Initiative, adopted by City Council at its December 4, 5 and 13 meeting in consideration of CC1.3 "Housing Now", in the implementation of the Parkdale Hub project.

12. City Council request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to provide key planning principles and guidelines for the Parkdale Hub project in keeping with the objectives and guiding principles of the Housing Now Initiative.

13. City Council direct the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services to convene a working group to develop an Operations and Collaboration Framework as part of Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, to ensure the successful collocation of municipal and community programs with the Parkdale Hub site. This Working Group should be comprised of senior management from the following City divisions and agencies:

- Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Toronto Public Library
- Social Development, Finance & Administration
- Housing Secretariat
- Economic Development & Culture
- City Manager's Office

- Legal Services
- CreateTO
- Corporate Real Estate Management

14. City Council direct the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services and the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services, in consultation with CreateTO, to report back to Executive Committee in the fourth quarter of 2020 with an update on Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, including additional details on capital budget requirements and funding sources.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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This report recommends funding of \$0.461 million for Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study to further architectural work, planning analysis, environmental studies and community engagement to advance the Parkdale Hub project towards a rezoning process.

Funding of \$0.144 million is available in the Development Charges Reserve Fund for Subsidized Housing (XR2116) requiring a related increase to the 2020 Staff Recommended Operating Budget for Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA), cost centre FH5417 in coordination with the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat for Council consideration through the 2020 Budget process. The remaining \$0.318 million is available in the 2019-2028 Council Approved Capital Budget and Plan for Facilities, Real Estate, Environment & Energy (FREEE) under the Strategic Projects – Feasibility capital project account (CCA266-01).

Subject to the adoption of Recommendation 6, as outlined in Confidential Attachment 1, this report recommends additional funding of \$0.247 million for Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study. Additional funding of \$0.162 million is available in the Development Charges Reserve Fund for Subsidized Housing (XR2116) requiring a related increase to the 2020 Staff Recommended Operating Budget for SSHA, cost centre FH5417 in coordination with the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat for Council consideration through the 2020 Budget process. The remaining \$0.085 million is available in the 2019-2028 Council Approved Capital Budget and Plan for Facilities, Real Estate, Environment & Energy (FREEE) under the Strategic Projects – Feasibility capital project account (CCA266-01).

If approved by Council, the Parkdale Hub project will advance through the stage-gating process for Major Capital Projects, which recognizes the complexity of estimating the budget impacts of such projects over multiple years, and allows for Council approval of the project and the forecast budget at each phase of design. A preliminary costing analysis has estimated the overall cost of delivering this project, including the acquisition and development of the property identified in Confidential Attachment 1, to be between \$150.0 million and \$175.0 million. Further details regarding capital requirements and associated funding sources will be provided in a report back to Council in the fourth quarter of 2020.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has been provided the financial impacts associated with this report for review as part of the 2020 Budget process.

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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The Parkdale Hub feasibility study has continuously assessed the potential impacts of any proposed changes to this site on equity-seeking groups and vulnerable residents of Toronto. If approved, this project has the potential to create new safe, inclusive and accessible community spaces, where diverse residents can access City services and further develop a sense of community identity and belonging.

Access to safe, secure, affordable housing in all parts of Toronto is a fundamental goal of the City's Housing Opportunities Toronto Action Plan 2010-2020 and the Housing Stability Service Planning Framework. Providing new affordable housing is also a goal of the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Parkdale Hub project has the potential to provide much needed affordable housing for lower-income Toronto residents and contribute to meeting the City's housing targets.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of March 28 and 29, 2017, City Council adopted motion MM27.3 and requested the three Deputy City Managers to convene an interdivisional agency table, including: Parks Forestry and Recreation, the Toronto Public Library, Shelter Support and Housing Administration, City Planning, Economic Development and Culture, the Toronto Parking Authority, the Affordable Housing Office, Build Toronto, Toronto Public Health, Real Estate Services, and Social Development Finance and Administration to determine the feasibility of a coordinated City plan for City owned properties located at 1313, 1303 Queen Street West and 220 Cowan Avenue:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.MM27.3>

At its meeting of May 24, 25 and 26, 2017, City Council adopted a new municipal real estate service delivery model that centralizes all real estate activities City-wide, including all real estate strategy and portfolio planning, major building projects, developments, real estate transactions and facilities management.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX25.9>

At its meeting of November 7, 8 and 9, 2017, City Council adopted the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (2019 - 2038). This Plan identifies Masaryk-Cowan Community Recreation Centre for revitalization, and identifies colocation and space sharing with City services as a key priority.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX28.2>

At its meeting of January 21, 2019, the Toronto Public Library Board adopted the Toronto Public Library Facilities Master Plan. This Plan identifies the Parkdale Library for relocation / expansion within the medium-term.

<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2019/jan12/11-facilities-master-plan-combined.pdf>

At its meeting of October 22, 2019, the Toronto Public Library Board approved the revised 2020-2029 capital budget and plan for Toronto Public Library. This plan identifies the relocation / expansion of the Parkdale Library as a capital project within the capital of 'Capital Needs Constraints - Joint City Projects'.

<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2019/oct22/18-2020-2029.capital.budget.and.plan-revised-combined.pdf>

At its meeting of October 29 and 30, 2019, City Council adopted the Implementation Strategy for the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, which recommends the revitalization or replacement of Masaryk-Cowan CRC in the timeframe of 2024-2028.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EX9.5>

At its meeting of December 4, 5 and 13, 2018, City Council adopted CC1.3 *Housing Now* approving 11 sites for the development of affordable housing as part of creating mixed-income, mixed-use and transit oriented communities. City Council requested the City Manager to provide an action plan to roll-out the initiative and identify the resources required to expedite implementation in January 2019.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.CC1.3>

At its meeting of January 30 and 31, 2019, City Council adopted EX1.1 *Implementing the "Housing Now" Initiative* providing implementation details for the new initiative to develop affordable housing on City real estate.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EX1.1>

## COMMENTS

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### Background

#### The Opportunity

The intersection of Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue is home to an important cluster of City facilities and community services, including the Masaryk-Cowan Community Centre, Parkdale Library, Toronto Parking Authority lot and Parkdale Arts & Cultural Centre (operated by Toronto Artscape Inc.). There is demand for a range of enhanced programs and services in the Parkdale community, which is designated by City Council as a Neighbourhood Improvement Area.

Each of the City facilities located at Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue requires capital investment over the next ten years in order to maintain their state of good repair. This provides a unique opportunity to plan and build the City's assets in a coordinated manner, leveraging existing adjacencies to create spaces that more efficiently and effectively serve the Parkdale community.

#### Study Area

As directed by Council, the study area included the following City-owned properties, located the south side of the intersection of Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue:

- Parkdale Library (1303 Queen Street West)
- Parkdale Arts & Culture Centre (1313 Queen Street West)
- Masaryk-Cowan Community Recreation Centre (220 Cowan Avenue)

Given its adjacency to the three City properties identified above, and the mandate of the City-wide Real Estate Program to coordinate assets across divisions and agencies, the Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) surface parking lot located at 1325 Queen Street West (Municipal Carpark 158) was also included in the study area.

### **Adjacent City-owned Lands and Synergies**

The Toronto Community Housing Corporation's (TCHC) residential apartment building located at 245 Dunn Avenue is located within the same block as the above-listed sites. While this property is not being considered for redevelopment of as part of the Parkdale Hub project, City staff have been in conversation with TCHC throughout the Parkdale Hub feasibility study in order to identify preliminary opportunities and/or concerns. It is recommended that City staff continue to work with TCHC to consider future opportunities to better integrate the grounds and programming of the TCHC property with the other City lands in this block potentially through landscaping, mid-block pedestrian connections, and/or site access and parking synergies.

While Masaryk Park and Dunn Avenue Parkette are not being considered for redevelopment as part of the Parkdale Hub project, this project presents an opportunity to consider potential enhancements to these well-used public spaces in order to better serve the local community and to effectively integrate with the Parkdale Hub properties and the adjacent TCHC property.

The block on the south side of Queen Street West between Cowan Avenue and Dunn Avenue is completed by two privately-owned properties (1337 Queen Street West and 1347 Queen Street West), which were examined by the project team for potential synergies and impacts on the Parkdale Hub site.

An overview of the ownership, operational management and current use of each property within the Study Area can be found in Attachment 1.

## **Project Stakeholders**

### **City-wide Real Estate Model**

City Council's 2017 direction to staff acknowledged the excellent opportunity that the City-owned lands at Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue provide to more strategically plan for and use its real estate assets through the City-Wide Real Estate Model. Since 2017, the Real Estate Services division and CreateTO have been jointly coordinating the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, in close collaboration with stakeholder divisions, agencies and corporations.

## **Interdivisional Agency Table**

As directed by Council in 2017, an interdisciplinary group of staff representing a broad range of City divisions, agencies and corporations, in addition to Toronto Artscape Inc., was called together to advance this feasibility study. This group, known as the project's "Interdivisional Agency Table" first met in September of 2017 and has provided ongoing guidance to the project vision, providing feedback to the project team and identifying opportunities and considerations at key stages in the project.

These discussions included participation from the following groups:

- City Planning
- CreateTO
- Economic Development & Culture
- Employment & Social Services
- Housing Secretariat
- Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Real Estate Services
- Shelter, Support & Housing Administration
- Social Development, Finance & Administration
- Toronto Artscape Inc.
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Toronto Parking Authority
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Public Library

A summary of the input and feedback received from the Interdivisional Agency Table can be found on the project website (<https://parkdalehub.ca/>)

### **Community Engagement**

Engaging with Parkdale community members, stakeholders and local organizations has been fundamental to the development of a shared vision for this project. Staff procured the services of Argyle Communications (public engagement facilitators) to support this work.

Community engagement activities included the following:

- Meeting with Parkdale Arts & Culture Centre (Toronto Artscape Inc.) live-work tenants - April 12, 2018
- Meeting with community organizations currently operating in the Study Area - May 4, 2018
- Public survey & community organization surveys - May and June 2018
- Public town hall meetings - May 16, 2018 and June 10, 2019

A project website (<https://parkdalehub.ca/>) was created to share information with the public on an ongoing basis. Complete summaries of the engagement activities and the input shared by stakeholders and community members can also be found on the project website.

In addition to the City-run events, community-based organizations including the Parkdale Residents Association, Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust and Parkdale People's Economy have been engaging Parkdale residents in learning events, facility



tours, and panel discussions around 'community hubs'. The purpose of these events has been to learn from existing community hub projects in Toronto and consider possibilities for the design and programming objectives of a potential Parkdale Hub project.

## **Feasibility Study Process and Findings**

The work completed to date has focused on examining the feasibility of enhancing spaces for programming and service delivery for the Parkdale community. This work has included the following elements.

### **Due Diligence**

In 2017 staff undertook a due diligence assessment to better understand the history and physical condition of the City-owned properties within the Study Area. This work included site visits and a review of land surveys, building condition assessments, heritage designations, and a preliminary environmental review. The findings of the due diligence assessment were used to inform the conceptual design development and preliminary capital costing analysis, and will be resources for future stages of the Parkdale Hub project, if approved.

### **Guiding Principles**

In 2018, the project team worked with the Interdivisional Agency Table to develop a set of high-level Guiding Principles for the Parkdale Hub project. These draft Principles were then revised and validated through a series of discussions with Parkdale community members culminating in a community meeting in June 2019, where the Guiding Principles were adopted - the Guiding Principles can be found in Attachment 2. These Principles will serve as continuous touchstones for the Parkdale Hub project as it moves forward, keeping the project grounded to a shared vision.

### **Programming Needs**

At the outset of this study, discussions with the Interdivisional Agency Table confirmed that any future redevelopment of this site should have a mandate to provide equal or greater amounts of space to the programs that currently operate within the City-owned properties.

Masaryk-Cowan CRC is identified for revitalization or replacement as part of the Community Recreation Centre Provision Strategy within the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019 - 2038. The current Masaryk-Cowan CRC facility is heavily used; there is high demand for space and programming but the facility is limited in its ability to meet growing community needs due to space limitations and accessibility challenges. Through the process of developing the Facilities Master Plan, it was identified that mid-size and large-size multi-component centres ranging from 45,000-65,000 square feet will be the primary models for new and replacement CRCs. Residents are seeking multi-use, inclusive and inter-generational spaces that provide a wide variety of programs and services. All new and replacement CRCs must include high quality public spaces that respond to a wide range of needs including larger lobbies, flexible space, natural light and barrier free spaces.

PFR's Facilities Master Plan also prioritizes co-location and shared space with other City services and partners. The revitalization and expansion of recreation and community spaces at Masaryk-Cowan CRC, within the context of the Parkdale Hub project, will help to achieve the goals of the Facilities Master Plan.

The Toronto Public Library (TPL) Facilities Master Plan, approved by the TPL Board in January 2019, identifies and prioritizes investments in Library facilities over the short, medium and long-term, providing the organization with a planning framework that may be employed on an ongoing basis to determine investment priorities over time. The TPL's Facilities Master Plan identified the Parkdale Library branch as a facility recommended for relocation / reconstruction within the Horizon B (medium) time frame for major capital renovation. Timing priorities included in TPL's Facilities Master Plan were indications of relative priority based on current levels of funding and financial capacity as well as equitable City-wide distribution of capital investments projects. Built in 1964, the Parkdale Library is currently the third busiest library in Toronto, based on number of annual visits.

Similar to PFR's Facilities Master Plan, the TPL Facilities Master Plan identifies the strong opportunity for libraries to co-locate with other City services, as libraries have been proven to serve as stable tenants that attract foot traffic and enhance quality of life in neighbourhoods.

The Parkdale Arts and Cultural Centre (PACC) is a unique adaptive reuse of a former police station into a mixed-use community cultural hub. Operated by Toronto Artscape Inc. under a below-market rent lease agreement with the City, it brings together economic development, community development and arts and culture under one roof, in order to improve life and create opportunities for Parkdale residents. Throughout the feasibility study, the project team has heard from stakeholders, including Toronto Artscape Inc., their current sub-tenants, and the local community, that there is a strong desire to for the Parkdale Hub site to continue to provide a mixed-use community and cultural hub space and to provide continuity for the residents and community organizations currently located within PACC.

The Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) is a key stakeholder in the Parkdale Hub project, as they currently operate a 32-space surface parking lot on 1325 Queen Street West. TPA has indicated that they will be looking to secure an equal number of replacement parking spaces if 1325 Queen Street West is redeveloped as part of the Parkdale Hub project.

A preliminary programming overview, which identifies the minimum space requirements of each of the existing programs in the context of a future redevelopment, can be found in Attachment 3.

Redevelopment of this site also has the potential to create opportunities for the introduction of new community and municipal programs at Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue. An important aspect of creating a shared vision for this project involves identifying community needs and considering how new spaces might work together to help to meet these needs. Some of the programming desires identified so far by the Interdivisional Agency Table, local community organizations, and Parkdale residents

include business and arts incubator space, shelter services, public health outreach, employment and social services, child care, youth programs, financial and legal support services, local retail businesses and food security programs. These opportunities will be explored further in Phase 2 of the feasibility study, in consultation with the local community.

One of the most consistent messages received from both the Interdivisional Agency Table and the local community throughout this study was to find opportunities to integrate new affordable housing with the civic and community uses on this site. This aligns with current City priorities for the development of more affordable housing, particularly on City-owned lands through the Housing Now Initiative.

The Parkdale Hub project provides an excellent opportunity to deliver much-needed new affordable and rental housing in the central city. City Council has prioritized affordable and rental housing development on City-owned land under the Housing Now Initiative. Launched in 2018, Housing Now has dedicated 11 sites for affordable housing development to date as part of new mixed-income, mixed-use and transit oriented communities. This report recommends that the Parkdale Hub project proceed following the guiding principles and objectives of the Housing Now Initiative as adopted by City Council in 2018.

The Parkdale Hub project, and the City site at 1303 Queen Street West in particular, are recommended to be included in the next grouping of City properties to be put forward for Council approval under the Housing Now Initiative. The City's Housing Secretariat, in consultation with CreateTO, Corporate Real Estate Management, City Planning and Corporate Finance will bring forward this new series of Housing Now sites, including the Parkdale Hub, in 2020. This future report will provide further details on the approach to affordable housing delivery at the Parkdale Hub.

The nine existing affordable live-work rental units managed by Toronto Artscape Inc. will be maintained or replaced within the Parkdale Hub site. Preservation of the City's rental housing stock is a high priority, and many of the tenants of these existing affordable rental units have called 1313 Queen St West home for over 15 years. Any future work on this site will ensure that these homes continue to be provided at affordable rates. Any future activities that could impact the current residential tenants of 1313 Queen Street West will be undertaken in accordance with the Rental Housing Demolition and Conversion By-law (Municipal Code Chapter 667) and the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006*.

A comprehensive programming model for this site, including a model for future affordable housing development, will be developed in Phase 2.

### **West Queen West Planning Study**

In November 2013, City Council directed the City Planning Division to undertake a study of Queen Street West between Bathurst Avenue and Roncesvalles Avenue. Recognizing its size and the distinct communities within it, the Planning Study area has been further segmented for purposes of the study with the portion from Bathurst Street to Dufferin Street identified as West Queen West and the portion from Dufferin Street to Roncesvalles Avenue as Parkdale Main Street. The Planning Study is a multi-

disciplinary review focussed on the historic character and role of Queen Street West, how to plan for new development that complements its built form and heritage attributes, opportunities to improve public space, and options to address transit, pedestrian and parking needs.

Planning staff continue to consult with local communities, and anticipate the Planning Study will be completed in Winter 2020, with reports to Toronto and East York Community Council and City Council detailing a recommended Official Plan Amendment to create a Site and Area Specific Policy (“SASP”) for the planning study area, as well as direction to undertake further work related to transportation, public space and the preparation of a Zoning By-law Amendment.

The City Planning division has identified the Parkdale Hub site at Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue as a "Focus Area" within the Planning Study Area, representing a unique opportunity for public investment and the establishment of a community and cultural centre comprising several uses and existing and new buildings.

### **Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan**

In March 2015, City Council identified Queen Street West between Bathurst Avenue and Roncesvalles Avenue as a priority for study as a potential Heritage Conservation District (“HCD”). In June 2017, the Toronto Preservation Board (TPB) endorsed the recommendations of the HCD Study, and approved proceeding with the development of plans for two Districts within the study area boundary, for the proposed West Queen West HCD and Parkdale Main Street HCD.

The HCD Plans are currently under development and will be presented to the Toronto Preservation Board (TPB), Toronto and East York Community Council, and City Council to consider the designation of the two HCDs under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, concurrently with the Planning Study Official Plan Amendment.

The Parkdale Hub study area is located within the pending Parkdale Main Street HCD. The properties at 220 Cowan Avenue and 1313 Queen Street West contain heritage value and are on the City’s Heritage Register, and have additionally been identified as Potentially Contributing Properties in the HCD Study. The Parkdale Main Street HCD Plan will propose policies and guidelines for both Contributing Properties, and the proposed development will be expected to comply with the City’s Official Plan Heritage Policies in conjunction with the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

### **Conceptual Design and Massing Study**

The intention of the Conceptual Design and Massing Study was to understand what scale of development is feasible on the site, and to begin to develop a high-level architectural vision. This work involved the procurement of an architectural team, led by DTAH Architects, to develop a series of built form massing options for the study area. DTAH was supported by ERA Architects, who provided direction with regard to the listed and designated heritage resources on site. The architectural team’s scope of work included:

- Develop massing diagrams that illustrate different options for redevelopment;

- Identify the amount of programming space that can be accommodated within each option;
- Develop an approach to the adaptive re-use of City-owned heritage assets;
- Establish a high level public realm strategy;
- Ensure seamless integration with the surrounding community;
- Conform to the planning and heritage frameworks that are being introduced for Parkdale Main Street; and
- Ensure that designs are grounded in and reflected the Guiding Principles established by project stakeholders.

A team of representatives from the current programming divisions on the site, as well as Toronto Artscape Inc. and City Planning, provided support for the conceptual design work. This "Technical Working Group" included representatives of the following groups:

- Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Toronto Public Library
- Toronto Artscape Inc.
- City Planning (Community Planning, SIPA, Urban Design, Heritage Preservation Services)
- Real Estate Services
- CreateTO

Through analysis of the site's current conditions, its historic evolution, and preliminary stakeholder input, the architectural team established a set of Design Principles as well as Heritage Parameters. Together, these findings identify how existing buildings and new additions can continue to support and enrich community life at this intersection, while respecting and enhancing the heritage value of the historic buildings and adhering to the emerging planning framework for the area. The Conceptual Design and Massing Study also highlights potential opportunities for enhancements to the public realm - including existing parks and parkettes, streetscapes, and pedestrian routes - which can be explored in collaboration with Transportation Services and Parks, Forestry & Recreation as the project advances.

The final results of the Conceptual Design and Massing Study were a set of conceptual massing options for the site, which are informed by the Design Principles and Heritage Parameters. Each option explored a different scale and approach to development to meet the municipal programming needs for the site within the parameters of the local planning framework. The findings of the Conceptual Design and Massing Study, including the four conceptual massing options that were explored, can be found in Attachment 4.

### **Proposed Massing**

The four conceptual massing options were refined and critically evaluated by City staff using the following criteria:

- Planning policy context;
- Site conditions and constraints;
- Heritage considerations;
- Design principles;
- Programming requirements;

- Project vision statement and guiding principles;
- Costing analysis; and
- Community and stakeholder feedback.

Through this evaluation, a proposed massing concept ultimately emerged.

**Figure 1: Proposed Massing Concept, Aerial View - Parkdale Hub**



**Legend**

Parkdale Library	Affordable Housing	Masaryk-Cowan CRC	Community Space (including Parkdale Arts & Culture Centre)
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The proposed massing concept (*figure 1*) would introduce a new mid-rise (6 storey) mixed-use building on the City-owned property to the east of Cowan Avenue (1303 Queen Street West). It envisions a 2 - 3 storey community hub on the City-owned properties to the west of Cowan Avenue (220 Cowan Avenue, 1313 Queen Street West and 1325 Queen Street West). This structure would be centered around a new public courtyard. The two sites would be anchored and connected by a revitalized streetscape on Cowan Avenue.

The proposed massing concept includes potential program locations based on the future requirements identified by existing programs operating on these sites (see Attachment 3). The proposed massing for the site to the east of Cowan Avenue could also accommodate a new affordable rental housing program (approximately 57 units) in addition to the relocated nine live-work units from 1313 Queen Street West. The proposed massing for the site to the west of Cowan Avenue could accommodate an expanded Masaryk-Cowan CRC program co-located with the Parkdale Library program. The relocation of the 32 parking spaces currently provided by Toronto Parking Authority

at 1325 Queen Street West will be further explored in Phase 2, and may include introducing below-grade parking or identifying space on a nearby property.

The proposed massing concept meets the objectives of the Parkdale Hub project in the following ways:

- Creates opportunity for new programming synergies between the Masaryk-Cowan CRC and the Parkdale Library;
- Creates a new all-season community courtyard;
- Introduces approximately 57 units of new affordable and rental housing to the Parkdale neighbourhood;
- Creates purpose-built live-work units for artists and their families, replacing units that otherwise require re-investment;
- Provides opportunity to enhance the historic buildings at 1313 Queen Street West and 220 Cowan Avenue through adaptive re-use as a community hub, enabling greater public access and interest in these historic properties;
- Activates Queen Street West through the removal of surface parking and the expansion of activated, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes; and
- Conforms to the emerging Planning and Heritage Conservation frameworks for Parkdale Main Street.

On June 10, 2019 the project team and project architects presented the four conceptual design options to the local community at a well-attended public meeting. A summary of the presentation material and the feedback received through the June 10, 2019 public meeting can be found on the project website (<https://parkdalehub.ca/>). Participants provided feedback on the advantages and disadvantages of each design option, in addition to suggesting new ideas and commenting on the overall project and process. The design option that is identified in this report as the preferred massing concept received strong positive feedback from participants at the public meeting. Elements that participants responded favourably to include the colocation of the library and community recreation centre, which would allow for a complete revitalization of the library and an overall expansion of both programs in an "all-in-one" civic building. Participants also liked the courtyard feature that connects 220 Cowan Avenue with 1313 Queen Street West in the proposed massing concept, as well as the balanced approach to introducing new housing and density to the site.

### **Costing Analysis**

A detailed costing analysis and funding model based on the proposed massing concept will be completed in Phase 2 of the feasibility study. The findings of this analysis will be included in the report back to Council in the fourth quarter of 2020.

### **A Phased Approach**

Participants in the public meetings in both 2018 and 2019 expressed concerns around any potential closure of the library or community recreation centre, and the effect this could have on the local community. Current residents of 1313 Queen Street West were also concerned about potential disruptions (including construction noise and dust) to their live-work spaces and around the need for temporary relocation during construction. Similarly, some community members raised concerns about the operations and viability of Gallery 1313 through the construction period. A construction phasing strategy will form a key element of Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub feasibility study, and will be

developed through ongoing discussions with the local community and current tenants and programs operating out of the site. This construction phasing strategy will aim to minimize impacts on current tenants and programs, while ensuring that new and expanded uses on the site are activated in a timely and cost effective manner.

## **Conclusions and Next Steps**

As directed by City Council, staff have completed a study to assess the feasibility of a coordinated plan for the City-owned lands at the intersection of Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue. This study has determined that there is a strong opportunity to enhance the buildings and programs at this site in order to better serve the Parkdale community, and that there is support for improving this site from both the local community and an interdivisional working group within the City. The proposed built form for a future redevelopment project on this site is illustrated, at a very high-level, through the proposed massing concept.

By adopting the recommendations contained within this report, City Council will be endorsing the collective vision for the future of these properties, and providing authority to undertake the necessary next steps to advance the redevelopment of this site. The recommended next steps include:

- *Architectural design, based on the proposed massing concept*  
Schematic design, to be undertaken by an architectural team. This team will be required to have expertise in heritage architecture in order to appropriately design the adaptive re-use of the heritage buildings at 220 Cowan Avenue and 1313 Queen Street West, and to protect and maintain the heritage values of Parkdale Main Street as a whole. The architects will consult with the current residential tenants of 1313 Queen Street West on the design of replacement live-work units that meet the unique needs of artists who work out of their homes.
- *Construction phasing strategy*  
Recommending an approach for phasing the development of the overall Parkdale Hub site in a way that minimizes disruption to existing programs and residents, mitigates potential negative impacts of construction on the neighbourhood, and facilitates project financing.
- *Programming model*  
Refining the requirements of existing programs and tenants on the site, and working with community stakeholders and City agencies and divisions to develop a programming model for any new community space that is created through site redevelopment.
- *Operations and collaboration framework*  
Working with identified programming divisions, agencies and community partners to establish the core principles that will govern program colocation at the Hub.
- *Community engagement*  
Developing and implementing an inclusive community engagement strategy for Phase 2 of the feasibility study that will advance the public conversation in a meaningful way. This could include establishing working groups to focus on specific issues, such as housing or sustainability. Efforts must be made to ensure that information about the project and



opportunities for input are made available to the many diverse communities within Parkdale.

- *Affordable housing model*  
Creating a financing and development plan for the affordable and rental housing component of the Parkdale Hub project through the Housing Now Initiative. The Housing Secretariat, in consultation with CreateTO, Corporate Real Estate Management, City Planning and Corporate Finance will bring forward this new series of Housing Now sites, including the Parkdale Hub site, in 2020. This future report will provide further details on the approach to affordable housing delivery at the Parkdale Hub.
- *Initiate environmental studies*  
This will include a topography survey, Phase 1 and 2 Environmental Site Assessments, Hydrogeological and Geotechnical report, and an updated Designated Substance Survey.
- *Identify overall capital budget and funding model*  
Once the estimated capital budget for the project has been identified, staff will report to Council with further information and a strategy to fund the project through the budget process, as per the Council-approved stage-gating process for major capital projects.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Confidential Attachment 1

Attachment 1 - Study Area Overview

Attachment 2 - Guiding Principles

Attachment 3 - Preliminary Program Needs

Attachment 4 - Conceptual Design & Massing Study