

## **City-initiated Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework – Final Report**

Date: December 19, 2019

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

Ward: 12 - Toronto-St. Paul's

**Planning File Number:** 18 122399 SPS 00 OZ

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council endorse a Planning Framework for the area surrounding the Yonge-St. Clair intersection to be used to evaluate current and future development applications. The Planning Framework includes a vision of a distinct and complete community, a co-ordinated plan for new and enhanced parks, open spaces and connections, and guidance on urban structure and built form.

The Planning Framework complements the existing Official Plan policies and, as the area continues to grow and intensify, the Framework is intended to provide clarity as to where tall buildings could go and the open space, public realm and built form improvements that are required to achieve those tall buildings.

The Framework study benefitted from a thorough public consultation process, input and feedback from the local community, the concurrent review of major development applications and the input of staff from various City Divisions. The Framework encourages a sense of place and guides development with a vision of an expanded and improved public realm consisting of new and expanded open spaces, pedestrian connections, widened sidewalks, intersection improvements, and appropriately scaled built form.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council endorse the Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework attached as Attachment No. 4 to the report (December 19, 2019) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, and direct City staff to review all current and future development applications against the Planning Framework.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

## DECISION HISTORY

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At its meeting on July 4, 5 and 6, 2017, City Council directed the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to review the built form policies within Mixed Use Areas A and B of the Yonge St. Clair Secondary Plan Area, to include the Yonge St. Clair Secondary Plan Review as a new study for consideration in the Division's Study Work Program, and to direct Planning staff to advise planning applicants that City Council will not adopt zoning by-law amendments in the Yonge St. Clair Secondary Plan Area that permit development at a scale, intensity or character that necessitates reconsideration of the Secondary Plan policies prior to adoption of the City-initiated Secondary Plan amendments.

In response to Council's direction, City Planning reported to Toronto and East York Community Council at its meeting on July 4, 2018, recommending that staff report back to Toronto and East York Community Council with a Planning Framework for the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan focused study area. Toronto and East York Community Council adopted this recommendation.

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

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### Study Purpose

The purpose of the study is to clarify and strengthen the existing land use planning framework in the Yonge-St. Clair area to assist in guiding future growth and development.

The resulting Planning Framework builds upon current policies of the Official Plan, including the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan, as well as design guidelines and other relevant policy documents, and responds to the unique character and physical attributes of the area. This will guide the form and scale of new development, improvements and expansions to parks and open spaces.

### Study Area

The Yonge-St. Clair area is situated at an intersection of two *Avenues*, at the intersection the Yonge-University-Spadina subway line and the dedicated St. Clair Avenue streetcar right-of-way, and is the link between two Growth Centres (the *Downtown* and the Yonge-Eglinton *Centre*).

The Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan, which regulates development within the Yonge-St. Clair area, outlines an existing urban structure consisting of:

- a node of mixed use development at a higher density and scale located at the intersection of Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue, shown as Mixed Use Area 'A' on Map 6-3 of the Plan;

- *Apartment Neighbourhoods* and *Mixed Use Areas* at a medium density and scale extending from the node west and east along St. Clair Avenue West and East; and
- lower density and scale development to the north and south of the node along Yonge Street.

Mixed Use Area 'B' extends from the node westward along St. Clair Avenue West, northward along Yonge Street to Heath Street, and southward along Yonge Street to Balmoral Avenue and Rosehill Avenue. Map 6-3 of Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan can be found in Attachment No. 2. The Secondary Plan states that development and civic improvements will be responsive to the urban structure described above.

Recent applications have proposed tall buildings within both Mixed Use Areas 'A' and 'B' along Yonge Street extending north and south from the node. The Framework area includes properties within Mixed Use Area 'A', portions of Mixed Use Area 'B' and other areas within close proximity to the Yonge-St. Clair intersection as shown in Attachment No. 1.

### **Development Activity**

A key goal of the Framework is to allow for growth around transit infrastructure while integrating with the existing and planned context, implementing a vibrant public realm, and contributing to a distinct and complete community. With much of the study area under application for development, the development of the Framework and the review of the major applications were undertaken concurrently in an informed and iterative process to ensure that the appropriate city building outcomes could be secured through the decision making process. The following list provides an overview of applications that have been approved and not built, and those still under review.

#### **Approved Applications:**

##### **30 Alvin Avenue (File No. 06 199698 STE 22 OZ)**

A development was approved in 2008, but has not yet been constructed, to permit the following: a terraced 16-storey (53.5-metre) residential building fronting onto Heath Street; a 37-storey (129-metre) residential building central to the block; a 15-storey (53.5-metre) mixed-use building fronting onto Yonge Street; two groups of townhouses fronting onto Alvin Avenue; and a mid-block linear park and open space linking Yonge Street to Alvin Avenue.

##### **1417-1431 Yonge Street (File No. 14 268423 STE 22 OZ)**

A development was approved in principle by the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT), but has not yet been constructed, to permit a 34-storey building (128-metre) consisting of a two-storey retail podium, 220 residential units, and a parking garage accessed via the rear public lane.

#### **Current Applications:**

##### **Southeast Corner of Yonge and St. Clair - Official Plan Amendment (File No. 17 133659 STE 22 OZ)**

This application proposes to amend the Official Plan for the block bound by Yonge Street, St. Clair Avenue East, Pleasant Boulevard and Tamblyn Lane (properties include 1 St. Clair Avenue East and 1407-1431 Yonge Street). The OPA proposes to establish tall building separation standards for any future development at 1 St. Clair Avenue East.

**1365-1375 Yonge Street (File No. 18 151554 STE 22 OZ)**

This application proposes to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit a 17-storey (69-metre) mixed-use building consisting of 621.2 square metres of at-grade retail space, a 310-unit retirement home (21,321.5 square metres residential gross floor area), and 93 parking spaces within a 2-level underground garage.

**1-11 Delisle Avenue and 1496-1510 Yonge Street (File No. 18 189938 STE 22 OZ)**

This application proposes to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit a 44-storey (150-metre) mixed-use building with 293 dwelling units and retail uses at grade. Overall, a total of 34,032 square metres of residential floor space would be provided, as well as 614 square metres of retail. The facade of the existing building at 1496-1500 Yonge Street would be incorporated into the podium of the new building and Delisle Parkette would be expanded to the west and redesigned.

**1485-1525 Yonge Street, 1-31 Heath Street East, and 30-36 Alvin Avenue (File Nos. 19 134851 STE 12 OZ)**

This application proposes to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit a new mixed-use development consisting of three residential towers, with heights of 59, 39 and 34 storeys, and with base building heights ranging from 4 to 9 storeys. A courtyard Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space (POPS), approximately 1,450 square metres in size is proposed in the centre of the site, with walkways from Yonge Street, Heath Street East, and Alvin Avenue. A 446 square metre park is proposed along the Heath Street East frontage. A total of 1,357 residential units, 27,712 square metres of non-residential space, and 677 vehicle parking spaces (462 resident spaces, and 213 commercial parking spaces) are proposed.

## **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

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The province and the City have a number of existing planning policies and design guidelines that guide new development in the Planning Framework area which are detailed below.

### **Planning Act**

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* sets out matters of provincial interest which City Council shall have regard to in carrying out its responsibilities, including: the orderly development of safe and healthy communities; the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing; the appropriate location of growth and development; the supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water; the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems; and the promotion of a built form that is well designed, encourages a sense of place, and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.

## **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 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 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 Council shall also be consistent with the PPS.

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."

### **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019)**

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (the "Growth Plan (2019)") came into effect on May 16, 2019. This new plan replaces the previous Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017. The Growth Plan (2019) continues to provide a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which the City forms an integral

part. The Growth Plan, 2019 establishes policies that require implementation through a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), which is a requirement pursuant to Section 26 of the *Planning Act* that comprehensively applies the policies and schedules of the Growth Plan (2019), including the establishment of minimum density targets for and the delineation of strategic growth areas, the conversion of provincially significant employment zones, and others.

Policies not expressly linked to a MCR can be applied as part of the review process for development applications, in advance of the next MCR. These policies include:

- Directing municipalities to make more efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure to reduce sprawl, contribute to environmental sustainability and provide for a more compact built form and a vibrant public realm;
- Directing municipalities to engage in an integrated approach to infrastructure planning and investment optimization as part of the land use planning process;
- Achieving complete communities with access to a diverse range of housing options, protected employment zones, public service facilities, recreation and green space that better connect transit to where people live and work;
- Retaining viable lands designated as employment areas and ensuring redevelopment of lands outside of employment areas retain space for jobs to be accommodated on site;
- 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 (2019) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2019) 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 Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform with the Growth Plan (2019). Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform with the Growth Plan.

The Growth Plan (2019) contains policies pertaining to population and employment densities that should be planned for in major transit station areas (MTSAs) along priority transit corridors or subway lines. MTSAs are generally defined as the area within an approximately 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk. The Growth Plan requires that, at the time of the next municipal comprehensive review (MCR), the City update its Official Plan to delineate MTSA boundaries and demonstrate how the MTSAs achieve appropriate densities.

## **Toronto Official Plan**

The Official Plan is a long-term vision for how the city should grow and provides insight into long-term city building objectives. Four land use designations shown on the Plan's land use maps, *Neighbourhoods*, *Apartment Neighbourhoods*, *Parks and Open Space Areas*, and *Utility Corridors*, will help to protect and reinforce the existing physical character of these areas. The additional four land use designations distribute most of the increased jobs and population anticipated by the Plan's growth strategy within *Mixed Use Areas*, *Employment Areas*, *Regeneration Areas* and *Institutional Areas*. The Official Plan and Growth Plan direct growth to compact, transit-oriented, mixed-use communities that can make effective use of existing infrastructure assets.

Most of the Planning Framework Area is designated *Mixed Use Areas* on Map 17- Land Use Plan of the Official Plan. The *Mixed Use Areas* designation in the Official Plan provides for a broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses, in single-use or mixed-use buildings, as well as parks and open spaces and utilities.

Development in *Mixed Use Areas* is subject to a number of development criteria in Policy 4.5.2. 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 so as 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, among other requirements.

The portion of the Planning Framework area along Alvin Avenue is designated *Apartment Neighbourhoods* on Map 17- Land Use of the Official Plan. *Apartment Neighbourhoods* are made up 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.

The Official Plan distinguishes *Apartment Neighbourhoods* from low-rise *Neighbourhoods* because a greater scale of buildings is permitted and different scale-related criteria are needed to guide development. Policy 4.2.2 provides development criteria for new development in *Apartment Neighbourhoods* respecting: location; massing; transition; streetscapes; and shadow impacts, among others. New buildings

are required to be located and massed to provide: transition between areas of different development intensity and scale; to limit shadow impacts in adjacent *Neighbourhoods*; and to frame the edge of streets and parks with good proportion and maintain sunlight and comfortable wind conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets, parks, and open spaces.

A small portion of the Planning Framework area at the corner of Alvin Avenue and Heath Street East, and on Heath Street East is designated *Neighbourhoods* on Map 17- Land Use of the Official Plan. The Official Plan considers *Neighbourhoods* as physically stable areas containing a full range of residential uses within lower scale buildings, as well as parks, schools, local institutions and small-scale stores.

Map 2 - Urban Structure in the Official Plan identifies Yonge Street, St. Clair Avenue West and St. Clair Avenue East within the Planning Framework Area as Avenues.

Map 3 in the Official Plan shows that within the study area the anticipated Right-of-Way width is 20 metres for Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue East and 27 metres for St. Clair Avenue West.

Map 5 in the Official Plan identifies St. Clair Avenue West as a Transit Priority Segment.

Official Plan Land Use Map 17 of the Official Plan indicating the Planning Framework Area is located in Attachment No. 3.

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

### **Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan**

The Planning Framework area is within the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan, which is generally bounded by Avenue Road to the west, Mount Pleasant Cemetery/Kay Gardiner Beltline to the north, the Moore Park Ravine/Beltline Trail to the east and the CP rail corridor to the south.

The purpose of the Secondary Plan is to:

- a. protect, promote and enhance the existing type of quality of *Neighbourhoods* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods* and maintain their stability;
- b. require that redevelopment in *Mixed Use Areas* on Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue is compatible with the maintenance of adjacent *Neighbourhoods* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods* and improves Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue as public spaces;
- c. retain, protect and enhance the special physical character and public spaces of the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan area; and
- d. ensure that new development meets high urban design standards which contribute to achieving public areas which are attractive, inviting, comfortable and safe.



Section 3.2(b-c), Built Form and Public Amenity, states that buildings will achieve a harmonious relationship to their built form context through building height, massing, setback, stepbacks, roof line and profile, architectural expression and vehicle access and loading. It also states that development will provide high quality, co-ordinated streetscape and open space improvements to promote pedestrian amenity, orientation, access, greening and confidence in personal safety.

Section 5.1, *Mixed Use Areas*, states that in addition to the development criteria in the Official Plan, the following objectives will be met:

- a. provide animated, landscaped and comfortable publicly-accessible spaces on properties fronting Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue;
- b. create a visual impression of Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue as comfortable and spacious, not crowded and cramped, through the location and massing of buildings;
- c. integrate development well, with adjacent *Neighbourhoods* by ensuring appropriate transitions in building height and separation distances; and
- d. encourage and support healthy retail businesses, especially on Yonge Street.

Section 5.7 explains that in Mixed Use Areas 'B' and 'C' there may be a potential to redevelop properties in excess of existing permitted height and/or density limits in the Zoning By-law on the east side of Yonge Street between Summerhill Avenue and Heath Street East. Section 5.7(b) explains that when zoning by-law amendments are enacted, new development will, wherever possible: provide grade-related residential units and entrances on side streets; minimize curb cuts by locating vehicular access for parking and loading either from laneways or within the building mass at one end of the site; encourage an active, comfortable and safe environment on all streets; and for properties fronting or flanking Yonge Street, on lots with long frontages on Yonge Street, avoid a continuous building wall above the building base by using stepbacks, recesses and lower scale elements where appropriate.

The Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan can be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>.

### **City-Wide Tall Building Design Guidelines**

City Council has adopted city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and directed City Planning staff to use these Guidelines in the evaluation of tall building development applications. The Guidelines establish a unified set of performance measures for the evaluation of tall building proposals to ensure they fit within their context and minimize their local impacts. The link to the guidelines is here: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-57177.pdf>.

## CONSULTATION

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Throughout the study, Staff engaged with community members and led various community consultation sessions. In addition to a number of informal check-in meetings with residents, key consultation checkpoints included a design charette on February 7, 2019, a walking tour of the study area with a stakeholder advisory committee on September 18, 2019, a community consultation meeting on October 24, 2019, and a meeting with residents on December 4, 2019.

On February 7, 2019, an urban design workshop was held with various community stakeholders including: the Ward Councillor's office; Community Planning, Urban Design and Transportation Planning staff; representatives from the Deer Park Residents Group; representatives from the Summerhill Residents' Association; representatives from the Yonge-St. Clair Business Improvement Area (BIA); landowners within the study area boundary; and team members representing development applications within the study area boundary, including architects and urban design consultants.

The design workshop provided feedback and resulted in a series of maps focused on a vision for the area including potential tall building locations, new open spaces, mid-block connections, other public realm and placemaking opportunities, transportation priorities and character areas.

On September 18, 2019, City staff and the Ward Councillor led a walking tour of the study area where staff presented a draft overview of the emerging Framework vision and guiding principles, including an urban structure and open space and public realm plan. Local community members participated in the walking tour which resulted in constructive feedback for staff to consider in advancing the development of the Framework.

On October 24, 2019 a community consultation meeting was held at Timothy Eaton Church (230 St. Clair Avenue West) and attended by the Ward Councillor and approximately 180 members of the public. At the meeting Community Planning and Urban Design staff gave presentations on the purpose of the study, the study area context, the existing planning framework for the area and an overview of the draft Planning Framework. Following the presentations, attendees participated in round table discussions focused on feedback related to the draft Framework and the overall vision for the neighbourhood. City staff were in attendance to facilitate discussions and answer questions.

On December 4, 2019, staff met with the Ward Councillor and representatives from the community to discuss a revised draft of the Framework, including a more realized vision for the area and detailed objectives to achieve big public realm moves. Staff were able to incorporate feedback from this meeting into the final draft Framework attached to this report.

Throughout this consultation process, comments consistently heard included:

- Concerns with existing traffic and congestion along Yonge Street, at key intersections and on side streets;
- Focus on new development needs to be thoughtfully planned to help improve traffic flow;
- Pedestrian safety at intersection crossings and along frequently used laneway connections;
- Need for wider sidewalks to improve pedestrian flow and allow more room for pedestrian amenities such as street trees, landscaping, public art, seating and spill-out cafes;
- Need for more public open space, particularly green space, is needed to serve existing and future residents and workers;
- Secure space for future cycling infrastructure;
- Building heights and massing should respond to the existing built form context;
- Development in close proximity to low-rise areas should provide adequate transition to those areas;
- Existing wind conditions are uncomfortable for pedestrians;
- New development should be carefully studied to not result in any adverse wind impacts and should be encouraged to help improve existing wind conditions if possible;
- Pedestrian connectivity should be promoted as much as possible to enhance the walkability of the neighbourhood;
- Yonge Street serves as the commercial "village" for the community and its human-scale character should be preserved;
- Small businesses with narrow street frontages should be encouraged, particularly on Yonge Street;
- Construction mitigation should be contemplated early in the development process with all current and future applications to ensure quality of life is not adversely impacted;
- Existing community services and facilities should be reviewed taking forecasted growth into consideration; and
- Existing infrastructure capacity should be reviewed to ensure the area can accommodate any future growth.

These comments and other feedback were closely considered by staff in preparing the Planning Framework.

## **COMMENTS**

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### **The Planning Framework**

The Planning Framework applies to properties within the Mixed Use Areas 'A' and 'B' in the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan near the intersection of Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue, and some additional lands to the east including properties on the west side of Alvin Avenue and the north side of St. Clair Avenue West. The Framework provides direction on how to accommodate changes to the existing built form while maintaining and creating new important public realm areas that support the livability of this mixed-use neighbourhood. The Planning Framework is found in Attachment No. 4.

## **Vision and Goals**

The Planning Framework area outlines a vision for the Yonge-St. Clair area as a vibrant and walkable area with a diverse mix of uses, commercial opportunities, and community destinations located within a system of open spaces and parks. Yonge-St. Clair is a community where residents, workers and visitors can explore various settings such as lively urban intersections, quiet residential streets, and heavily treed ravines all within close proximity to each other. The Yonge-St. Clair area consists of a dense core at the intersection of two major streets, each with a distinct character, and buildings that transition down at the intersection to lower scale *Neighbourhoods*.

New buildings will respect the surrounding area context, limit shadow impact, preserve sky views, protect views to local landmarks, and contribute to the creation of new open spaces. The pedestrian realm will be designed to ensure a beautiful, animated and comfortable pedestrian experience year-round. Open spaces will be designed with seating, public art and include family friendly areas.

The Goals of the Planning Framework focus on:

- accommodating future growth for the area in a form that is compatible with and respects the unique character of the Yonge-St. Clair area;
- ensuring all existing, approved, and proposed buildings are sited, massed and designed to provide open space and public realm improvements, maximize pedestrian comfort, minimize shadow and wind impacts, and protect privacy and sky view;
- appropriately transitioning tall building heights from a 'Height Peak' around the Yonge-St. Clair intersection downward to lower-scaled areas, designated *Neighbourhoods, Parks and Other Open Space Areas*;
- creating place-making opportunities by designing and constructing high-quality, creative and publicly accessible open spaces, parks and streetscapes;
- improving mobility and connectivity to important destinations throughout the area by securing permanent, publicly-accessible, safe and well-designed pedestrian connections to transit stations, schools, community facilities, parks, open spaces, ravines, and commercial/retail areas; and
- improving pedestrian safety by providing public spaces that are visible and well-lit, and new signalized intersections for safe street crossing.

## **Urban Structure**

The Planning Framework provides an added layer of clarity to the policy context for the area. The Framework does not amend the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan, rather it identifies specific public realm and built form considerations that will need to be met in order to accommodate future growth in the area. The Framework ensures that new development provides a stronger sense of identity and allows for higher-density areas close to the Yonge-St. Clair intersection while sensitively integrating with the scale and character of surrounding neighbourhoods.

The proximity of the Planning Framework area to low scale areas, including low-rise *Neighbourhoods*, *Parks*, ravines, and *Apartment Neighbourhoods*, requires that transition in height, scale and density occur within a relatively short distance.

In order to achieve the required transition the Framework outlines an Urban Structure comprised of a 'Height Peak' at the core of the neighbourhood around the Yonge-St. Clair intersection and 'Transition Zones' generally located between the 'Height Peak' and the surrounding areas.

The tallest buildings will be located around the intersection of Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue with heights, scale, and density decreasing as distance from the intersection increases.

'Transition Zones' are located around the 'Height Peak' and will see a clear step down of heights from the 'Height Peak'. New development within the 'Transition Zone' will show clear transition down to the surrounding context.

### **Big Moves (Public Realm and Open Space)**

The Framework goes beyond providing clarity on the urban structure and potential location of tall buildings, it also clearly identifies the public realm moves and open spaces that are required to achieve those new buildings. The Framework identifies seven 'Big Moves' that collectively assist in creating a complete community and maintaining the livability of the Yonge-St. Clair neighbourhood.

The 'Big Moves' include the following and are further described in the Framework:

- Yonge-St. Clair Crossing;
- Yonge-Heath Civic Corners;
- Delisle Extension;
- Delisle Park;
- Alvin Row;
- Laneway Link; and
- Racquet Club Connection.

The Planning Framework is a careful response to the requirements of the Growth Plan and the Official Plan for accommodating growth while also providing a vibrant public realm, including public open spaces. The Growth Plan provides direction to create complete communities that expand convenient access to: safe and convenient use of active transportation and an appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks, trails and other recreation facilities.

The Official Plan states that Tall Buildings come with greater civic responsibilities and obligations than other buildings. Development in *Mixed Use Areas* is required to create a balance of high quality commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses that reduces automobile dependency and meets the need of the local community. The Official Plan also requires that new development provide an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment.

The Yonge-St. Clair neighbourhood has a number of existing public realm/open space assets such as Delisle Park, Moore Park Ravine, David A. Belfour Park and trail, and green spaces outside of the churches at Yonge Street and Heath Street. These spaces are inadequate for the existing population and will need to be expanded and improved in order to accommodate growth in the area while improving pedestrian connectivity and safety, maintaining livability, and creating a sense of place.

### **Street Character**

The Planning Framework outlines streetscaping improvements that will be required within the Framework area. The finer details of the materials, lighting, and street furniture will be identified by the BIA Master Plan which is currently being prepared by the Yonge-St. Clair Business Improvement Area.

Yonge Street, both north and south of St. Clair Avenue, is currently the primary commercial street in the Framework area with a well-established mix of retailers, food stores and restaurants, creating a dynamic commercial main street character. The look and feel of the street is characterized by the eclectic mix of buildings from low-rise main street buildings to tall buildings, all contributing to the lively energy of Yonge Street.

The St. Clair corridor within the Framework area is composed mostly of tall office buildings with some low-rise buildings. The character of this area is more subdued than that of Yonge Street. Commercial and public buildings front onto St. Clair Avenue with their ground floor uses varying depending on the building. The commercial uses, public facilities, and St. Clair Subway station and streetcar loop help to maintain a vibrant destination for the local community.

At the edges of the Planning Framework area are *Neighbourhood* and *Apartment Neighbourhood* streets that allow for quieter green landscaped public realm connections within and to outer surrounding areas and adjacent ravines. They include: Delisle Avenue; Heath Street; Pleasant Boulevard; and Rosehill Avenue. New development that is adjacent to these areas, will allow for the continuation of these special landscaped settings to Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue creating welcoming pedestrian connections.

### **Built Form**

The Planning Framework outlines a series of built form objectives for existing and potential development sites that fit with the overall vision for the Framework area as a vibrant mixed use urban area. These built form objectives include performance standards such as: streetwall height; tall building setbacks and stepbacks; and retail frontage widths, and help to achieve the goals of the vision and goals of the Planning Framework.

### **Transportation**

The Growth Plan requires that lands adjacent to or near frequent transit should be planned to be transit-supportive and supportive of active transportation.

Due to the physical geography of the study area, the ravine, Mount Pleasant Cemetery and St. Michael's Cemetery create barriers to movement that put added pressure on Yonge Street and St. Clair Ave East and West. These busy streets require further study in order to safely and effectively create complete streets that make space for various forms of active transportation, including cycling.

The Planning Framework requires that new development provide large setbacks from the property line, which in the short-term creates large sidewalks and an improved public realm, while in the long-term provides flexibility within the right-of-way for accommodating various forms of active transportation.

The Framework further identifies that as part of accommodating new development, improvements to pedestrian safety and connectivity are required beyond widened sidewalks. These improvements include:

- Exploring new signalized intersections at Yonge Street and Delisle Street, and Alvin Avenue and St. Clair Avenue East;
- Expanding pedestrian crossing opportunities on the south side of the Rosehill Avenue and Yonge Street intersection;
- Realigning Heath Street East and West to meet at Yonge Street;
- Extending the laneway system from Ferndale Avenue to Alvin Avenue in order to accommodate pedestrians;
- Improving pedestrian connections from St. Clair Avenue along the laneway system south to Rosehill Avenue;
- Improving connections to St. Clair subway station, in particular through the centre of the north-east block of the Yonge-St. Clair intersection; and
- Alterations to Alvin Avenue to alleviate existing traffic/loading issues and accommodating future development.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS**

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Planning staff are recommending that Council direct Planning staff to review all current and future development applications against the Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework. The Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework will also set the basis for any future studies and policy changes in the area.

### **Municipal Infrastructure**

Municipal infrastructure including the water distribution system, sanitary sewers and storm sewers are essential in maintaining the quality of life in the study area. Servicing infrastructure is also central to efforts to build a sustainable community by ensuring management of Toronto's water resources and protecting water quality.

The City requires new development applications to be supported by reports (servicing and stormwater management) that demonstrate that there is sufficient infrastructure capacity and that the proposed development will not negatively impact the area. The types of studies required to support development applications are listed in the City of Toronto Development Guide.

## **Community Services and Facilities**

Community Services and Facilities are important to creating well functioning and liveable communities. As new residents move to the area, review and evaluation of community services and facilities will be done through the requirement for studies completed in support of development applications. The guidelines rely on the existing policies in the Official Plan which call for preserving and improving existing community services and facilities and ensuring that an appropriate range of services and facilities are provided in areas of incremental growth.

## **Conclusion**

The Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework outlined in this report builds upon the policies of the Official Plan, including the Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan, to provide a clear vision for the area surrounding the Yonge-St. Clair intersection for the years to come. One of the key objectives of the Framework is the creation and realization of seven 'Big Moves'. The big moves, implemented through a variety of developments, will collectively assist in creating a complete community, and maintain livability while allowing for future growth to occur.

The Planning Framework has been reviewed against the policies of the PPS (2014), A Place to Grow (2019), and the Toronto Official Plan. Staff are of the opinion that the Planning Framework is consistent with the PPS (2014) and conforms with A Place to Grow (2019). Furthermore, the Planning Framework is in keeping with the intent of the Toronto Official Plan. Staff recommend that City Council endorse the Planning Framework.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Director, Community Planning  
Toronto and East York District



## **ATTACHMENTS**

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### **City of Toronto Data/Drawings**

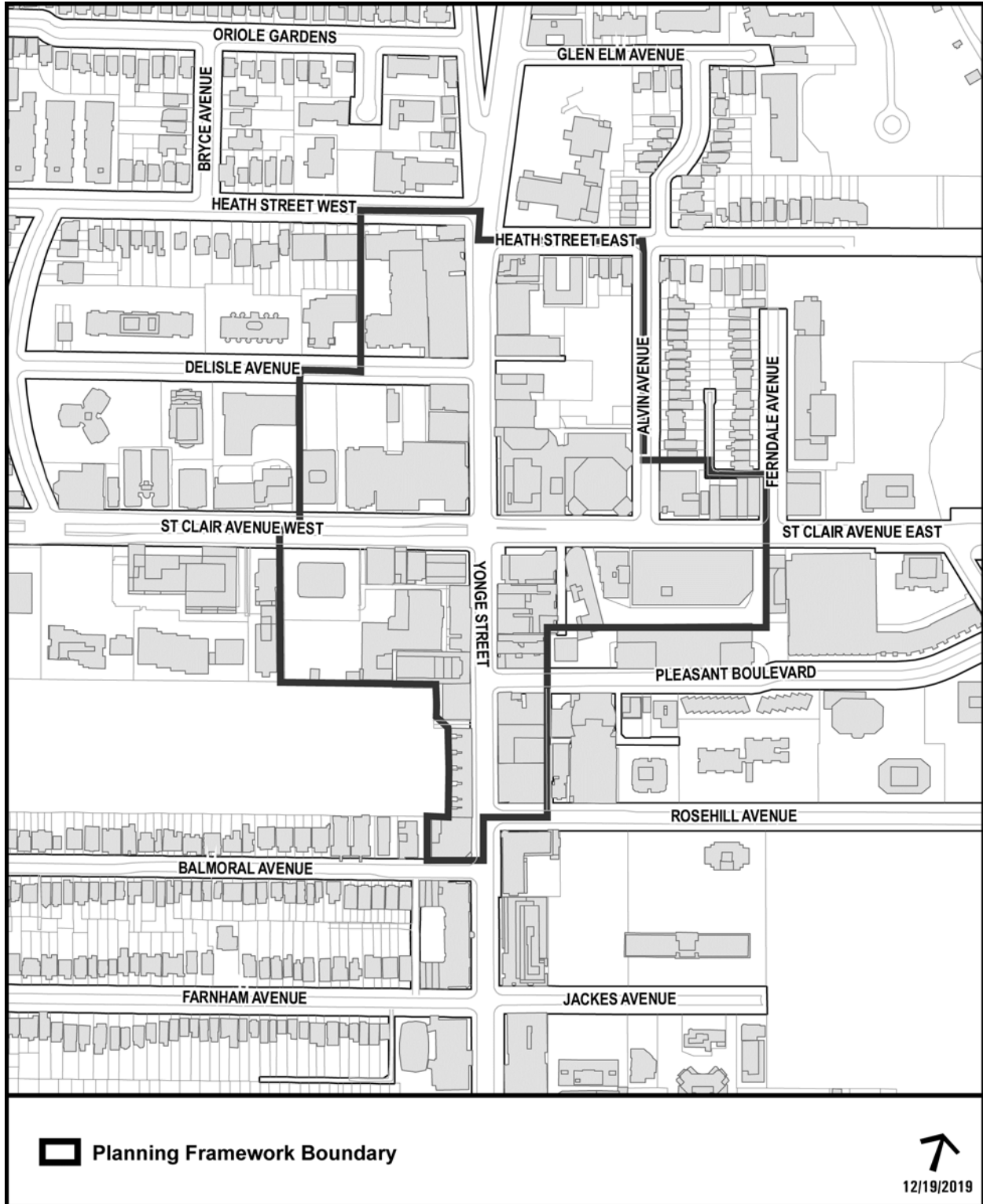
Attachment 1: Planning Framework Boundary

Attachment 2: Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan

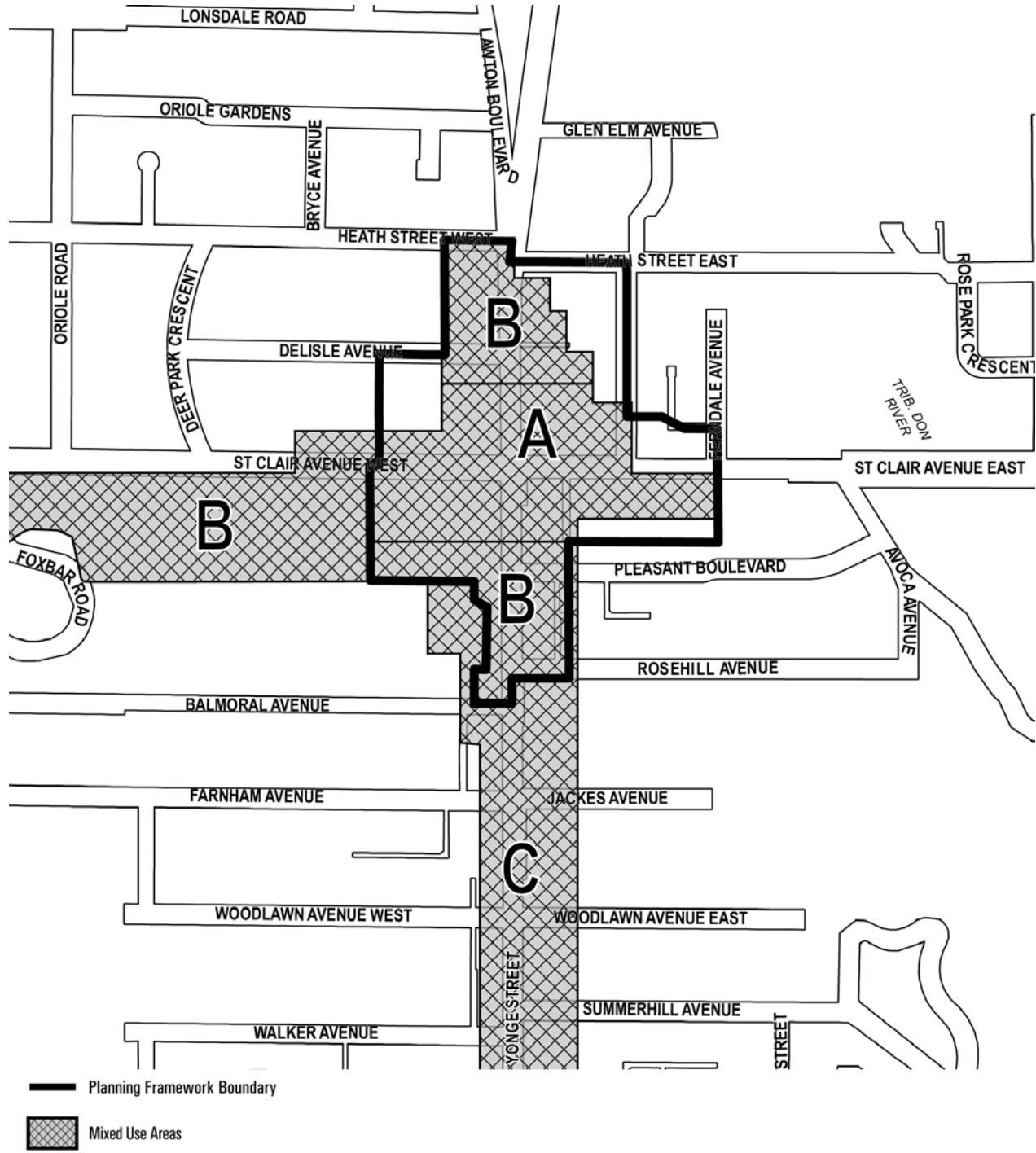
Attachment 3: Official Plan Map

Attachment 4: Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework (December 2019)

Attachment 1: Planning Framework Boundary



Attachment 2: Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan



Map 6-3 Mixed Use Areas

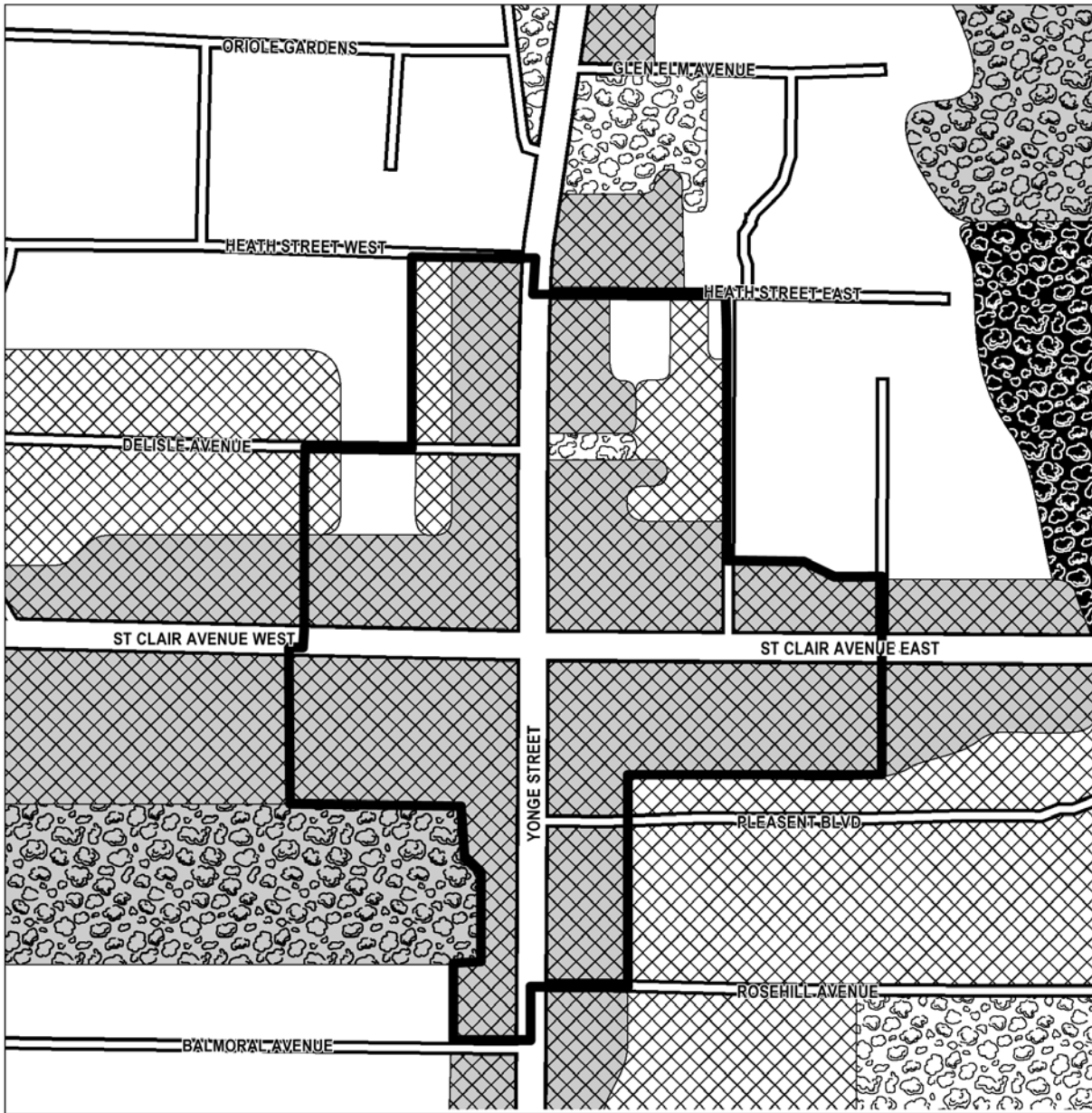
Yonge-St. Clair Secondary Plan

Not to Scale  
05/31/18



File # 18 122399 SPS 00 0Z

Attachment 3: Official Plan Map










**TORONTO**  
**Official Plan Land Use Map**

**City-initiated Yonge-St. Clair Planning Framework**

File # 18 122399 SPS 00 02

Note: This map was extracted from the July 2015 Land Use Plan. For current information refer to the February 2019 data.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Planning Framework Boundary |  Parks & Open Space Areas |
|  Neighbourhoods              |  Parks                    |
|  Apartment Neighbourhoods    |  Other Open Space Areas   |
|  Mixed Use Areas             |  |

↑  
 Not to Scale  
 12/10/2019