

# TORONTO STAFF REPORT

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October 28, 2005

To: Toronto East York Community Council

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

Subject: Status Report - Terms of Reference  
Bloor Annex Corridor Visioning Study  
File No. 05 193137 SPS 00 TM  
Wards 20 and 19, Trinity-Spadina

Purpose:

To report on a draft Terms of Reference for a Visioning Study for the Bloor Annex Corridor (Bloor Street West between Avenue Road and Christie Street).

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. Funds for consultant fees required to complete the study will be provided through a settlement with the proponents of a previous development application.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) Council adopt the proposed Terms of Reference for a Visioning Study for the Bloor Annex Corridor, as attached to this report; and
- (2) Council authorize City staff to undertake a Request for Proposals to engage a consultant team for the Visioning Study, based on the Terms of Reference.

Background:

The Annex area, especially Bloor Street West between Walmer Road and Avenue Road, has become the subject of intense development interest in recent years. The neighbouring community of Bloor-Yorkville to the east has already experienced a surge in condominium and hotel development, and that focus has been shifting westward to development parcels bordering

the Annex. There are several active development applications within the proposed study area that seek intensification of residential uses with retail at grade. Most notably, the development known as 1 Bedford Road, which would house 308 units in a 32-storey tower with retail at grade and underground parking, has recently been approved by Toronto City Council and awaits final approval at the Ontario Municipal Board.

At its meeting of July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005, Toronto City Council adopted a recommendation to include, among the requirements of settlement with the developers of 1 Bedford Road, \$70,000 in funding for consultant fees for a community-based "Visioning Study" for the Annex. In particular, as described in the Planning Staff report dated July 18, 2005, the study would look at Bloor Street West between Avenue Road and Christie Street, including the business communities of Koreatown BIA and Mirvish Village BIA.

### Comments:

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to develop a shared vision for the Bloor Street West corridor between Avenue Road and Christie Street (the "Bloor Annex Corridor") for the next ten years, through consultation with area stakeholders including residents, businesses and landowners. Potential impacts of future development with regard to traffic, community services & facilities and other matters on the neighbouring communities to the north and south of Bloor will also be examined.

#### Consultation

The draft Terms of Reference were circulated to area residents' associations, BIAs and major landowners for their comment and input. Two meetings were held in the community to discuss the Terms of Reference for the study. On October 6, 2005, Planning staff held a meeting with local residents and business representatives; on October 24, 2005 those groups were invited back to meet with area landowners, including representatives from the Royal Ontario Museum, the University of Toronto, the Royal Conservatory of Music, Honest Ed's, and lands subject to active development applications. Attendees had an opportunity to express their priorities for the study and provide input on the Terms of Reference. The revised Terms of Reference are found in Attachment 1 to this report.

Notice regarding the proposed Terms of Reference was given to landowners with properties on Bloor Street West prior to the November 15, 2005 Community Council meeting.

Planning staff will initiate a website for the study to facilitate public access to information.

#### Next Steps

Following Council adoption of the Terms of Reference, staff will initiate a Request for Proposals process to hire a consultant team for the study. The \$70,000 funding is expected to be received once the Ontario Municipal Board issues an order approving the Official Plan and Zoning By-

law amendments for the development at 1 Bedford Road, anticipated in early 2006. Staff anticipate that the study will be completed before the end of 2006.

City staff will contribute to the study in various capacities and this will accomplish a broader study than the funding will achieve on its own. Community Planning staff will manage and direct the consultant team with input and support from Urban Design, Transportation Planning, Community Policy, Heritage Preservation Services, Traffic Operations, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, and other staff as appropriate.

Conclusions:

Planning staff were asked to report to Community Council with Terms of Reference for a Visioning Study of Bloor Street West between Avenue Road and Christie Street. The attached Terms of Reference were developed following consultation with area residents, BIAs and landowners. Staff will initiate a hiring process to engage a consultant team early in 2006. The Bloor Annex Corridor Visioning Study is targeted for completion by the end of 2006.

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Gary Wright  
Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

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List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Draft Terms of Reference, Bloor Annex Corridor Visioning Study

## **Attachment 1**

### **Draft Terms of Reference**

#### **BLOOR ANNEX CORRIDOR VISIONING STUDY**

##### **1.0 STUDY OUTLINE**

###### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the study is to develop a shared vision for the Bloor Street West corridor between Avenue Road and Christie Street (the “Bloor Annex Corridor”) for the next ten years, through consultation with area stakeholders including residents, businesses and landowners.

###### **1.2 Study Area**

The Bloor Annex Corridor is the main street of various residential neighbourhoods and home to Koreatown, Mirvish Village and the Bloor-Annex BIA, as well as several cultural, educational and institutional facilities including the University of Toronto, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Royal Conservatory of Music, the Bata Shoe Museum and the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. It is an established neighbourhood, retail destination and transportation thoroughfare that serves the needs of residents at the local, city-wide and regional level. In this area, Bloor Street links together several specialized shopping areas, commercial and institutional uses and stable, low-rise residential neighbourhoods.

The Study Area (shown in Appendix A) will include properties fronting on the north and south sides of Bloor Street between Avenue Road and Christie Street. It will also encompass properties within the Mirvish Village BIA on Bathurst and Markham Streets. East of Walmer Road, this strip is currently characterized by a range of building types and uses, including low- to mid-rise commercial retail, high-rise hotel and residential, and landmark institutional buildings. West of Walmer Road, this area is more consistently low-rise in scale, comprising typical main street retail/commercial uses with some residential above.

Impacts of development within this study area on the broader communities bounded by Harbord Street, the Canadian Pacific Railway, Christie Street and Avenue Road will also be considered (see the Neighbourhood Impact Area shown in Appendix B). These are typically low-rise, stable residential neighbourhoods consisting mainly of single and semi-detached homes. Many of these dwellings are of historical significance individually, and collectively it is an area of special historical identity. Along Spadina Road/Spadina Avenue, St. George Street and Walmer Road, the building forms are more reflective of a mid- to high-rise apartment neighbourhood. Parts of this area are also proposed to be the focus of a concurrent Heritage Conservation District study, to be considered in tandem with the Bloor Annex Corridor Visioning Study.

### **1.3 Background**

The Study Area, especially Bloor Street West between Walmer Road and Avenue Road, has become the subject of intense development interest in recent years. The neighbouring community of Bloor-Yorkville to the east has already experienced a surge in condominium and hotel development, and that focus has been shifting westward to development parcels bordering Bloor Street. There are several active development applications within the study area that seek intensification of residential uses with retail at grade. Most notably, the development known as 1 Bedford Road, which would house 308 units in a 32-storey tower with retail at grade and underground parking, has recently been approved by Toronto City Council and awaits final approval at the Ontario Municipal Board.

At its meeting of July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005, Toronto City Council adopted a recommendation to include, among the requirements of settlement with the developers of 1 Bedford Road, funding for consultant fees for a community-based “Visioning Study” for the Annex. In particular, as described in the Planning Staff report dated July 18, 2005, the study would look at Bloor Street West between Avenue Road and Christie Street, including the business communities of Koreatown BIA and Mirvish Village BIA.

### **1.4 Objectives**

- To consult with local residents and stakeholders;
- To develop a vision for the nature and use of the Bloor Annex Corridor and establish principles for future development;
- To set reasonable expectations for “responsible intensification” along the Bloor Annex corridor by examining appropriate areas for development;
- To develop an urban design concept for the Bloor Annex Corridor;
- To establish performance criteria for issues such as heights, densities, built form and separation distances;
- To determine potential impacts on local community services & facilities, parking, traffic, bicycle circulation and transit;
- To protect stable low-rise residential neighbourhoods; and
- To identify opportunities for potential public realm improvements.

## **2.0 PROJECT PHASING**

Once a consultant team has been hired and the project has been initiated, it is targeted for completion within 9 months. The study should be completed according to the following phases:

### **2.1 Phase I (2 months)**

- general analysis of existing conditions
- identification of viable potential development sites
- review of planning documents and relevant studies

- meeting with City staff and relevant agencies
- “kick-off” public information meeting

## **2.2 Phase II (3 months)**

- charette / “visioning” workshop
- consultation with Local Advisory Committee, broader community
- development and submission of concept plan
- presentation of draft vision to community

## **2.3 Phase III (4 months)**

- further meetings with staff as necessary
- recommendations and implementation plan

## **3.0 RELEVANT DOCUMENTS & STUDIES**

Phase I of the Bloor Annex Corridor Study should include the review of existing planning policies, as well as recent studies and initiatives that have taken place, or are taking place, both within the study area and in the broader context. These include, but may not be limited to:

### **3.1 Planning Documents**

- Former City of Toronto Official Plan (1991), including:
  - Annex Part II Plan
  - University of Toronto Area Part II Plan
  - Seaton Village Part II Plan
- Official Plan of Metropolitan Toronto (1994)
- Provincial Policy Statement (2005)
- New City of Toronto Official Plan (2003 – not in force)
- Former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86, as amended
- City of Toronto Bike Plan (2001)

### **3.2 Completed Studies and Initiatives**

- Former City of Toronto Urban Design Handbook (1997)
- Toronto Urban Design Guidelines: Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown (2004)
- Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines (Brook McIlroy, 2002)
- East Annex Heritage Conservation District Study (1993)
- City of Toronto Planning Studies and Avenues Studies (<http://w3.toronto.ca/planning/newtoronto.htm>)

### **3.3 Concurrent Studies and Initiatives**

- Proposed Annex Heritage Conservation District Studies – Heritage Preservation Services



Palmerston Area Ratepayers' Association  
Huron-Sussex Residents' Association

Business Improvement Areas: Bloor-Annex BIA  
Mirvish Village BIA  
Korea Town BIA  
Harbord Street BIA

Area landowners: Royal Ontario Museum  
University of Toronto  
Royal Conservatory of Music  
Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre  
Toronto Parking Authority  
Park Plaza Hotel  
Hotel Intercontinental  
1 Bedford Road  
204-206 Bloor St. W.  
344 Bloor Street W.  
Honest Ed's

Other organizations bordering the study area, such as the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area and other groups who elect to observe the process, will be kept advised as the study progresses.

#### **4.2 Website**

City staff will establish and maintain a website to facilitate access to information throughout the course of the study. Public documents including staff reports, meeting notices and minutes will be posted to the website on a regular basis.

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# Appendix A Study Area

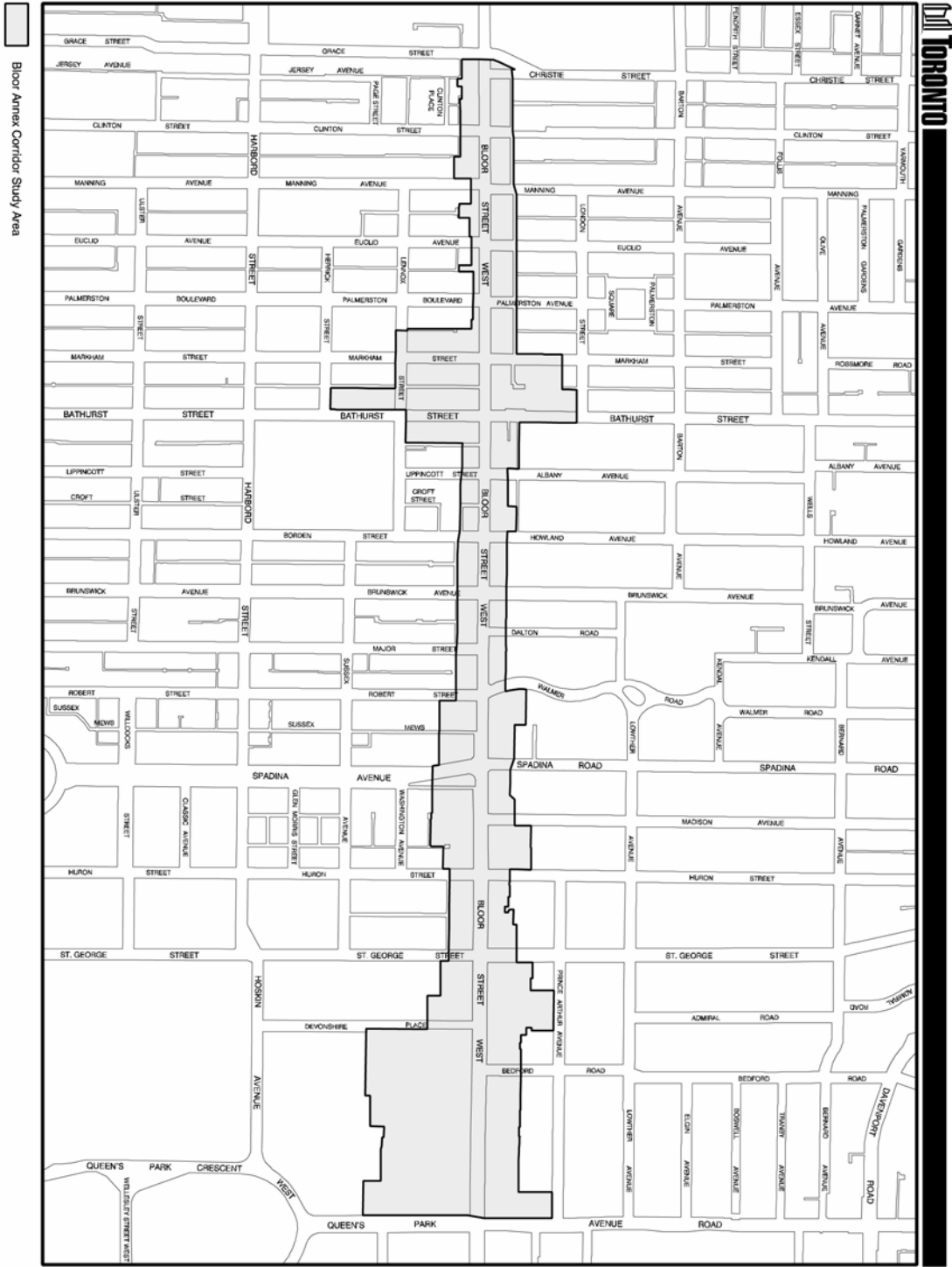


Fig. 1: CITY OF TORONTO, BRAMPTON, MISSISSAUGA, RICHMOND HILL, SPECIAL SERVICES, 2005. FROM PLANNING DOCUMENT NUMBER 39000, STREET MAPS, BRAMPTON.

Not to Scale  
Extracted 10/19/05 - 1A

## Appendix B Neighbourhood Impact Area

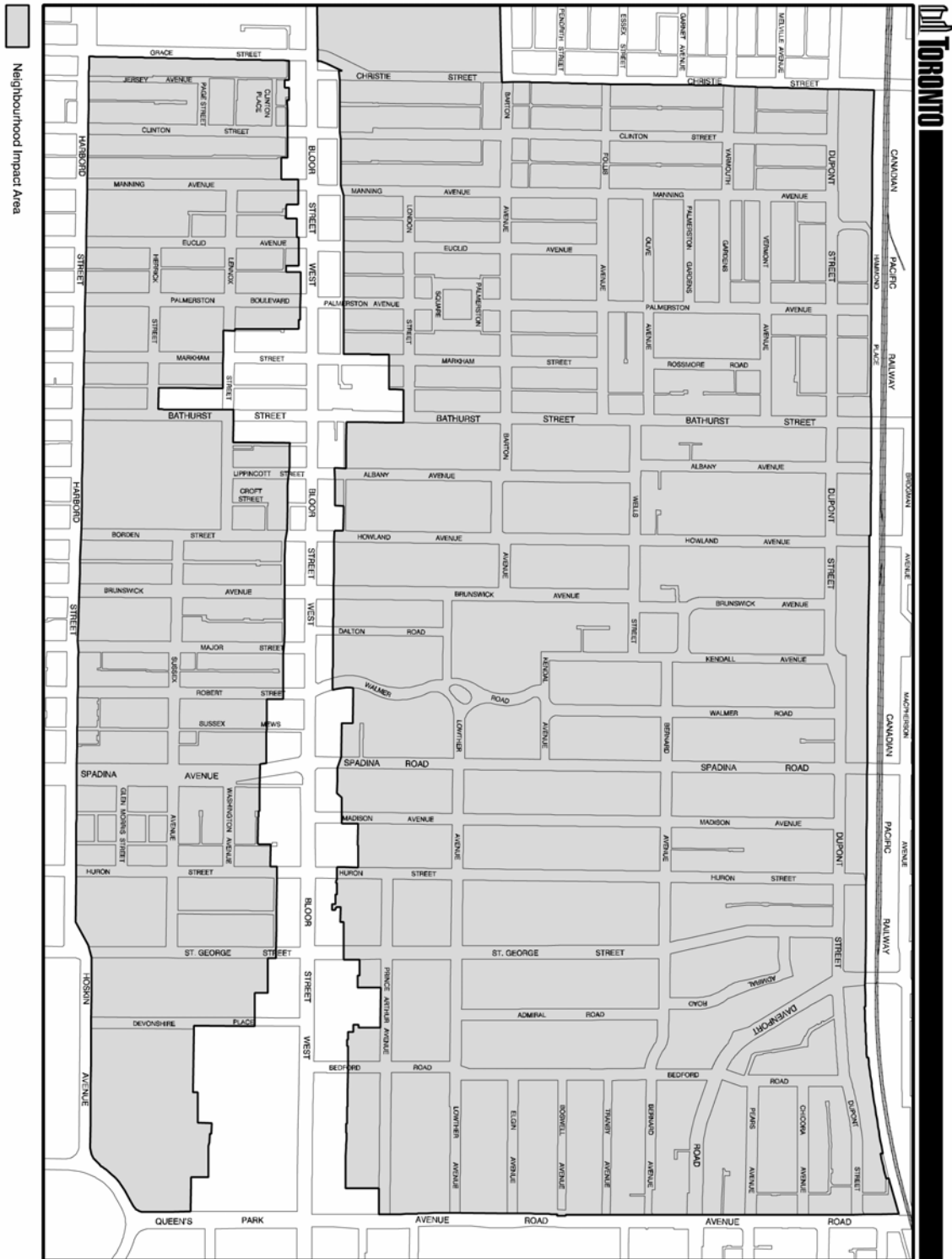


FIG. 1: K. IN. URBAN DESIGN, SHANNON GOSSETT SPECIAL STUDIES 2000 PRIMARY SECONDARY NEIGHBOURHOOD STUDY AREA MAP.

Not to Scale  
Extracted 10/27/05 - 1/A