

Bayview Avenue Area Study – Final Report

Date:	September 17, 2007
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, North York District
Wards:	Ward No. 23 – Willowdale
Reference Number:	05 18990 TM

SUMMARY

This report presents the conclusions of the Bayview Avenue Area Study, which reviewed development options for the lots that front onto the west of Bayview Avenue from Finch Avenue to Highway 401.

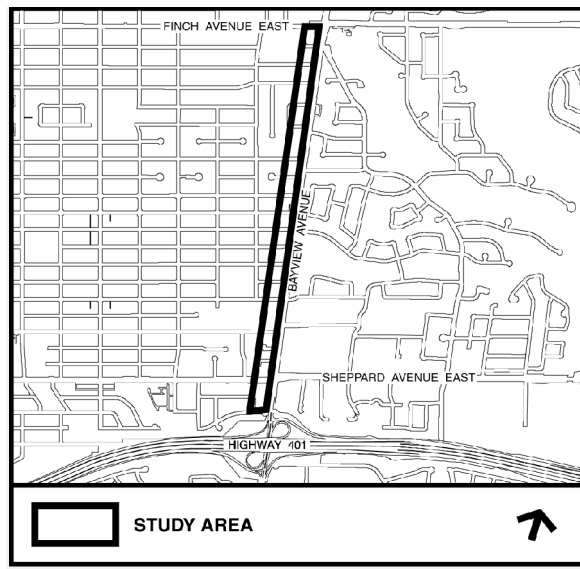
City staff have worked with area residents to develop application guidelines to use in evaluating applications for townhouses along Bayview Avenue from Finch Avenue to Hollywood Avenue. These guidelines are to be used where townhouses are permitted in the ‘*Neighbourhoods*’ designation of the Official Plan. These guidelines are supplementary to the Council approved Infill Townhouse Guidelines and deal with two transition options to protect the adjacent low density neighbourhood.

It is recommended that Council approve the Urban Design Guidelines presented in Attachment 3.

RECOMMENDATION

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council adopt the urban design guidelines presented in Attachment 3 for use in reviewing development applications for the west side of



Bayview Avenue from Finch Avenue to Hollywood Avenue.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of July 19, 20 and 21, 2005 City Council requested the Director, Community Planning, North York District to “undertake an area study for the west side of Bayview Avenue from Finch Avenue to Highway 401, to review appropriate development options for the lots fronting onto Bayview Avenue”.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Study Area

As directed by City Council, this study deals specifically with the lands located on the west side of Bayview Avenue between Finch Avenue and Highway 401. However, to appropriately evaluate the development options for lots that front onto Bayview Avenue, the study examined existing adjoining land uses including the lands on the east side of Bayview Avenue.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. The key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. City Council’s planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

Official Plan

There are a number of different land use designations along Bayview Avenue from Finch Avenue to Highway 401.

The majority of lands between Spring Garden Avenue and Finch Avenue are designated as ‘*Neighbourhoods*’, which are considered physically stable areas made up of residential uses in lower scale buildings such as single and semi-detached dwellings, townhouses and interspersed walk-up apartments that are no higher than four storeys. Parks, low scale institutions, home occupations, cultural and recreational facilities and small-scale retail, service and office uses are also provided for in ‘*Neighbourhoods*’.

The Official Plan states that development in ‘*Neighbourhoods*’ will respect and reinforce the existing physical character of the neighbourhood. It also states that no changes will be made through rezoning that are out of keeping with the neighbourhood. The established Zoning By-laws are to remain in place and will establish the benchmark for what is permitted in the future within neighbourhoods. For instance, if the prevailing building type within a neighbourhood is single detached dwellings, than the Official Plan’s policies are to be interpreted to allow only single-detached dwellings in order to respect and reinforce the established physical character of the neighbourhood.

The lands on the west side of Bayview Avenue between Highway 401 and Spring Garden Avenue are designated ‘*Mixed Use Areas*’, which permit a broad range of institutional, commercial and residential in single use or mixed use buildings, as well as parks and open spaces. Section 4.5 of the Official Plan outlines development criteria in ‘*Mixed Use Areas*’. These lands are also part of the Sheppard East Subway Corridor Secondary Plan (OPA 392) and a Context Plan was approved for them in April 2005.

There are lands on the west side of Bayview, south of Finch Avenue that are designated as ‘*Apartment Neighbourhoods*’. Currently these lands are developed with townhouses.

Empress Parkette is situated on the west side of Bayview, south of Empress Avenue and is designated as ‘*Parks*’. Development is generally prohibited within ‘*Parks*’ Areas except for recreational and cultural facilities, conservation projects, cemetery facilities and public transit.

Zoning

Zoning By-law No. 7625 permits a number of land uses within the study area. The table below outlines the applicable zoning categories on the west side of Bayview Avenue, between Finch Avenue and Highway 401:

Zone	Permitted Use
R3	The general provisions permit single detached dwellings with a minimum lot frontage of 18 metres, maximum 16.8 metre length, minimum lot area of 690 m ² .
R4	The general provisions permit single detached dwellings with a minimum lot frontage of 15 metres, maximum 16.8 metre length, minimum lot area of 550 m ² .
R6	The general provisions permit single detached dwellings with a minimum lot frontage of 12 metres, maximum 15.3 metre length, minimum lot area of 371 m ² .
RM1	The general provisions permit multiple attached dwellings, single family dwellings and accessory buildings. Maximum lot coverage of 25% of the lot area.
RM3	The general provisions permit Multiple, Apartment House, Duplex and Semi detached dwellings and single family dwellings. Maximum lot coverage of 35% of the lot area.
01	Open space.
C1	The general provisions permit commercial buildings and commercial uses such as restaurants, retail stores and business offices.
G	The general provisions permit Single detached dwelling, parks, playgrounds, golf courses.

Infill Townhouse Guidelines

In January 2003, City Council approved the Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Townhouses. These guidelines are used to review infill townhouse applications throughout the City, with the main objectives of maintaining appropriate location, building mass and organization of townhouses, minimizing impacts such as shadows and overlook and enhancing the relationship between new housing and adjacent streets and open spaces. The guidelines are intended to serve as a framework for reviewing development applications for intensification.

Consultation

Community consultation was an integral component of the study. The initial community consultation meeting was held on October 19, 2005 to present the purpose of the study. Approximately 35 members of the public attended the meeting. At this meeting residents were asked to identify concerns with development occurring within the study area. The local Councillor invited the attendees to participate in a working group which would provide interested residents and stakeholders an opportunity to assist in establishing appropriate guidelines for future development within the study area.

Four working group meetings were held between May 2006 and July 2007. The main concerns raised by the working group were impact, unit height and width, overview, and parking locations. The group suggested a number of development standards:

1. Locate parking at the front of the unit with access via individual driveways off Bayview Avenue;
2. Provide a minimum 20 feet (approximately 6 metres) building setback from the property line of Bayview Avenue;
3. Provide a minimum 25 feet (approximately 7.6 metres) setback from the rear property line;
4. A maximum height limit of 2.5 storeys and a 30 degree angular plane provision and;
5. A minimum townhouse unit width of 20 feet (approximately 6 metres).

Not all members of the working group are in support of the guidelines recommended in this report.

Analysis

Land Use

Staff undertook a detailed review of the area. Different land uses within the study area, were examined, which can be characterized by the following:

- Immediately north of Sheppard - commercial and mixed-use development front onto Bayview Avenue. On the east side there is Bayview Mall. On the west side there are Official Plan permissions for mixed use density development;
- Two blocks north of Sheppard, there are predominately townhouses fronting onto both sides of Bayview Avenue. This block is a transition from higher density, mixed-use buildings to the south, and the single detached dwellings that exist to the north.
- Further north of Sheppard Avenue there are single detached dwellings. There are also approximately 10 townhouse developments along Bayview Avenue as far north as Cummer Avenue.

The Zoning By-law permits a number of townhouse projects within the study area. The existing physical patterns and character of the established neighbourhood consists of mix of different uses, with townhouses on lots fronting onto Bayview, and single detached houses on the interior lots. This land use analysis determined that townhouses are part of the existing neighbourhood pattern, and therefore a land use that conforms with the existing neighbourhood policies of the Official Plan.

Block & Lot Pattern

A block and lot pattern inventory was undertaken to identify the pattern of lot, street and block configurations along this portion of Bayview Avenue. A lot study of the residential properties to the west of Bayview Avenue was also undertaken.

Through this analysis, City staff were able to identify the lots within the study area that are not appropriate for residential redevelopment in the townhouse form including:

- parcels of land containing parkland, open space and utility corridors as the Official Plan policies and current zoning do not permit redevelopment of these sites.
- recent redevelopment and other large blocks. These lots have been recently redeveloped and it is not likely they will be redeveloped with townhouses in the near future.
- single lots that flank or do not front onto Bayview Avenue. Development of these lots may conflict with the existing physical character of the neighbourhood.
- remnant lots that are small in size and lack sufficient depth to support townhouse development as outlined in the recommended urban design guidelines.

This work established that there are blocks of land on the west side of Bayview Avenue that are capable of supporting residential redevelopment in the form of townhouses, while respecting and reinforcing the existing physical character of the study area.

Built Form

A design exercise was undertaken to determine what built form would arise from the development criteria and standards suggested by the working group (see consultation section on page 3). It also determined if the resulting built form would meet the Official Plan policies and the Council approved Infill Townhouse Guidelines.

In examining the criteria and standards presented by the working group, the following findings were developed:

1. Providing parking at the front of the units via individual driveways would result in parking dominating the streetscape. Multiple curb cuts on Bayview Avenue would jeopardize pedestrian safety and comfort and would not allow for landscape setbacks or the planting of street trees, which contribute to the landscaped character of a neighbourhood. As outlined in the Infill Townhouse Guidelines, parking for townhouses should not dominate the streetscape, but instead should be located to the rear of the development.
2. Front yard setbacks of 6 metres are prevalent in the adjacent low density residential neighbourhood, where the driveways are located in front of the single detached units. However, townhouse development will be limited to specific lots on Bayview Avenue, and the units will be accessed from the rear of the site (as discussed in the above paragraph). This will allow for a reduced setback and allow for the provision of landscaping and a continuous green space adjacent to the public sidewalk. A 3 metre front yard setback from Bayview Avenue will achieve the objectives of the Infill Townhouse Guidelines, and will allow the townhouses to be located further from the adjacent residential neighbourhood, which the working group felt was an important development consideration.
3. A minimum rear yard setback of 9.5 metres is being recommended. This is similar to setbacks required for the Finch Avenue Secondary Plan, which provides a development framework for townhouses on an arterial road adjacent to this neighbourhood to the north.
4. The working group felt that height of development along Bayview Avenue should be restricted to a maximum 2.5 storeys, with a 30 degree angular plane setback from the rear property line. An 11 metre, or 3 storey height limit is more appropriate for Bayview Avenue, given its width and that it is designated as a major roadway in the Official Plan. A 70 percent of the horizontal distance (or 33 degree angular plane) to the adjacent lot is appropriate in certain instances, and is similar to the height and setback requirements for townhouses along Finch Avenue East. This is discussed later in this report.

5. A key concern was that previously approved townhouse units are too narrow. It was suggested that a minimum unit width of 6 metres was an appropriate dimension, rather than the minimum unit width of 4.2 metres contained in the Infill Townhouse Guidelines. To address this concern, it is recommended that the townhouse units should be ‘symmetrically paired’ so that two units appear as one wider unit. Pairing of the units can be achieved through articulation of the front façade and rooflines, and by using a different material every two units. Paired units should be setback from adjacent pair a minimum of 1 metre. This symmetrical pairing will ensure that townhouse units fit within the Bayview neighbourhood.

Criteria Testing

Testing the criteria involved applying the approved infill townhouse guidelines on the parcels of land identified as suitable for townhouse development. The lot analysis determined that there is a variety of lot depths. There are several lots fronting Bayview Avenue that can support townhouse development with vehicular access located at the rear of the site that meet the 33 degree angular plane requirement and the 9.5 metre rear yard setback requirement. In addition, some of the lots have sufficient depth to allow for a single detached dwelling as a transition between the townhouses and the abutting stable neighbourhood. The study developed scenarios for both of these situations.

Scenario ‘A’ provides for an appropriate transition by providing an increased landscape strip of a minimum 4.5 metres at the rear of the property so that the adjacent neighbourhood is appropriately buffered from redevelopment along Bayview Avenue. In addition, *Scenario ‘A’* applies a 70 percent of the horizontal distance from the adjacent property line (a 33 degree angular plane) and a minimum 9.5 metre rear yard setback to ensure that an acceptable built-form relationship is established between the abutting low scale residential neighbourhood and any proposed multiple residential buildings fronting Bayview Avenue. The proposed guidelines include additional criteria for redevelopment along Bayview Avenue, including front yard setbacks and access/parking location. An illustration of Scenario ‘A’ is provided on page 3 of the proposed guidelines (Attachment 3).

Scenario ‘B’ introduces single family dwellings on separate lots, to provide a physical transition between the townhouse development on Bayview Avenue and the adjacent stable residential neighbourhood. The transitional houses screen the adjacent low density dwellings from redevelopment, and reinforce the existing front yard setback patterns within the neighbourhood.

A minimum lot frontage of 12 metres for the transitional house will enhance and extend the local street characteristics by providing a gradual transition from the adjacent neighbourhood and the townhouse development fronting onto Bayview Avenue. In addition, the transition units will have a single at grade integral garage to maximize the

amount of soft landscaping and provide for better integration with adjacent neighbourhoods. An illustration of Scenario 'B' is provided on page 5 of the proposed guidelines (Attachment 3).

Both *Scenario 'A'* and *'B'* comply with the Council approved Infill Townhouse Guidelines and represent good urban design.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Official Plan Map

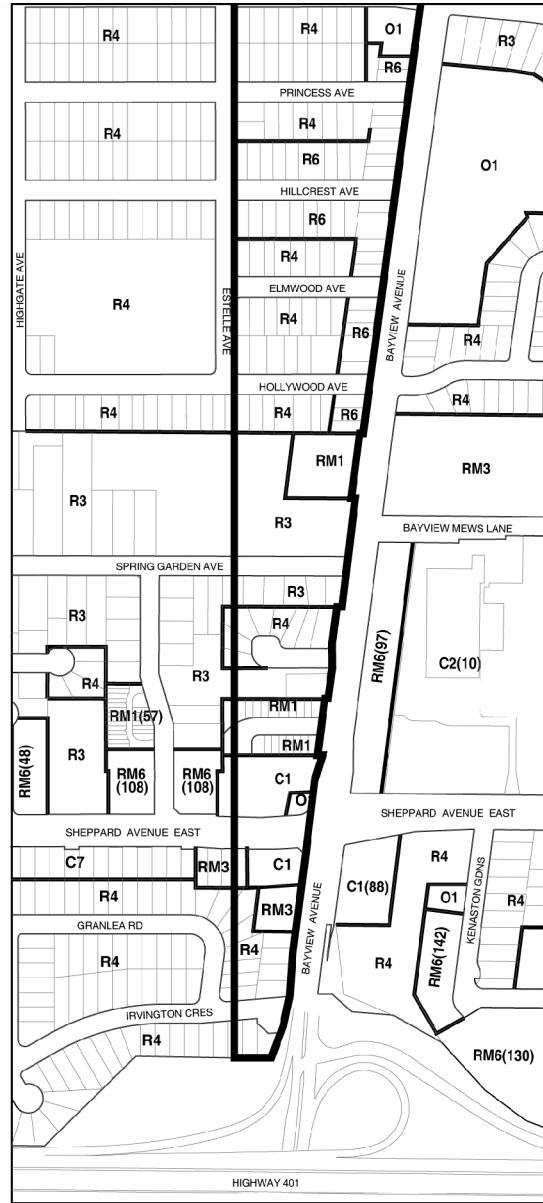
Attachment 2: Zoning Map

Attachment 3: Bayview Area Study Guidelines

Attachment 1



Study Area - Finch to Empress



Study Area - Empress to Hwy 401



Bayview Avenue Study Area

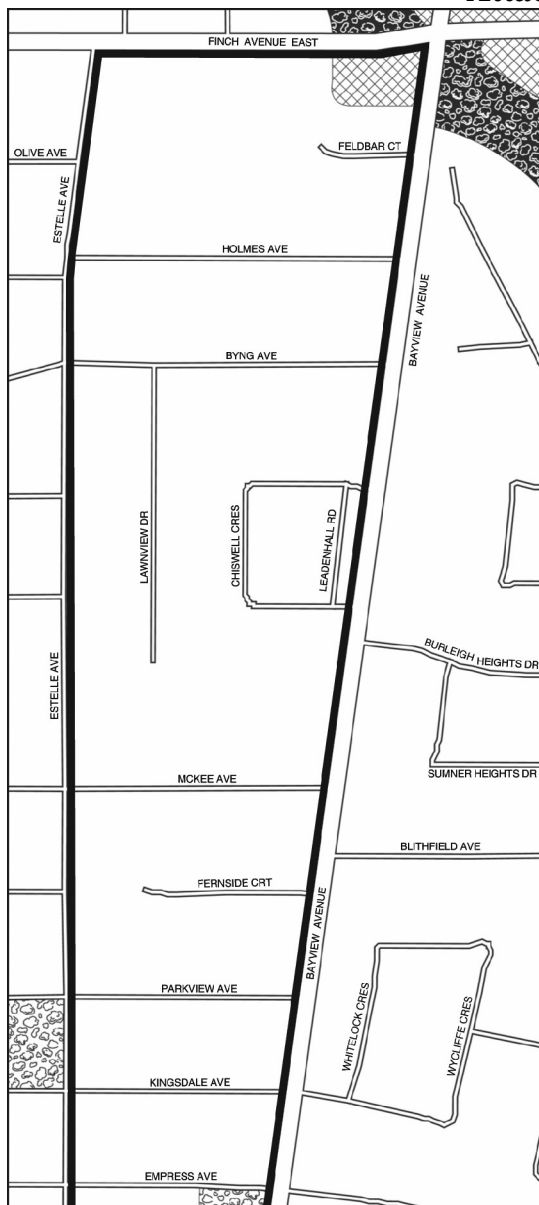


Study Area

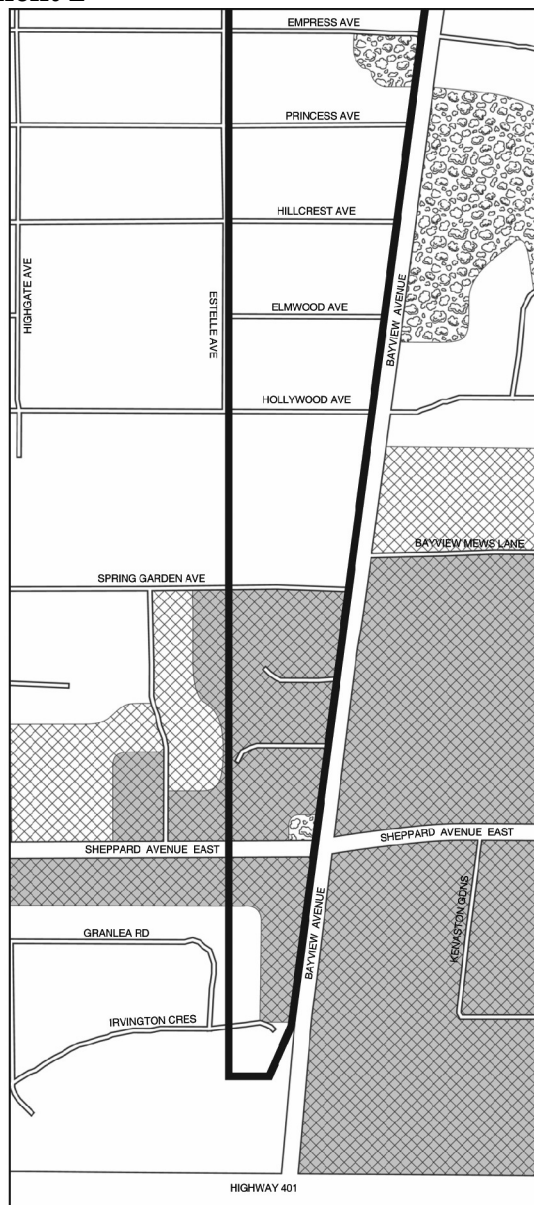


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Attachment 2



Study Area - Finch to Empress



Study Area - Empress to Hwy 401



Bayview Avenue Study Area

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|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Study Area | Apartment Neighbourhoods | Natural Areas |
| Neighbourhoods | Mixed Use Areas | Parks |

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