# **DA TORONTO**

# STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

# North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework Draft Official Plan Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines – Status Update Report

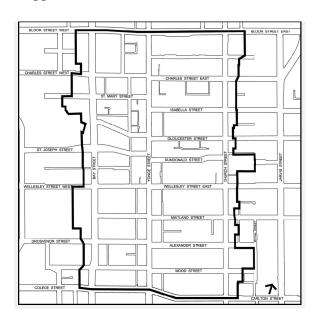
Date:	June 11, 2013
То:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District Director, Urban Design, Community Planning
Wards:	Ward 27 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale
Reference Number:	11 247686 SPS 00 TM

# SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the study process to date and the next steps to finalizing the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework (NDYPF). In response to the Downtown Tall Buildings Study and to address the amount and type of development occurring and anticipated in the area, Toronto and East York Community Council at the meeting of June 22, 2011 through development application 11 187996 STE 27 OZ for

501 to 521 Yonge directed staff to undertake the North Downtown Yonge Street Planning Framework process and community consultation as outlined in the Preliminary Report dated May 30, 2011 from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District.

The NDYPF area is generally bounded by College/Carlton Streets, Bloor Street, fronting properties on the west side of Bay Street and fronting properties on the east side of Church Street. The original direction of the NDYPF was to provide urban design guidelines to direct development within the study area. As the study process evolved, it was determined



that an official plan amendment with area specific policies should also be drafted to provide a policy framework with urban design guidelines as the implementation tool.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

#### The City Planning Division recommends that:

- 1. City Council adopt the "Draft North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines", attached as Attachment 3 to the report (June 6, 2013) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, and the Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division.
- 2. City Council direct staff to use the Draft North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines in the evaluation of all new and current tall building development proposals falling within the Guideline boundaries.
- 3. City Council direct Staff schedule a community consultation meeting with the Working Group prior to September 10, 2013 for review of a Draft Official Plan Amendment for the lands included in the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework together with the Ward Councillor.
- 4. City Council authorize the City Clerk to provide notice of a statutory public meeting for the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework to be scheduled for the September 10, 2013 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council, as per the requirements of the Planning Act.
- 5. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division to bring forward a draft Official Plan Amendment for the statutory public meeting for the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework to be scheduled for the September 10, 2013 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council, as per the requirements of the Planning Act.
- 6. City Council request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to report back to the Economic Development Committee regarding the extension of the Yonge Street Culture Corridor north from Dundas Street to Davenport Road.
- 7. City Council request the General Manager, Transportation Services to report back to the Toronto and East York Community Council on the removal of commercial boulevard parking and streetscape design within the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework by the second quarter of 2014.

#### **Financial Impact**

There is no Financial Impact.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

In 2003 the City Planning Division commissioned a consultant's study entitled "Design Criteria for the Review of Tall Building Proposals". City Council adopted the resulting report and the citywide tall buildings guidelines in 2006.

In 2007, City Planning Division commissioned a consultant's study entitled Downtown Tall Buildings Study. On July 11, 2012 City Council approved the Downtown Tall Buildings Guidelines to create a vision for tall buildings which identifies which downtown streets tall buildings should be located on, and the height ranges and built form typologies that these tall buildings should adhere to in order to enhance the urban environment; minimize shadowing of sidewalks, parks and public squares; protect landmark views and heritage resources and improve the quality of life (access to natural light, sky views and privacy) for people living and working in the downtown. As part of the study process the area along Yonge Street between Bloor Street and College/Carlton Streets was directed to have further detailed study to address area specific issues and concerns.

The Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines are now a supplement to the City Wide Tall Buildings Design Guidelines as adopted in May 2013.

In response to the Downtown Tall Buildings Study and to address the extent and type of applications received in the area, Toronto and East York Community Council at the meeting of June 22, 2011 through development application 11 187996 STE 27 OZ for 501 to 521 Yonge directed staff to undertake the North Downtown Yonge Street Planning Framework process and community consultation as outlined in the Preliminary Report dated May 30, 2011 from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, and submit a report on this matter to the Toronto and East York Community Council in the fourth quarter of 2011. The boundary for the NDYPF included Bay Street on the west, Bloor Street to the north, Church Street to the east and College/Carleton Streets to the south. The study was to consider mixed use sites in the area with potential for intensification and revitalization and recommend a framework for future redevelopment that City Council can use as a guide for consideration of individual redevelopment proposals within the area.

# **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

#### North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework - Study Process

As noted above staff were directed to undertake the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework (NDYPF). The process for the NDYPF was outlined in a Draft Terms of Reference and work plan that was vetted through community consultation with neighbourhood associations, BIA's, stakeholders, developers with applications within the study area and consultants who were representing landowners in the study area. The study process included:

- review of existing area conditions including built form, massing, architecture, sidewalk widths, landscaping and streetscaping;

- mapping and modelling of the planned context including heritage sites (listed, designated and proposed for designation), recent development approvals, current development applications as well as other sites where development interest has been expressed;
- policy review of applicable municipal, provincial and federal policies and statutes;
- review of all related relevant studies and ongoing work;
- community consultation including area residents and resident associations, Business Improvement Areas, stakeholders and industry groups;
- a design charrette;
- a report to Toronto and East York Community Council in fourth quarter 2011.

The primary focus of the NDYPF was a review of the built form of the area. Other issues that were addressed through this process include special places and streets, pedestrian improvements, open space, heritage, and terminus/views. The review provided through this process took into consideration other ongoing work that was currently underway within the City and particularly the downtown area including the Tall Buildings Downtown Project. The intended result of the study process was the preparation of urban design guidelines for the North Downtown Yonge area. Where possible these guidelines would compliment and be coordinated with other City and community heritage, economic and social development/revitalization initiatives and studies.

The NDYPF evolved through the study process in response to feedback from the community and as a result of the detailed planning review that was undertaken. The main concern of the community initially was the timing of the process. It was felt that the reporting timeline was too aggressive for the detailed review that should be done for the area and that the public would not have adequate opportunity for feedback. In response to this concern, staff reworked the timelines and the Terms of Reference to include additional community consultation and additional time for feedback. Through the more detailed review that resulted, staff determined that to adequately address the amount and type of development that was currently in process in the area and anticipated in the future, a policy framework should be developed to link the City of Toronto Official Plan policies to the proposed urban design guidelines for the area. This policy framework would result in an area specific Official Plan Amendment.

This report provides an overview of the community consultation process, the draft Official Plan Amendment and the urban design guidelines.

# **Community Consultation**

Planning staff led a comprehensive consultation process for the NDYPF that included a variety of engagement techniques including the development of a web page on the City of Toronto web site that was updated through the process with links to the information as it was released. A detailed account of the community consultation process is included at Attachment 2. The following is a brief summary.

DATE	MEETING TYPE		
August 22, 2011	Open House - Developer focussed consultation on the Terms of Reference		
August 24, 2011	Open House - Community focussed consultation with Business Improvement Areas (BIA's)/neighbourhood associations		
September 9, 2011	Community Walk through the study area		
September 30, 2011	Working Group/mini-charrette		
November 15, 2011	Open House – results of the Working Group/mini-charrette		
February 16, 2012	Open House – Update on process		
March 26, 2012	Working Group Meeting 1 – Draft OPA		
April 2, 2012	Working Group Meeting 2 – Urban Design Guidelines		
April 18, 2012	Working Group Meeting 3 – Urban Design Guidelines		
May 1, 2012	Working Group Meeting 4 – Urban Design Guidelines		
October 9, 2012	Open House – Presentations on the Draft Official Plan Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines		

The main concerns expressed through the consultation process included:

- built form and urban design;
- treatment of heritage;
- support for heritage owners (i.e., tax relief);
- height of base buildings and towers;
- density;
- setbacks and stepbacks;
- public realm;
- parkland deficiency;
- sunlight protection/shadow impact on public realm including sidewalks and in parks;
- laneway interface and animation;
- small form retail support;
- transit capacity;
- policy vs. guidelines, need a secondary plan as well;
- community services including parkland and community space; and
- respect for and transition to the character of the various areas such as the Church Street Village, the heritage along Yonge Street, St. Nicholas area, the *Neighbourhood* and *Apartment Neighbourhood* east of Yonge Street.

The draft Official Plan Amendment has been revised since the initial release to the working group as a result of further more detailed review and in response to comments and discussion through the working group process.

The working group has provided valuable feedback to date and Staff are recommending an additional working group meeting be held to review the draft Official Plan Amendment prior to the final report being scheduled for a statutory public meeting.

# **Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans**

#### Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005

The PPS provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The key objectives of the PPS include building strong communities, wise use and management of resources and protecting health and safety. The PPS includes policies directing municipalities to manage and direct the use of land to achieve efficient development patterns. Policy 1.1.3.3 states that Planning authorities shall identify and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas and the availability of suitable existing or planning infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs. The PPS recognizes that municipalities, through their Official Plans, will implement policies that direct growth that are consistent with the PPS.

Within the Downtown core, the promotion of intensification and redevelopment must also be reconciled with other matters of provincial interest, including the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest. Policies of particular relevance for the conservation of heritage features are contained in Section 2 of the PPS, Wise Use and Management of Resources. The preamble directs that "Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being depend on protecting natural heritage .... cultural heritage and archaeological resources for their economic, environmental and social benefits." Further direction recognizes that development and site alteration may be permitted on lands adjacent to protected heritage where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved and where mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches may be required in order to conserve the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property affected by the adjacent development or site alteration.

#### The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including: directions for where and how to grow; the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation.

Downtown Toronto is identified as an urban growth centre in the Growth Plan, which will accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth. Section 2.2.3 of the Growth Plan clearly states that municipalities will facilitate and promote intensification, but also identify the appropriate type and scale of development in intensification areas, provide high quality public open spaces with site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places; support transit, walking and

cycling for everyday activities; and (amongst other matters), achieve appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas. In addition, the Growth Plan states in Section 4.2.4 that, municipalities will develop and implement Official Plan policies and other strategies in support of cultural heritage conservation, including conservation of cultural heritage and archaeological resources where feasible, as built-up areas are intensified. Part 4 of the Growth Plan makes reference to "irreplaceable cultural heritage sites...that are essential for the long-term economic prosperity, quality of life....These valuable assets must be wisely protected and managed as part of planning or future growth," and directs that a balanced approach to the wise use and management of all resources will be implemented.

#### City of Toronto Official Plan, 2006

The City of Toronto Official Plan through its growth strategy and land use designations supports and compliments the PPS and the Growth Plan. It provides a comprehensive policy framework to direct and manage physical, social and economic change. The Official Plan encourages population and employment growth, recognizing that directing growth to appropriate areas is critical to Toronto's future. Chapter Two sets out the growth management strategy to guide reurbanization and direct job and population growth to certain "growth" areas including the Downtown and Central Waterfront, the Centres, the Avenues and Employment Districts - shown on Map 2, Urban Structure. The Official Plan indicates that tall buildings are appropriate in the Downtown, but not all areas of the Downtown.

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

#### NORTH DOWNTOWN YONGE PLANNING FRAMEWORK URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DRAFT OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

In order to address the range and types of issues and to provide appropriate direction for future development and redevelopment it was determined through the study process for the NDYPF that an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) with Area Specific Policies should be developed. In support of the Area Specific OPA there would be Urban Design Guidelines. These Guidelines are intended to implement the policy direction expressed in the Official Plan Amendment. A draft of the Urban Design Guidelines have been finalized and are provided as Attachment 3 to this report. The proposed draft OPA is still a work in progress but will be finalized in September 2013. Staff are recommending that a final working group meeting be held to review the draft OPA and that a final version of the OPA be brought forward to a statutory public meeting at the September 10, 2013 Toronto and East York Community Council. The following is a summary of the urban design guidelines and the draft OPA.

As noted previously the urban design guidelines and the draft OPA are intertwined in terms of approach, direction and treatment of the built form and public realm for the NDYPF. Although the summary provided below is more particularly directed to the

urban design guidelines, the key policy directions for the draft OPA are also noted to provide an understanding of the linkage between the documents.

The policies for the draft OPA for North Downtown Yonge will be added to Chapter Seven: Site and Area Specific Policies of the City's Official Plan. The draft OPA provides the vision and the policy framework to guide development within the study area. To recognize the distinct and varied character of the area, Special Character Areas were defined throughout the NDYPF. The Special Character Areas in the draft OPA are the same geography as the precinct and corridor areas in the urban design guidelines. The draft OPA provides policies that are applicable to the whole of the area and then, in the Structure section, provides more specific policies for each Special Character Area. This format is replicated in the urban design guidelines with additional detail in Precincts and Corridors Yonge Street Corridor, in terms of a block by block analysis. There is direction in the policy to link the North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines. The following summary will be primarily addressing the urban design guidelines but will attempt to address the linkage to the draft OPA policies as well.

# **Urban Design Guidelines**

The urban design guidelines consist of the following sections:

- 1. Introduction including the objectives of the guidelines and the location to which they apply
- 2. Heritage
- 3. Yonge Street and Culture
- 4. Precincts and Corridors
  - 4.1. Bloor Street Corridor
  - 4.2. Hayden-Church Precinct
  - 4.3. St. Nicholas Precinct
  - 4.4. Gloucester/Dundonald Precinct
  - 4.5. Church Street Village Precinct
  - 4.6. College/Carlton Corridor
  - 4.7. Bay Street Corridor
  - 4.8. Yonge Street Corridor
    - Downtown Tall Building Performance Standards
    - Yonge Street, A "Great Street"
    - Character Areas along Yonge Street Corridor
    - Block by Block Analysis along Yonge Street Corridor
  - 4.9. Isabella and Wellesley/Wood Precincts
- 5. Built Form Framework
- 6. Street Character Types
- 7. Public Realm/Parkland
- 8. Gateway Treatments
- 9. Views, Key Sites and View Terminus
- 10. Public Art

- 11. Shadow Sensitive Areas
- 12. Sustainability and Green Standards

#### **Objectives**

The Introduction includes both the location of the study area and the guidelines as well as the objectives for the North Downtown Yonge area. There are a number of more detailed key objectives listed in the guidelines but in summary the general intent is to help improve the quality of life by providing appropriate built form and public space guidance, while being respectful of the integrity of the surrounding context.

#### Heritage

Heritage is recognized as a key component of the guidelines and will also be a priority in the draft OPA especially given the amount and type of heritage found within the area. The Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District Study process is recognized as well as the fact that the study and the resulting Heritage Conservation District may result in some of the guidelines and draft OPA policies being amended or superseded. The policies recognize that areas with significant heritage resources may not be redevelopment sites whereas there may be sites where heritage could be respectfully incorporated into redevelopment or new development subject to detailed review.

#### Yonge Street and Culture

Yonge Street is not just a priority retail street; it is a major cultural and civic corridor, which has become the key spine of Toronto. This is recognized throughout urban design guidelines along with the distinct character resulting from the narrow frontages of the heritage structures. Tourism has also been a prominent activity with the famous Toronto Eaton Centre, cultural services such as Ed Mirvish Theatre and Panasonic Theatre, iconic public open spaces like Yonge Dundas Square, mixed use developments including 10 Dundas Street East, as well as the popular year round events and parades have all added to the tourism and cultural significance of the Study Area.

#### **Precincts and Corridors**

This section of the urban design guidelines provides specific direction for the Precincts and Corridors. As noted previously, the Precinct and Corridor areas in the urban design guidelines have the same geography as the Special Character Areas in the draft OPA with the draft policies. The urban design guidelines also address the transition between the NDYPF and the Bloor Yorkville/North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines. Area specific Official Plan Amendment No. 211 (OPA 211) addresses the area within the Bloor Yorkville/North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines. The policies of OPA 211 in the Yorkville area are currently under review by City Planning staff through another process. It is anticipated that staff will report on this review to Community Council in the fourth quarter of 2013.

#### Bloor Street Corridor and Hayden-Church Precinct

Although the Bloor Street Corridor and Hayden-Church Precinct is not within the study area and is currently addressed through the Bloor Yorkville North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines, they have both been addressed to ensure consistency between the Staff report for action – Status Update Report – North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework Official Plan Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines built form and streetscape direction of both of the urban design guideline documents. There are no changes to the existing guidelines being recommended in the NDYPF urban design guidelines.

#### St. Nicholas Precinct

The St. Nicholas Precinct is located on the west side of Yonge Street from St. Joseph Street to St. Mary Street. Development in the St. Nicholas Precinct is characterized with low rise two and four storey heritage townhouses and walk up apartment buildings. The St. Nicholas Precinct will respect and reinforce the existing character of:

- heritage context of the buildings;
- Main Street Typology;
- Restrict height and density to its current as-of-right;
- No new net shadow beyond the as-of-right zoning permissions;
- Retention of existing streetscaping and enhancement where feasible;
- provide locations for greening the City boulevard on both sides of the street with plantings and streetscaping treatments; and
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian connections within the area.

#### **Gloucester Dundonald Precinct**

The Gloucester Dundonald Precinct is located in the middle of the study area and is designated *Neighbourhood* in the Official Plan. The area contains a mix of residential single detached, semi detached, and townhouses. This precinct is not suitable for tall buildings given the designation and policy direction which seeks to provide protection from the negative impacts of future development such as inappropriate shadowing from surrounding development. Development in the Gloucester Street/Dundonald Street Precinct will retain and respect the existing residential built form and reinforce the existing character of:

- new development will be in the form of low-rise residential (single detached, semi-detached, townhouses) and small scale commercial;
- heritage buildings will be preserved, maintained and enhanced; and
- shadow impact of any tall building development in the vicinity will be closely reviewed to minimize impact.

#### Church Street Village Precinct

The Church Street Village Precinct is home to the City of Toronto's LGBT Village. The built form context is generally three-storeys in height with retail at grade and rental apartments and offices above. The area is characterized with a Main Street feel: two lanes of traffic, on-street parking, outdoor cafes, street furniture, public art, standardized lighting and iconic heritage buildings. Site Specific Policy 155 currently applies to the village. Through the NDYPF the policies and boundary of the Village were reviewed to determine if any changes should be implemented. The policy direction for the Church Street Village is as follows:

- boundary for the Church Street Village as defined through Site Specific Policy 155 should be extended north to Isabella Street and south to Wood Street from the current boundaries at Gloucester Street and Alexander Street to recognize the current village;
- existing policies of Site Specific Policy 155 should be incorporated into the policies for this Precinct;
- heritage and built form characteristics should be enforced to require that new development be an appropriate scale and mid-rise;
- Church Street is identified in the Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines as a priority retail street. Policies will maintain the narrow frontage and small scale commercial use; and
- require a high quality public realm.

It is proposed that the Church Street Village Precinct will maintain the existing 44 degree angular plane in Zoning By-law 438-86 and the existing height limits in the Zoning By-law for properties fronting along the portion of the street.

#### College/Carlton Corridor

College/Carlton Corridor is a priority retail street that connects a number of Downtown neighbourhoods as well as institutional and recreational facilities. The street is characterized by a canyon built form with retail uses between Bay Street and Jarvis Street. College/Carlton Streets have a mix of retail, commercial and institutional uses and streetcar service. Higher densities and tall buildings are considered appropriate in this area as identified through the Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines. Development direction includes preservation and enhancement of heritage, maintaining the existing street wall height, stepback and setback.

#### **Bay Street Corridor**

The Bay Street Corridor includes the fronting properties along Bay Street as well as the area east of Bay Street to the Yonge Street Corridor. Adjacent to the west is the University of Toronto for which there is a Secondary Plan. The Downtown Tall Building Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines recognize Bay Street as a High Street with a tower and podium built form. There is a mix of high rise office and institutional towers, residential condominiums and apartment buildings with retail at-grade. Bay Street is known for its wide sidewalks, outdoor patios and street trees. Canopies and colonnades are used along Bay Street for weather protection; Cloverhill Park is located at the St. Joseph Street intersection. The area is designated *Mixed Use* and with a small component of *Institutional* at the southwest corner of Bay Street and Wellesley Street West. Bay Street has had significant growth during the last decade and continues to be viewed as an area for tall buildings as shown in the Downtown Tall Building Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines. Direction for this area includes encouraging retail at grade, requiring continuous weather protection along all street frontages, public realm

improvements, provision of additional park space at Breadalbane Park (previously Opera Place Park north) which has protection from net shadow beyond as-of-right zoning impacts from surrounding developments.

#### Yonge Street Corridor

Yonge Street between College/Carlton Streets and Bloor Street is characterized by a strong heritage fabric and a predominantly low rise main street building typology that includes a prevailing street wall height of 2 to 4 storeys, narrow retail frontages and shallow lot depths. In the Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines, Yonge Street is shown as a priority retail street, which will be maintained and enhanced with fine-grained retail and a high quality public realm. Development direction for Yonge Street includes:

- preservation and enhancement of heritage structures;
- tower stepbacks of 10 metres where there is no on-site heritage and 20 metres where heritage properties are present;
- a consistent street wall with active at grade uses taking into account opportunities for sidewalk requirements;
- a minimum of 20 metres between a tower face and areas designated *Neighbourhood* in the Official Plan;
- minimum 6 metre sidewalk widths where possible through redevelopment sites where there is no heritage building;
- an active public realm including patios setback on private property and wrapping around the side streets, and locations for greening in boulevards, with enhanced streetscaping, through linkages and connections to green space;
- animation laneways and improving their pedestrian connection; and
- responding to key views and locations, avoiding encroachment into the viewshed of significant buildings.

Height is not consistent through the current built form along Yonge Street between Bloor Street and College/Carlton Streets. The tallest development just north of the Yonge Street Precinct on the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Bloor Street is 1 Bloor Street East. This site occupies a full city block and can support a larger development with a tall tower. The intersection of Yonge Street and Bloor Street is identified as a height peak area in the Bloor Yorkville/North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines to accommodate the tallest towers in the area. The immediate context is in keeping with height and density and no heritage resources were on the site. To the south of the Yonge Street Precinct is the Aura at College Park located at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Gerrard Street. This site is part of the larger College Park development consisting of a full city block and was approved through the Ontario Municipal Board. No new density was ascribed to the site. These two blocks and developments that book-end the north and south end of the study area are more unique and not considered to be appropriate precedents to be replicated anywhere within the Yonge Street Precinct. The vision for the whole of the Yonge Street Precinct is to create a place where site specific projects need to be evaluated in their larger context to achieve consistency and implement the urban design objectives.

It is recognized that there are some sites along portions of Yonge Street where tall building development may be possible, as lot size, depth and specific location can physically accommodate a tall building and its service requirements, and where there are no on-site heritage resource considerations. Other sites are quite restricted to the extent that tall building development is not appropriate. The urban design guidelines address height through areas identified as Peaks, Transition and Heritage Character Area. Along with directions on height and setbacks an angular plane will pertain to the Heritage Character Area of Yonge Street where there is a greater heritage fabric. With the characteristics of Yonge Street changing through its length, a block-by-block analysis is provided in the guidelines for a better understanding of the appropriate design approach for the different segments of Yonge Street. Shaping built form is also intended to influence density and help manage infrastructure for growth. The draft Official Plan Amendment also includes an overall direction on height except for the block-by-block analysis.

#### Isabella Precinct

The Isabella Precinct is located between the Yonge Street Corridor and Church Street Village Precinct, Charles Street East and Gloucester Street. The area is designated *Apartment Neigbourhoods* and *Mixed Use Areas* in the Official Plan. The area contains primarily residential apartment buildings with a "tower in the park" style. Most of the buildings are setback from the street with generous space around the buildings that provide private open space. Development or redevelopment potential in this area will be related to infill projects that protect the established built form and maintain adequate open space. The height of new development should be in keeping with existing heights in the area.

#### Wellesley/Wood Precinct

The Wellesley/Wood Precinct is located between the Yonge Street Corridor and Church Street Village Precinct, the south side of Gloucester/Dundonald Precinct and the College/Carlton Corridor. The area is designated Apartment Neigbourhoods and Mixed Use Areas in the Official Plan. Wellesley Street transects the northerly part of the area and is recognized in the Downtown Tall Building Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines as a High Street with a tower podium built form. The area contains a mix of office and residential buildings along Wellesley Street East with primarily residential apartment to the south end of the area. The apartments to the south of Wellesley Street East range from "tower in the park" style to narrow mid-rise buildings. Most of the buildings are setback from the street with generous space around the buildings that provide private open space. As with the Isabella Precinct, development or redevelopment potential in this area will be related to infill projects that protect the established built form and maintain adequate open space. The height of new development should be in keeping with existing heights in the area. Shadow impact is addressed regarding the designated *Neighbourhood* area to the north and other open space within the area. Streetscape direction is provided for the east/west streets to enhance the public realm.

#### Built Form and Urban Design

Revitalization within North Downtown Yonge area is expected to occur through redevelopment, renewal and infill. Together with the policies of the draft OPA, the urban design guidelines will be used to ensure high quality, appropriately scaled development which relates positively to the existing and planned context and contributes to and achieves an enhanced public realm. Direction is provided in terms of setbacks, stepbacks, protection of low-rise areas. The attached urban design guidelines provide further details on built form.

#### Street Character Types, Gateway Treatments, Views, Key Sites and View Terminus

Street character types are identified in the urban design guidelines to reflect the functional differences the hierarchy of streets and their treatment in terms of built form and streetscape. Other areas are identified for specific treatment including gateways, views, key sites and view termini that will lend additional character and identity to the area. These are identified and described in detail in the urban design guidelines.

#### Public Realm/Parkland, Public Art and Shadow Sensitive Areas

The parks and open space system is a fundamental element to providing recreational opportunities and spaces for social activity. The area within the NDYPF has been identified as an underserved area for parkland. The primary existing park space consists of a small linear park system east of Yonge Street running north-south over the Yonge Street subway. In addition to the linear park system are several small dispersed park blocks that are poorly connected to pedestrian pathways, sidewalks, buildings and the overall parks network.

The policies discuss the opportunities to increase the amount of parkland and privately owned publically accessible open space. The goal is to expand existing parkland wherever possible to create larger more viable parcels and to add to the park space by purchasing or obtaining land in identified locations to create park space and create linkages between park spaces. Shadow is addressed within the precinct and corridor areas as well as in the parkland section to minimize shadow impacts on the open space areas. The measures are targeted to the particular type of open space and the current and expected usage of the space. Some areas will have more protection in the morning and evenings, some throughout the day. As-of-right impacts will be taken into account in the shadow analyses for the areas.

Improvements to the public realm are also a key component that include a variety of measures such as large and small scale greening, streetscape initiatives, pedestrian amenity, continuous weather protection along buildings, sidewalk widening, built form improvements, creation/enhancement of plazas, forecourts, on-site tree plantings, green or enhanced streetscape, boulevard parking reclamation, parklettes and community gardens. Public Art is also a key component for developments within the plan area. Public art is encouraged in all significant private sector developments within the area in accordance with the City of Toronto Percent for Public Art Program.

# **Draft Official Plan Amendment**

The Draft Official Plan Amendment follows a similar format to the urban design guidelines. The general principles and policy directions are outlined in the previous section. This section will address where the draft OPA departs from the urban design guidelines.

The draft OPA will consist of the following:

- 1) Goals and Vision
- 2) Heritage
- 3) Built Form and Urban Design
- 4) Public Realm and Parkland
- 5) Housing
- 6) Culture
- 6) Structure
- 7) Sustainability
- 8) Implementation

#### Goals and Vision

The Goals and Vision provide the broad direction of the vision for the area. Although growth is anticipated within the area, the vision is that any development or redevelopment be directed to maintain the heritage character of the area and to create a vibrant and liveable community.

#### Housing

The NDYPF currently has a mix of housing types, densities, and tenures that accommodate a range of household sizes, composition, ages and incomes. Policies will be included in the draft OPA to recognize the housing diversity and opportunities so that residents are supported in their choice to remain in their community throughout their life. Policies will also be included to address affordable rental housing and low-end-of-market housing, particularly for larger units of 3-bedrooms or more.

#### Culture

Yonge Street is designated as a Cultural Corridor from Lake Ontario to Dundas Street in the *City of Toronto Waterfront Culture & Heritage Infrastructure Plan (2001)*. The North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework is home to a range of cultural institutions and activities of both local and regional significance including, Panasonic Theatre, Maple Leaf Gardens, Canadian Music Centre, Alliance Atlantis, Toronto Reference Library, Masonic Temple and Buddies in Bad Times Theatre.

Firstly, existing and new uses that support and expand the vitality of cultural activity in the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework Study will be encouraged through the draft OPA. The draft policies and the urban design guidelines recognize the historical cultural identity of Yonge Street from College/Carlton Streets to Bloor Street and that this identity provides insight into a significant past that should be maintained through the

built form. The retention of the existing heritage buildings will be encouraged to maintain this cultural corridor.

Secondly, *Creative Capital Gains Report – An Action Plan for Toronto* was unanimously endorsed by City Council in May 2011 that included five key areas for City investment with the first recommendation being that the City ensure a supply of affordable, sustainable cultural space. As such and through the draft OPA, new developments within the North Downtown Yonge Street Neighbourhood should consider incorporating affordable, sustainable cultural space in their real estate development projects as per the feedback from the various BIA's and Neighbourhood Associations through the recent mini-charrette and community consultations.

#### **Open Space/Parkland**

The study area is identified as an area that is deficient in parkland. The existing parkland blocks within the NDYPF are relatively small and disconnected. They include passive type parks featuring one playground and some passive seating areas. The draft OPA may consider the acquisition of new park space wherever possible and supports publically accessible private open space to augment the open space in the area.

#### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES SERVICES**

Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) are part of a healthy neighbourhood that help meet the everyday needs of local residents and employees and make the area attractive for future development. Through the NDYPF and the number of applications submitted in the area, it was determined that an area wide review of the schools, child care facilities, libraries, pools, community centers, parks and open spaces was needed to identify service provision issues and assist in determining CS&F improvements. This will be pursued through a broader review of downtown growth and infrastructure.

In the short term, one of the recommended CS&F improvements includes the full or partial acquisition of the Toronto Parking Authority parking lot on the south side of Wellesley Street East (20R Maitland Street) for a linear park extension. Other opportunities include the expansion of Breadalbane Park and Norman Jewison Park, the acquisition of land near Wood Street and Church Street, and the introduction of a public green roof on top of the Wellesley Subway Station.

# **COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD PARKING AREAS**

There are currently areas within the Study Area where commercial boulevard parking encroaches on the City right-of-way. From a planning perspective, this is not an appropriate use of city owned land given the parkland deficiency in the area, availability of on-street parking and commercial parking lots, and narrow abutting sidewalks. The Urban Design Guidelines will provide details regarding opportunities for the removal of commercial boulevard parking areas and replacement with widened sidewalks, sitting areas, bicycle parking areas, sidewalk cafes and community gardens.

# CONCLUSION

The draft Official Plan Amendment combined with the urban design guidelines provides a meaningful policy framework and implementation strategy that address the principles emerging from the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework consultation process. These documents support the protection of heritage resources, the enhancement of the public realm and that appropriate development occurs that is respectful of the cultural fabric of the North Downtown Yonge Street Neighbourhood and supporting infrastructure is provided to create a vibrant liveable community.

Over the past several years development pressure within the study area and particularly along Yonge Street within the study area has been increasing. Planning staff undertook this Study to address the potential intensification within the North Downtown Yonge Planning Area. The draft Official Plan Amendment described in this report and the attached draft Urban Design Guidelines provides a policy and design framework for future development within the study area.

Planning staff will bring forth the final Official Plan Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines to Community Council for consideration in September 2013.

#### CONTACT

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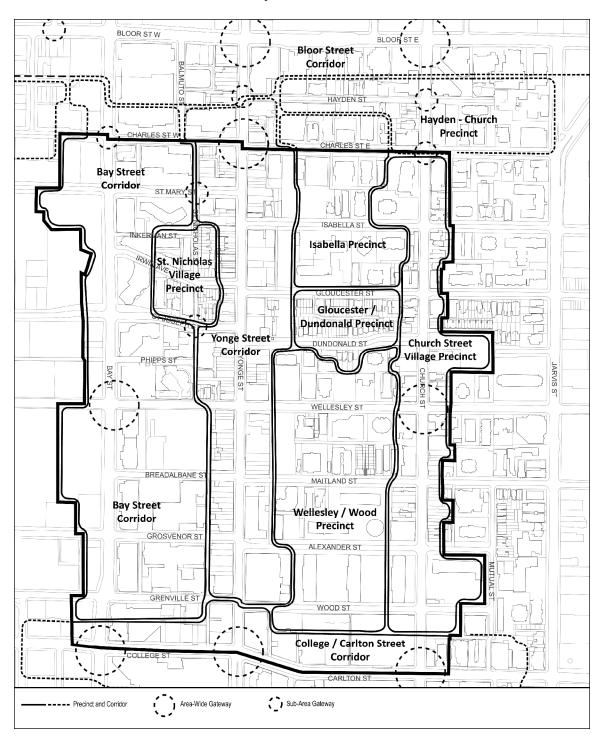
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Attachment 1 – Final Study Area with Precincts and Corridors

Attachment 2 - Community Consultation Summary

Attachment 3 – Development within the North Downtown Yonge Area

Attachment 4 – North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines



**Attachment 1: Final Study Area with Precincts and Corridors** 

#### **Attachment 2: Community Consultation Summary**

#### August 22, 2011 - Developer Focused Consultation Open House

Planning staff invited developers with active applications in the area and consultants that had or were currently working on applications within the study area to discuss the Terms of Reference for the proposed study. Staff emphasized that built form was a key aspect of this study. The developers provided the following feedback:

- 1. Maintain heritage built form with a 7.5 m setback;
- 2. Use stepbacks for a reduction in angular planes;
- 3. Higher density along Yonge Street is needed;
- 4. Zero setbacks were requested;
- 5. Intensification at pedestrian level and along subways lines;
- 6. Yonge Street is not a Main Street anymore; this is a tall building study;
- 7. Need to protect heritage and existing retail; and
- 8. Provide a mix of old and new uses.

#### August 24, 2011 - BIA's/Neighbourhood Associations Focused

Planning staff invited the area BIA's and Neighbourhood Associations to discuss the Terms of Reference for the proposed study. The invitees included: Downtown Yonge BIA, Church Wellesley Village BIA, Bloor-Yorkville BIA, Historic Yonge BIA, Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association, Bay Cloverhill Community Association, Bloor East neighbourhood Association. The participants provided the following feedback:

- 1. Develop a Heritage Cultural District;
- 2. No new residential tower condominiums on Yonge Street;
- 3. Increase stepback for residential condominium towers to 75 metres from the Yonge Street right-of-way;
- 4. Prepare a cultural map for Yonge Street;
- 5. Protect the main street feel of Yonge Street and Church Street;
- 6. Connect the neighbourhoods;
- 7. Put massive investment in public realm animate the streets;
- 8. Protect and value heritage buildings;
- 9. Protect facades;
- 10. Increase sidewalk widths;
- 11. Height is an issue promote small low scale retail units;
- 12. Lack of parks and open space acquire additional lands for parks; and
- 13. Community services need a real plan.

# September 9, 2011 - Walkabout with Developers, BIAs and Neighbourhood Associations

On September 9, 2011 Planning staff held a walkabout with Developers, BIAs and Neighbourhood Associations. The event was well attended. The walk started at Church Street and Carlton Street and the community walked the perimeter of the study area along Yonge Street, Charles Street East and Church Street. The community provided the following feedback:

- 1. Protect existing heritage buildings;
- 2. No new residential condominium towers on Yonge Street;
- 3. Increase the stepback for new residential towers to 75 metres from the Yonge Street right-of-way;
- 4. Standardize street lighting;
- 5. Introduce public realm initiatives widening of sidewalks, improved streetscaping, encourage weather protection, protect and improve laneways, improved pedestrian crossings, appropriate signage;
- 6. Protection of existing *Neighbourhoods* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods*;
- 7. Protection of Site Specific OP Policy 155 Church Street protection of special character defined by low scale and form of existing buildings; and
- 8. Encourage public art, community gardens and street patios.

# September 30, 2011 – Mini-Charrette/ with the BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations and Developers

A one-day design working group meeting was held at the 519 Community Centre that was in the general format of a condensed charrette process. Approximately 45 people attended the mini-charrette on September 30, 2011 organized by Planning staff. Attendees included area BIA's, Neighbourhood Associations, landowners and developers. The mini-charrette was co-ordinated around the following issues: Public Realm; Height; Heritage; Stepbacks; Open Space/Parks; Streetscape; Street Furniture; Sidewalk Widths; Signage; Weather Protection; Street Lighting; Sidewalk Cafes.

The following is the result of the discussion:

Issue	Mini-Charrette Members Comments
Public Realm	- Wider and improved sidewalks -for walking and wheelchairs, street
	furniture;
	- Provide raised planters and improved streetscaping wherever possible;
	- Hanging baskets might be good greening solution;
	- Designate large spaces of land for parks;
	- Increase benches and amenities for pedestrians;
	- Standardize lighting;
	- Encourage weather protection – not on heritage buildings;
	- Bulb out sidewalks – remove outside lanes on Yonge Street to streetscaping;
	- Pedestrianize the street;
	- Provide wider sidewalks;
	- No signs on heritage buildings;
	- Signage should reflect main street heritage character of Yonge Street;
	- Enhance pedestrian realm by reducing vehicle traffic;
	- Create Cultural Corridor – create places where people meet and observe;
	- No appetite for excessively lit buildings, video and animated signs; and
	- A cohesive signage vision is needed.
Built Form	- New development should respect the context of existing buildings with small
	scale retail at grade;

	- New development should have appropriate angular planes and setbacks;
	- Tall buildings should be directed to large under-utilized sites (surface
	parking lots);
	- Mid-rise slab built form more appropriate for Yonge Street;
	- More rental and co-operative housing;
	- Maximum 4-storey podiums;
	- Blend heritage and new building at rear;
	- No concrete canyons;
	- 10-12 storeys in height is appropriate;
	- No building to lot line;
	- Gradual increase in height rather than straight down;
	- Protect Yonge Street as a pedestrian corridor;
	- Height less important than podium and stepback;
	- Stepback – 10-15 metres from Yonge Street;
	- Protect mid-block area and cross streets;
	- Stepback appropriate depending on block;
	- Each new tower creates a negligible increase in shadow, but taken together
	it's a lot of shadow;
	- No new shadows on parks;
	- No street lighting on building walls;
	- Parks not sufficiently lit; and
	- Consolidate newspaper boxes.
Height	- No new height on Yonge Street;
0	- If there must be height, a minimum stepback of 30 metres for the tower from
	the Yonge Street right-of-way;
	- Heights should be midrise on Church Street; and
	- Heights should respect heritage, parks, and low rise areas.
Heritage	- Minimum of 30 metre stepback for development on or adjacent to heritage
Hennage	buildings on Yonge Street;
	- Preserve all heritage buildings on Yonge Street
	- Low-scale and heritage make Yonge Street important and interesting;
	- Protect more heritage facades;
	- Limited development potential behind heritage;
	- New development should maintain character, height and massing of heritage
	building;
	- Not enough protection of heritage buildings;
	- Create a Heritage Conservation District;
	- Maintain the character of Yonge Street and protect area character;
	- Enforce cultural character of street; and
	- Branding the street – designating the street.
Community	- No community centre near Bay and Yonge Streets;
Services and	- No recreation facilities; and
Amenities	
Amennues	- Lack of open spaces.

#### November 15, 2011 – Open House

On November 15, 2011 an open house was held with the BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations and Developers to provide feedback on the results of the mini-charrette for the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework Study. The attendees provided the following feedback:

- 1. The developments at 1 Bloor Street East and the Aura at Yonge Street and Gerrard Street should not be used as a precedent for the area;
- 2. Above grade parking is not appropriate;
- 3. A minimum 30 metre stepback for residential condominium towers from the Yonge Street right-of-way is preferred;
- 4. Dense European style development with a maximum of 10 storeys would be ideal for areas of Yonge Street with strong heritage presence;
- 5. A heritage conservation district for all of Yonge Street should be pursued
- 6. Infrastructure improvements should be reviewed to ensure capacity to accommodate growth;
- 7. The architecture of new development should be in keeping with the style of the existing heritage buildings and include a mix of retail, office and residential
- 8. Protect the main street feel of Yonge Street and Church Street;
- 9. Make area more pedestrian and family friendly;
- 10. Put massive investment in public realm animate the streets;
- 11. Increase green space and public realm improvements;
- 12. Provide additional bicycle parking;
- 13. Increase sidewalk widths;
- 14. Height is an issue no towers should be considered for Yonge Street;
- 15. Animate laneways;
- 16. Signage needs improvement; and
- 17. Implement an Interim Control By-law.

#### March 26, April 2, April 18, May 1, 2012 – Working Groups on the Official Plan Amendment and the Urban Design Guidelines.

The first working group discussion was focussed on the draft Official Plan Amendment to receive feedback on the content. The discussion focused on requested heights, setbacks and stepbacks for developments along Yonge Street. The following three working groups were to discuss various elements of the proposed urban design guidelines. Separate detailed notes for reference were done for these groups and comments have been incorporated into the review and drafting of the urban design guidelines and the draft OPA.

#### February 16, 2012 – Community Consultation Meeting

On February 16, 2012 a community consultation meeting was held with the BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations and Developers to provide feedback on the results to date of the North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework Study. The attendees provided the following feedback:

1. Future development should maintain the existing 2-4 storey streetwall;

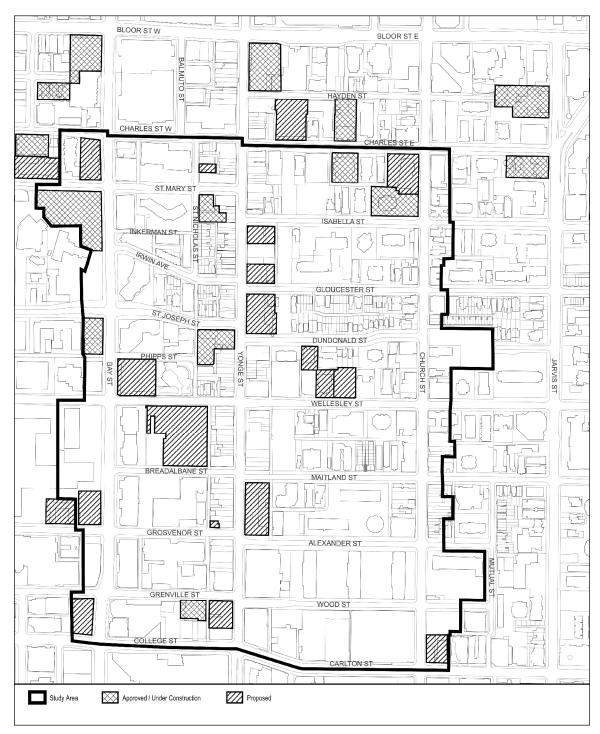
- 2. Maintain a coherent architectural link between new development and the existing massing and rhythm on Yonge Street;
- 3. Maintain a smooth transition between existing lower scale buildings and new tower development through angular planes and stepbacks;
- 4. Shadow and wind impacts should be closely controlled;
- 5. Architecture, massing and orientation of tower development should ensure maximum sunlight and minimize wind impacts on the street;
- 6. Except where there is heritage buildings sidewalks should be widened;
- 7. Minimize balcony overlook on Yonge Street;
- 8. Materials should be high quality, natural, minimize glazing, metal, exposed concrete;
- 9. Tower top should be interesting with high quality materials;
- 10. Animate laneways, provide for retail use, require high quality materials and make more pedestrian friendly;
- 11. Create mid-block connections;
- 12. Terminus sites should have high quality unique architectural treatment;
- 13. Incorporate heritage properties;
- 14. Larger format stores should be located on second floor or higher;
- 15. Provision of larger sized family units with 3-bedrooms or more;
- 16. No above grade parking; and
- 17. Provide tighter development limitations for the Church Street Village.

#### **October 9, 2012 – Community Presentation**

On October 9, 2012 staff presented to the community an overview of the intended contents for the Official Plan Amendment and the Urban Design Guidelines. The meeting attended by members of the BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations and Developers. The attendees provided the following feedback:

- 1. Parkland should be required for new developments and purchased/obtained in the area;
- 2. Yonge Street should be reduced to two lanes and add bicycle lanes, widen sidewalks and use for streetscape improvement;
- 3. Owners of heritage properties should be penalized if property not maintained;
- 4. Tax breaks should be considered for heritage properties and retention of heritage through the development process;
- 5. Sunlight protection should be longer than between 12:00 2:00 p.m. as that caters to a small defined demographic, morning and evening (after work) especially should be included as key times as well;
- 6. Wellesley Street should not permit tall buildings or be within a height peak or transition area;
- 7. Parking should be considered to support retail;
- 8. Laneway interface and integration should be in the policy as well as the guidelines;
- 9. Retail should be restricted to narrow frontage format to replicate existing rhythm;
- 10. Sites should not be sterilized;
- 11. Layby's should be incorporated;

- 12. The angular plane is too steep;
- 13. Increase distance between buildings to allow light and sky view; and
- 14. Questions on the affect of an HCD on policy and guidelines.



#### Attachment 3: Approved, Under Construction and Proposed Development within the North Downtown Yonge Area

Address	Application Type	Description
620 Church Street	Zoning Amendment 11 330270 STE 27 OZ Proposed	Two 3-storey walk-up residential condominium apartment buildings containing 43 residential condominium units including 37 one-bedroom units
2-8 Gloucester Street	Zoning Amendment 11 216486 STE 27 OZ Proposed	and 6 two-bedroom units. 34-storey residential tower with 232 residential units, commercial uses at grade and two levels of below grade parking. Retaining 5-storey heritage building (Masonic Hall).
17 Dundonald Street	Zoning Amendment 12 154762 STE 27 OZ Proposed	18-storey residential building with 115 residential units and 3 levels of below grade parking. Includes partial retention of the facades of the existing designated heritage building on site as well as a secondary entrance to the Wellesley TTC subway station.
501-521 Yonge Street	Zoning Amendment 11 187996 STE 27 OZ Proposed	Two mixed use towers of 52 and 23 storeys containing 776 residential units on a shared 6-8 storey base. Retail uses at grade and mezzanine, residential level 3, above grade parking.
587-599 Yonge St, 2- 4 Dundonald St, 7-9 Gloucester St	Zoning Amendment 12 235622 STE 27 OZ Proposed	49-storey mixed use tower with 513 residential units, retail at grade and on the second storey, and 202 underground parking spaces.
454-464 Yonge Street	Zoning Amendment 11 296426 STE 27 OZ Proposed	60-storey mixed use tower complete with 3 levels of commercial/office space, 660 residential units above and 196 parking spaces in a below grade parking structure.
625 – 637 Yonge Street, 1-9 Isabella Street	Zoning Amendment 12 260124 STE 27 OZ Proposed	40-storey mixed use tower with retail at grade, office and 326 residential units and below grade parking.
606-618 Yonge Street, 5-9 St. Joseph Street, 11-25 St. Nicholas Street	Zoning Amendment Under Construction	45-storey mixed use tower with 412 residential units and retail units at grade.
9-21 Grenville Street	Zoning Amendment 10 196552 STE 27 SA Approved	50-storey mixed use tower with 7-levels of below grade parking, 487 residential units and retail on the ground level.
42 Charles Street East	Zoning Amendment 11 194814 STE 27 OZ Approved	56-storey mixed use tower containing 447 residential units on a 3-storey podium. Five levels of underground parking with 220 parking spaces.
45 Charles Street East	Zoning Amendment 06 198326 STE 27 OZ Under Construction	47-storey mixed use tower containing 511 residential units and 229 parking spaces.
20 Charles Street East	Site Plan Application 09 174970 STE 27 SA Proposed	Two additional floors for the existing Toronto Parking Authority garage.
55 Charles Street West	Zoning Amendment 05 112259 STE 27 OZ Proposed	Rental conversion into 149 residential condominium units.
77 Charles Street West	Zoning Amendment 04 149437 STE 27 OZ Approved	Demolish existing building and construct a 16-storey tower with 72 residential units.

#### Approved, Under Construction and Proposed Development within the North Downtown Yonge Area

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#### Attachment 4: North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework Urban Design Guidelines