

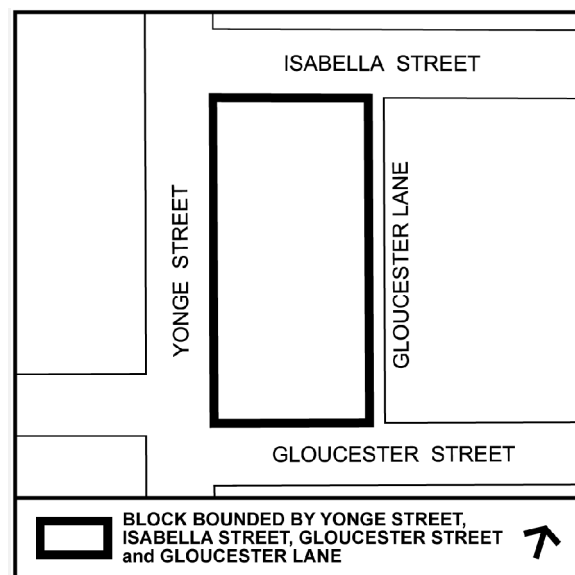
## Lands bounded by Yonge Street, Isabella Street, Gloucester Lane and Gloucester Street – City Initiated Official Plan Amendment – Final Report

<b>Date:</b>	April 14, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 27 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale
<b>Reference Number:</b>	14 130038 STE 27 OZ

### SUMMARY

An Official Plan Amendment is proposed by the City of Toronto to establish a Site and Area Specific Policy for the block bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south. The intent of the policy is to limit the block to a maximum of two new tall buildings, with a minimum separation of 25 metres between the face of the tall building towers. The Draft Official Plan Amendment is in Attachment 1.

A 34-storey building was approved at the south end of the block and an application for a Zoning By-law Amendment to permit a second tower in the block, at the north end, has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. Given this OMB appeal and lack of consolidation of the balance of the block, a Site and Area Specific Policy is appropriate to ensure that any towers within the block have a separation distance of 25 metres. That would also result in a maximum of two towers within this block.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council amend the Official Plan, for the lands bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south, substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment No. 1 to report (April 14, 2014) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment as may be required.

### **Financial Impact**

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of February 19, 2014 City Council requested the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District to initiate an amendment to the Official Plan to create a "site and area specific policy" for the block bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Street to the south, and Gloucester Lane to the east, generally stating that the block contain a maximum of two tall buildings, with a minimum separation of 25 metres between the face of the tall building towers. It was also requested that the amendment be scheduled for consideration at the same Toronto and East York Community Council meeting as the revised Zoning By-law Amendment application for 625, 629 and 637 Yonge Street and 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 Isabella Street (File 12 260124 STE 27 OZ). (Item MM48.21).

City Council also provided direction to staff to schedule a community consultation meeting for the proposed Official Plan amendment with the Ward Councillor.

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

#### **Proposal**

This amendment is consistent with the objectives of the City-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines as well as the North Downtown Yonge Site and Area Specific Policy 382, Official Plan Amendment 183 and the North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines. While it is not necessary to rely on a site specific Official Plan Amendment such as this to apply a 25 metre tower separation to zoning amendments and site plan applications, City staff wish to ensure, given the current OMB appeal for the Rezoning application for 625, 629 and 637 Yonge Street and 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 Isabella Street and the lack of consolidation of the balance of the block, that the Guideline recommended 25 metre tower separation will be applied. That would also result in a maximum of two towers within this block.

The reasons for a 25 metre tower separation are set out in the Tall Building Design Guidelines and include sky view, privacy and daylight.

## **Site and Surrounding Area**

This block is located on the east side of Yonge Street, between Isabella Street and Gloucester Street. Gloucester Lane runs along the rear of the block.

At the north end of the block, at the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Isabella Street, there are three commercial buildings, ranging in heights from 2-storeys on Isabella Street and 3-storeys on Yonge Street. A Zoning By-law Amendment application has been submitted to permit a mixed-use development consisting of a 40-storey building, including a 4-storey base building on these properties municipally known as 625, 629 and 637 Yonge Street and 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 Isabella Street. The applicant appealed the application to the Ontario Municipal Board on July 9, 2013 for failure of a Council decision within 120 days of the application being received. The Ontario Municipal Board has scheduled a pre-hearing conference for July 24, 2014 and staff will be submitting a Directions Report to an upcoming Toronto and East York Community Council meeting.

At the south end of the block, adjacent to the Gloucester Street frontage (2 to 8 Gloucester Street and 601 to 613 Yonge Street), a 34-storey mixed use residential tower with retail uses at grade was approved (File 11 216486 STE 27 OZ).

The middle portion of the block consists of two heritage buildings, a 6-storey commercial building on the Yonge Street frontage (615 Yonge Street) and a 5-storey mixed used building at the rear fronting Gloucester Lane and multi-tenant 2-storey commercial buildings (619-623 Yonge Street). The total width of these properties is approximately 34 metres.

## **Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. These policies support the goal of enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians. Key policy objectives include: building strong healthy communities; wise use and management of resources and protecting public health and safety. The PPS recognizes that local context and character is important. Policies are outcome-oriented, and some policies provide flexibility in their implementation provided that provincial interests are upheld. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

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. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

## Official Plan

The Official Plan places this block within the Downtown and Central Waterfront on Map 2 "Urban Structure". The commentary section for Section 2.2.1 Downtown: the Heart of the City, identifies that the Downtown offers opportunities for substantial employment and residential growth, but the growth will not be spread uniformly across the whole of Downtown. Policy 2.2.1.6 states that Design guidelines specific to districts of historic or distinct character will be developed and applied to ensure new development respects the context of such districts in terms of the development's fit with existing streets, setbacks, and heights and relationship to landmark buildings.

This block is designated "*Mixed Use Areas*" on Map 18 – Land Use Plan in the Official Plan. This designation permits a range of residential, commercial and institutional uses. The Plan includes criteria that directs the form and quality of development in this land use designation.

The Official Plan also includes policies related to "Built Form", "Heritage", "Transportation", among other policies.

## North Downtown Yonge Area Specific Policy and Guidelines

At its meeting of October 8-9, 2013, City Council adopted the North Downtown Yonge Area Specific Policy 382, Official Plan Amendment 183 and approved the Final version of the North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines, for the area generally bounded by Charles Street, Bay Street, Church Street and College/Carlton Street. The following is the link to the decision and reports;

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.TE26.14>

The North Downtown Yonge Site and Area Specific Policy 382 provides direction in how development responds to its historic main street context, reinforcing a pedestrian friendly micro-climate and retail uses along the street. This block is within the Yonge Street Character Area which is characterized by a strong heritage fabric, predominantly low-rise main street building typology with a prevailing street wall height of 2 to 4 storeys, retail frontages of around 16 metres in width and shallow lot depths of approximately 18, 25 or 30 metres.

This block is subject to the height provisions of the North Downtown Yonge Area Specific Policy 382 and is identified as being located in the "Core Area" to which an angular plane of 75 degrees taken at a height of 18 metres as measured from the Yonge Street property line applies.

Other Yonge Street Character Area policies that are relevant to this area relate to creating a consistent street wall and store widths along Yonge Street; minimum sidewalk zones and provision of at grade commercial uses, mitigating shadow impacts on the adjacent linear parks; and minimum tower setbacks of 10 metres from the Yonge Street property line for sites with no heritage buildings (min 20 metres setback for sites with heritage buildings). There are also area wide policies related to heritage, parks and open space and the public realm.

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

In May 2013, Toronto City Council adopted the updated city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and directed City Planning staff to use these Guidelines in the evaluation of all new and current tall building development applications. The guidelines establish a unified set of performance measures for the evaluation of tall building proposals to ensure that they fit within their context and minimize their local impacts. The city-wide Guidelines are available at <http://www.toronto.ca/planning/tallbuildingdesign.htm>

Policy 1 in Section 5.3.2 Implementation Plans and Strategies for City-Building, the Official Plan states that Guidelines will be adopted to advance the vision, objectives, and policies of the Plan. Urban Design guidelines specifically are intended "to provide a more detailed framework for built form and public improvements in growth areas." The Tall Building Design Guidelines serve this policy intent, helping to implement Chapter 3.1 The Built Environment and other policies within the Plan related to the design and development of tall buildings in Toronto. Section 3.2.3 of the City-Wide Tall Building Guidelines provides direction regarding tower separation distances and addresses the importance of providing a 25 metre tower separation. This block is located within an area that is also subject to the Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines (adopted by City Council in July 2012 and consolidated with the city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines May 2013). This document identifies specific Downtown streets that are most suitable for tall building development, establishes a height range along these streets and provides a set of supplementary Downtown specific design guidelines which address Downtown built form and context. The Downtown Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines were used together with the city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines in the evaluation of this tall building proposal. The Downtown Guidelines are available at <http://www.toronto.ca/planning/tallbuildingstudy.htm#guidelines>

## **Community Consultation**

City staff held a community consultation meeting on April 9, 2014 with the Ward Councillor to hear comments on the proposed Site and Area Specific Policy. The comments from the area residents were generally positive and many residents understood the need to introduce this policy for the block. A resident in attendance questioned why this policy was being introduced for this block and not other blocks along this portion of Yonge Street. Staff advised that the City may introduce similar Site and Area Specific Policies, as required, to support appropriate development.

## **Conclusion**

While it is not necessary to rely on a site specific Official Plan Amendment such as this to apply a 25 metre tower separation to zoning amendments and site plan applications, City staff wish to ensure, given the current OMB appeal for the Rezoning application at 625, 629 and 637 Yonge Street and 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 Isabella Street and the lack of consolidation of the balance of the block, that the Guideline recommended 25 metre tower separation will be applied and that no more than two towers may be permitted within this block.

This ensures a comprehensive approach to the overall development of the block and also reinforces policies of the Official Plan, including "Built Form", and the objectives of the City-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines as well as the North Downtown Yonge Site and Area Specific Policy 382, Official Plan Amendment 183 and the North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines. The amendment is also consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms, and does not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP  
Director, Community Planning  
Toronto and East York District

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Draft Official Plan Amendment

## **Attachment 1: Draft Official Plan Amendment**

Authority: Toronto and East York Community Council Item ~ as adopted by City of Toronto Council on ~, 2014

Enacted by Council: ~, 2014

### **CITY OF TORONTO**

**Bill No. ~**

**BY-LAW No. ~-2014**

**To adopt an amendment to the Official Plan  
for the City of Toronto  
respecting the lands bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north,  
Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south**

WHEREAS authority is given to Council under the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P. 13, as amended, to pass this By-law;

WHEREAS Council of the City of Toronto has provided adequate information to the public and has held at least one public meeting in accordance with the *Planning Act*;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The attached Amendment No. ~~~ to the Official Plan is hereby adopted pursuant to the *Planning Act*, as amended.
2. This is Official Plan Amendment No. .

ENACTED AND PASSED this ~ day of ~, A.D. 20~.

ROB FORD,  
Mayor

ULLI S. WATKISS,  
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

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**AMENDMENT NO. XXX~ TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN**

**For the lands bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south**

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The Official Plan of the City of Toronto is amended as follows:

1. Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policies, is amended by adding Site and Area Specific Policy No. XXX for the lands bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south as follows:

**XXX            Lands bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south**

A maximum of two new tall buildings shall be permitted within these lands and they must provide a separation distance between their towers of 25 metres or greater, measured from the exterior wall of the buildings, excluding balconies.

2. Chapter 7, Map 29, Site and Area Specific Policies, is revised to add the lands bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Isabella Street to the north, Gloucester Lane to the east and Gloucester Street to the south shown on the map below as Site and Area Specific Policy No. XXX.

