

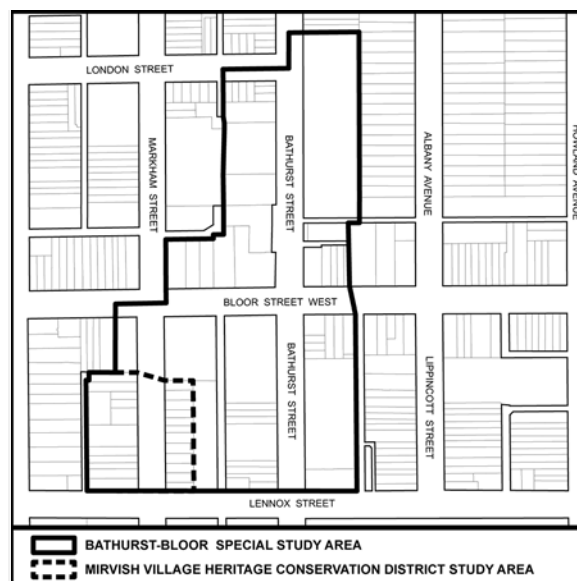
**Bathurst – Bloor Four Corners Study – Official Plan
Amendment – Principles Report**

Date:	March 24, 2015
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 19 – Trinity-Spadina Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	14 254231 STE 20 OZ

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update City Council on the status of the work and next steps for the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study. It also recommends that City Council endorse the emerging principles of the study to inform staff's review of current and future development applications. The Study focuses of the area around the intersection of Bathurst Street and Bloor Street West and was requested as one of the recommendations adopted by City Council as a result of the Bathurst Street Study and Official Plan Amendment No. 246 from Dupont Street to Queen Street West.

The Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study will result in a long term plan including potential Official Plan or Zoning Amendments. The study area includes the Honest Ed's site and extends south of Lennox Street, north of the Bathurst Subway station, east of Albany /Lippincott Street and west of Markham Street south of Bloor Street. This area specific study includes a review of: public realm improvements, pedestrian and cycling connections, heritage conservation, open space, new parks, relationship of the transit station and entrances with their surroundings, appropriate built form, and a full range of residential unit sizes and affordability and land use.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council endorse the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study Principles, attached as Attachment 1 to the report (March 24, 2015) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, and direct staff to apply the Principles in evaluating future and current development applications in the study area along with the direction of the Better Bathurst Built Form and Land Use Study.
2. City Council request the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District to:
 - a) schedule a second community consultation meeting for the Study Area together with the two Ward Councillors on draft Official Plan Policy for the study area.
 - b) report back to Community Council in the third quarter of 2015 with a recommended Official Plan Amendment for the study area.
 - c) report back to Community Council in the third quarter of 2015 on the feasibility of extending Zoning By-law Amendment 714-2014, and its provisions related to retail use, to include all *Mixed Use Areas* in the study area.
 - d) report back to Community Council in the third quarter of 2015 with specific recommendations for the conservation of heritage resources within the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study Area.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

In July 2012, City Council directed staff to initiate a planning study focussing on built form and land use on both sides of Bathurst Street from Dupont to Queen Street ("The Bathurst Study"). That study is now complete and City Council adopted the Official Plan Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP No.465) to guide development in the study area in August 2014. The reasons for the Bathurst Study and the description of the study area (including the building typologies, blocks and parcels, the height, the public realm and the land use, existing and potential heritage resources, and a description of the areas to the north, west, east and south of the study area) are all described in the Final Report on the study which can be found here: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-72135.pdf>

At its meeting on August 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2014, City Council adopted amendments to the Official Plan for Bathurst Street - Queen Street West to Dupont Street. The Official Plan Amendment includes policy for 8 character areas, one of which includes recommendations for the Bathurst-Bloor Character Area, and places a maximum height of six stories on that character

area until the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study is completed. The motion also directs the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, to report to the Toronto and East York Community Council on the heritage attributes, and options for inclusion on the City's heritage inventory, of the properties identified in Section 4.2 of the "Better Bathurst" Final Report by DTAH. The motion can be found at the following link:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.TE34.8>

The Final Report that outlined the Official Plan Amendment direction for the Bathurst Built Form and Land Use Study requested the initiation of the Bathurst/Bloor Area Study and authorization of a Heritage Conservation District Study for Markham Street, and brought forward zoning by-law amendments to limit the size of any one retail establishment in the study area (Zoning By-law 714-2014). Both recommendations were approved by City Council at its meeting on July 8, 2014. The link to that report can be found here:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-70047.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Study Website

The Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study website contains information about the study. The website is: <http://toronto.ca/bathurstbloor>

The Bathurst Street Study website contains detailed background information about the Bathurst Street Study including: background documents, the consultant reports, presentations, information panels, meeting summaries and survey results. The study website is:

www.toronto.ca/planning/bathurst.htm

Background

Bathurst-Bloor Character Area

The Bathurst-Bloor Character area is described in the Bathurst Study as an eclectic Character Area characterized by a variety of mixed use buildings, medical offices, and the TTC station. Buildings at the intersection of Bathurst Street and Bloor Street West are 2 to 3 storeys in height. The large retail store (Honest Ed's) on the south west corner has evolved over time to introduce individual storefronts on the Bloor and Bathurst frontages that reflect in some ways the fine grain traditional pedestrian shopping area character. The signage on the building is considered by many residents to be a landmark. This Character Area includes a new 9-storey condominium south of Bloor Street on the east side at 783 Bathurst Street (B-Street condos).

The Bathurst Street Study called for an area-specific study for the Bathurst-Bloor four corners area to define the vision for the area. On a preliminary basis, the Bathurst Study suggests that new development incorporate active ground floor uses, provide public amenities to animate and enrich the pedestrian realm on Bloor Street and on Bathurst Street, and reinforce the existing pedestrian shopping areas.

Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP No.465) for Bathurst Street

The policies in the SASP implement a vision for Bathurst Street according to the following principles: area-appropriate built form and use; reinforcing of existing scale and character, heritage conservation and improving the public realm.

The new area-specific policy for Bathurst Street (SASP No.465) includes the following direction for the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study:

- The area-specific study will include, but not be limited to, recommendations for achieving public realm improvements, pedestrian and cycling connections, heritage conservation, open space, new parks, the relationship of the transit station and entrances with their surroundings, built form, a full range of residential unit sizes and affordability and land use.
- The building located at 783 Bathurst Street does not reflect the prevailing character of this Character Area and should not be considered a precedent for new development.
- Dwelling units are not permitted on the ground level of any new building.
- Proposals for buildings taller than 6-storeys, or buildings with a street wall height that is greater than 5-storeys will only be assessed after the area-specific study is complete in order to determine whether increased height is appropriate.

Although Bathurst Street is not anticipated to experience significant intensification, the Bathurst Street Study recognizes that some intensification will happen at major intersections such at College, Dundas and Bloor. The Study also encourages fine grain, pedestrian shopping areas along those parts of Bathurst Street that are designated *Mixed Use Areas*. To direct growth to the major intersections, the Study removed the *Avenue* overlay on the west side of Bathurst, north of Bloor to instead maintain the low scale, fine-grained character of this area.

Bloor Corridor Vision Study (Avenue Road to Bathurst Street)

In the spring of 2007, the City initiated Phase I of the Bloor Corridor Visioning Study (Avenue Road to the east side of Bathurst Street). Phase II has not been initiated and includes Bloor Street from the east side of Bathurst to Christie Street. City Council at its meeting of November 30, December 1, 2, 4 and 7, 2009, adopted the Bloor Corridor Vision Study recommendations as Official Plan Amendment (OPA) No. 98 and the Bloor Corridor Visioning Study: Urban Design Guidelines, Avenue Road to Bathurst Street.

The Guidelines state that the area west of Walmer Road and approaching Bathurst Street (the Main Street Precinct) exhibits a highly consistent fine-grained and compact built form, with two-and-three story mixed-use buildings lining both sides of Bloor Street and that infill in this area will be designed with elements that complement this existing character. The Guidelines also state that the existing 16 meters (5-storey) zoning envelope should generally be maintained.

The Bloor Corridor Study identified a Bathurst Node at the intersection with Bloor Street West as the subject of a future study. The Bathurst Node, therefore, provides an important transition and connection between the Phase I and Phase 2 lands. The Guidelines suggest that while the Bathurst Node is a location that may appropriately accommodate intensification, the extent of intensification was to be assessed as part of the Phase II study. The Guidelines also suggest that new development in the Bathurst Node should be designed with a built form that integrates with the local, main street character at street level. Buildings in the Bathurst Node should incorporate a low-rise podium consistent with the street wall of the Main Street Precinct, with similar fine-grained uses and characteristics, to provide a continuous pedestrian experience as well as appropriate transition to taller built form elements.

Official Plan Site and Area Specific Policy 334 for the Bathurst Node was also amended as part of the Bathurst Study to reflect the direction for the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners.

Official Plan

Bathurst Street is a boundary line between the Official Plan's *Downtown and Central Waterfront* area and the rest of the city to the west. In particular, *Downtown* policies in Section 2.2.1 of the Official Plan place a priority on maintaining and upgrading public amenities and infrastructure, including streets, parks and open spaces, preserving architectural and cultural heritage, and improving transit and the pedestrian environment.

Bloor Street is identified as an *Avenue* in the Official Plan as per Section 2.2.3. The study area is designated *Mixed Use Areas* except for a small section on the east side of Markham Street north of Bloor which is designated as *Neighbourhoods*. Section 4.5 of the Official Plan contains policies on *Mixed-Use Areas* and Section 4.1 contains policies on *Neighbourhoods*. The *Mixed Use Area* designation permits a broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses and includes policies and development criteria to guide development and its transition between areas of different development intensity and scale. Chapter 2 – Shaping the City recognizes that *Neighbourhoods* and open spaces are to be protected from development pressures. Bathurst Street and Bloor Street within the Study Area are traditional pedestrian shopping streets under Policy 3.5.3 – the Future of Retailing – in the Official Plan.

Zoning

The majority of the study area is zoned *Mixed Use (CR)* with the exception of the rear portion of St. Peter's Church and the TTC entrance located mid-block on the east side of Markham Street north of Bloor Street, which are located in a *Residential zone* which extends into the surrounding established *Neighbourhoods*. The *Mixed Use* zoning permits a mix of commercial and residential uses to a total of generally between 1.5 and 3.0 times the area of the lot. The maximum permitted height in the *Mixed Use* areas is generally between 11 metres and 16 metres. Any redevelopment would also be subject to various development standards established by the Zoning By-law respecting setbacks, parking, loading and amenity space. In addition, retail uses on Bathurst Street are subject to Zoning By-law 714-2014 which limits the total amount of non-residential gross floor area of any one retail establishment to 3,500 square metres, and limits the width of any single retail or service use on the ground floor to 12 metres.

Community Consultation

In October 2013 the two Ward Councillors hosted a visioning session on the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners area concurrently with the Bathurst Study and invited Community Planning staff to participate. At that session participants expressed the following strengths and weaknesses in the study area and identified elements of a vision for the future of the area as per the table below:

Table 1: October 2013 Community Consultation

Strengths	Weaknesses	Vision Elements
✓ Livability	✗ Bathurst unfriendly to pedestrians, needs curb appeal	• Conserve fine grain retail on Bloor and Bathurst Streets
✓ Walkability - neighbourhood & main street feel	✗ Need more green space, trees, wider sidewalks	• Keep Markham Village the way it is with small scale, local retail, walkability and front yards
✓ Transit access	✗ More places to sit outside	• Create a pedestrian street in Markham Village
✓ Small retail & local shopping	✗ High store rents, bars taking over, retail unstable	• Improve Ed and Ann Mirvish Parkette
✓ Markham Street	✗ Need more diverse retail to support daily life	• Consider redevelopment potential of the TTC site
✓ Amenities: library, cinema, books, banks, fruit markets, barber, Honest Ed's	✗ Concern about big box retail	• Improve Markham entrance to subway station
✓ Cultural diversity	✗ Concern about building heights & density	• Locate a cultural hub in the study area, possibly at the southwest corner of the Bloor-Bathurst intersection
✓ Mix of incomes, mix of ages	✗ Housing no longer affordable	• Create east-west mid-block pedestrian and cyclist connections north and south of Bloor Street in relation to TTC entrances on
✓ Heritage	✗ Not enough school or day care spaces	
✓ Low-rise neighbourhoods		

		<p>Bathurst and Markham and existing open spaces as well as south of Bloor to connect between Bathurst and Markham Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create pedestrian priority at Bathurst-Bloor intersection • Create an open space or plaza at the intersection, preferable the southwest corner • Create a community gathering on the southwest portion of the study area • Locate any increase in density towards the intersection
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In December 2014, City Planning hosted the first community consultation meeting for the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study. Approximately 120 people were in attendance. Building on the comments received at the October 2013 visioning session, participants were asked to comment on their level of agreement on a set of Emerging Principles for the study area on Public Realm, Movement, Heritage, Built Form, and Land Use to this report.

Following the meeting, the Emerging Principles were posted to the study website in a survey format for a period of two weeks, which received over 250 responses. Staff also consulted with the area's Business Improvement Associations. The feedback received through the Bathurst-Bloor consultation process indicates strong support for the principles as well as the contextual statement which prefaces them. There was a particularly high level of support for the Public Realm Principles, Movement Principles, and Land Use principles at the community consultation meeting, BIA meeting and via the website survey and less consistent agreement on individual Built Form and Heritage principles as noted below in the Comments section.

COMMENTS

Bathurst-Bloor Principles

The following principles were presented at the December consultations and via the on-line survey. They describe the direction for the future of the Bathurst-Bloor study area and provide the foundation upon which to build new area-specific Official Plan Policy.

Contextual Statement

Bathurst-Bloor is a diverse, historic and walkable hub of activity. The fine grain, small-scale character creates a sense of place and opportunities for the spontaneous and casual interactions which support public life. It is a central gathering place located at the heart of four neighbourhoods where people can meet while shopping, running errands or on the way to a park, event, or cultural activity.

1. Public Realm Principles

- 1.1 Celebrate Bathurst-Bloor as a community focal point, gathering place, and location for public life e.g. identify places for expanded sidewalks, places to sit and gather, community gardens
- 1.2 Connect parks and open spaces to each other and the surrounding neighbourhoods with pedestrian and cycling links and laneways
- 1.3 Secure publicly accessible open space as part of any new development in a *Mixed Use* area e.g. a flexible space to allow for live theatre, farmers markets and festivals
- 1.4 Make physical improvements to existing parks and open spaces e.g. Ed and Ann Mirvish Parkette
- 1.5 Preserve the front yard setbacks and patios of Markham Street south of Bloor Street as part of the publically accessible open space

2. Movement Principles

- 2.1 Design streets to include pedestrians of all ages and abilities, cyclists, transit users, motorists and goods delivery
- 2.2 Improve connectivity to transit stations and the cycling network
- 2.3 Improve pedestrian facilities e.g. improve crossings at Bloor-Bathurst intersection
- 2.4 Provide conveniently located car share and bike share spaces

- 2.5 Create a unique pedestrian environment in Markham Village e.g. temporary or permanent closing of the street to traffic (excluding delivery vehicles)
- 2.6 Seek opportunities to integrate the Bathurst TTC station within a pedestrian-friendly re-development of the site

3. Heritage Principles

- 3.1 Study potential heritage properties for listing on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties or designation under the Ontario Heritage Act including Markham Street and Honest Ed's
- 3.2 Acknowledge and commemorate the contribution of "Honest Ed's" to the Bathurst-Bloor neighbourhood
- 3.3 Ensure that new development and alterations will respect and conserve the integrity of potential cultural heritage resources

4. Land Use

- 4.1 Animate and enrich the pedestrian realm with active ground floor uses on Bloor, Bathurst, and Markham Street south of Bloor
- 4.2 Seek affordable housing for rent and to own, including options for families
- 4.1 Support local arts and businesses by providing affordable and adaptive spaces for social and business enterprise
- 4.2
- 4.3 Locate an outdoor community gathering space for special events – like markets and festivals - within the study area
- 4.4 Maintain the mix of uses in Markham Village e.g. retain affordable artist and studio space, permit only non-residential uses on the ground floor

5. Built Form Principles

- 5.1 Continue the tradition of small scale, pedestrian-friendly streets and blocks
- 5.2 Locate any increase in height or density at the intersection of Bloor-Bathurst
- 5.3 Maintain the character, scale and format of existing buildings
- 5.4 Transition development downwards in scale towards Neighbourhoods to be compatible with low-rise housing

While responses were supportive of the principles, there was less consistent agreement on particular Built Form and Heritage principles. Responses to the Heritage principles were generally supportive of a) conserving heritage in general and in conserving the historic character of fine grain, small scale retail in the study area in particular and b) retaining the existing mix of uses and existing house-form buildings in Markham Village.

However, there was a range of responses in relation to the Honest Ed's building, with some responses indicating that the building and sign do not need to be commemorated, while others indicated a preference for conserving only the sign. Others indicated a preference for commemorating Ed Mirvish rather than the building, while some suggested that the Honest Ed's site is not a priority for commemoration or conservation. Staff have removed Principle 3.2 above (as per Attachment 1 to this report) to reflect the feedback received. The remaining two heritage principles do not preclude commemoration or acknowledgement of a particular site.

Responses to the Built Form principles included a range of views on the extent of heights and densities that might be appropriate for the study area. While there was strong agreement on the protection of the neighbourhoods from development and on the retention of a fine grain, main street feel at the street level on Bathurst and Bloor Streets, the maximum heights suggested for the study area ranged from six to twelve stories and a small minority of responses supported a tower form. In addition, some respondents indicated any increase in height or density should not be located at the intersection of Bathurst-Bloor as the principle suggests but rather be located mid-block.

Staff have modified Principle 5.2 above (as per Attachment 1 to this report) by deleting it and replacing it with the following two principles in order to give greater clarity as to the intention of the originally proposed principle. Staff also note that the application of a 45 degree angular plane taken from the closest *Neighbourhood* boundary will make it difficult to achieve mid-block density in the study area. The rear transition angular plane towards *Neighbourhoods* is critical.

- Any increase in height or density in the Study Area will transition downwards in scale to reflect and protect the fine grain character of the main street condition on Bloor Street. To the east of the Bathurst-Bloor intersection the scale will transition to reflect the five-to- six storeys detailed in the Bloor Corridor Visioning Study. To the west of the intersection, the scale will transition to reflect the prevailing character on Bloor Street West. The transition shall be achieved within the study area boundary and not rely on properties outside the study area.

- Any increase in height or density to the north and south of the Bathurst-Bloor intersection will transition downwards in scale away from the intersection in order to be compatible with the Bathurst Study Official Plan policies for the Seaton Village-West Annex and Palmerston-Harbord Character Areas. The transition shall be achieved within the study area boundary and not rely on properties outside the study area.

Honest Ed's Pre-Application Consultation

A pre-application community consultation meeting was held by the owner of the Honest Ed's and Markham Village lands on March 3, 2015. It is desirable for the City to work with the community and the owner to align the review of any future development application for the lands with the Bloor-Bathurst Four Corners Study process, to the extent that this is possible.

Next Steps

Next steps in the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners include, but are not limited to, an analysis of the following:

1. appropriate street wall heights for all streets in the study area, including testing streetwall heights on Bathurst Street and on Bloor Street West
2. angular plane transitions at the front, rear and sides of any new development
3. massing studies and shadow studies to inform appropriate maximum heights and location for any potential increase in density permissions
4. testing appropriate depth of setbacks above the street wall height
5. identification of potential streetscape improvements such as increases in sidewalk widths and tree planting opportunities
6. identification of improvements to the open space network within the study area and connecting beyond the study area, including an expansion of existing open spaces
7. analysis of potential heritage resources
8. identification of priority services and facilities to inform decisions around Section 37 contributions
9. an analysis of the size of existing retail and identification of any changes, if appropriate, to regulate such use in the Zoning-By law in order to support vital and viable main street shopping areas
10. drafting of Official Plan policy for consultation prior to a final staff report to Council

Staff anticipate that the results of the above analysis will be available for community consultation in the third quarter of 2015 and a final staff report will be submitted in the fourth quarter.

Conclusion

The Principles outlined in Attachment 1 to this report lay the foundation for a site and area specific policy for the Bathurst-Bloor study area. Staff recommend that City Council endorse the principles of the study to inform staff's review of current and future development applications. In addition, staff will continue to apply the Bathurst Street SASP No.465 and the guidelines for new development outlined in the Better Bathurst Built Form and Land Use Study (February 2014) to any development application that may be submitted within the Bathurst-Bloor Study Area prior to completion of the Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Bathurst-Bloor Four Corners Study Principles

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Contextual Statement

Bathurst-Bloor is a diverse, historic and walkable hub of activity. The fine grain, small-scale character creates a sense of place and opportunities for the spontaneous and casual interactions which support public life. It is a central gathering place located at the heart of four neighbourhoods where people can meet while shopping, running errands or on the way to a park, event, or cultural activity.

1. Public Realm Principles

- 1.1 Celebrate Bathurst-Bloor as a community focal point, gathering place, and location for public life through amenities such as expanded sidewalks, places to sit and gather, and community gardens.
- 1.2 Connect parks and open spaces to each other and the surrounding neighbourhoods with pedestrian and cycling links and laneways.
- 1.3 Secure publicly accessible open space as part of any new development in a *Mixed Use* area, such as a flexible space to allow for live theatre, farmers markets and festivals.
- 1.4 Make physical improvements to existing parks and open spaces, such as Ed and Ann Mirvish Parkette.
- 1.5 Preserve the front yard setbacks and patios of Markham Street south of Bloor Street as part of the publically accessible open space.

2. Movement Principles

- 2.1 Design streets to include pedestrians of all ages and abilities, cyclists, transit users, motorists and goods delivery.
- 2.2 Improve connectivity to transit station entrances and the cycling network.
- 2.3 Improve pedestrian facilities, such as the crossings at the Bloor-Bathurst intersection and widen sidewalks throughout the study area.
- 2.4 Provide conveniently located car share and bike share spaces.
- 2.5 Create a unique pedestrian environment in Markham Village such as temporary or permanent closing of the street to traffic (excluding delivery vehicles).
- 2.6 Seek opportunities to integrate the Bathurst TTC station within a pedestrian-friendly re-development of the site.

3. Heritage Principles

- 3.1 Study potential heritage properties for listing on the City's Heritage Inventory or designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.
- 3.2 Ensure that new development and alterations respect and conserve the integrity of identified cultural heritage resources.

4. Land Use

- 4.1 Animate and enrich the pedestrian realm with active ground floor uses on Bloor, Bathurst, and Markham Street south of Bloor.
- 4.2 Seek affordable housing for rent and to own, including options for families.
- 4.3 Support local arts and businesses by providing affordable and adaptive spaces for social and business enterprise.
- 4.4 Locate an outdoor community gathering space for special events – like markets and festivals - within the study area.
- 4.5 Maintain the mix of uses in Markham Village such as the retention of affordable artist and studio spaces and permission only for only non-residential uses on the ground floor.

5. Built Form Principles

- 5.1 Continue the tradition of small scale, pedestrian-friendly streets and blocks.
- 5.2 Design new buildings to maintain the historic fine-grain character, scale and format of buildings and historic lot sizes.
- 5.3 Transition development downwards in scale towards *Neighbourhoods* to be compatible with low-rise housing.
- 5.4 Any increase in height or density in the Study Area will transition downwards in scale to reflect and protect the fine grain character of the main street condition on Bloor Street. To the east of the Bathurst-Bloor intersection the scale will transition to reflect the five-to- six storeys detailed in the Bloor Corridor Visioning Study. To the west of the intersection, the scale will transition to reflect the prevailing character on Bloor Street West. The transition shall be achieved within the study area boundary and not rely on properties outside the study area.
- 5.5 Any increase in height or density to the north and south of the Bathurst-Bloor intersection will transition downwards in scale away from the intersection in order to be compatible with the Bathurst Study Official Plan policies for the

Seaton Village-West Annex and Palmerston-Harbord Character Areas. The transition shall be achieved within the study area boundary and not rely on properties outside the study area.