

**Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue) – City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment – Update Report**

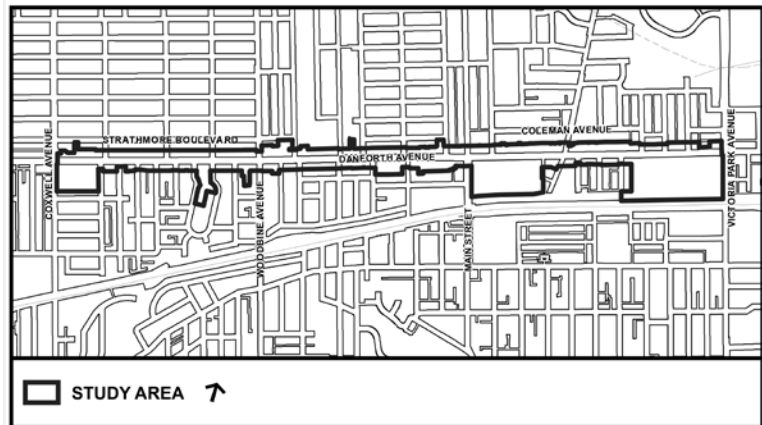
<b>Date:</b>	February 6, 2017
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Wards 31 and 32 – Beaches-East York
<b>Reference Number:</b>	16 129539 SPS 00 OZ

**SUMMARY**

The Danforth Avenue Planning Study (the Study) was initiated after a request from City Council that the City Planning Division undertake a study of Danforth Avenue, in two segments, between the Don River and Coxwell Avenue and Coxwell Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue. City Planning is currently undertaking the Study between Coxwell and Victoria Park Avenues. A project website is available at the following link:

[www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy](http://www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy).

On May 10, 2016, Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) adopted recommendations outlined in a Preliminary Report on the future planning study. As part of those recommendations, staff were directed to consult with the community on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the study, and report back to TEYCC with a final ToR, as well as a completed Area Profile Report for the study area.



This report provides an update on the progress staff has made since the original TEYCC adoption, including recommendations pertaining to the final ToR, a completed Area Profile Report, an update on ongoing community consultation, and refinements to the original, estimated the study timelines.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

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

1. Staff be directed to complete the Danforth Avenue Planning Study as per the Terms of Reference, as shown in Attachment #1 to this report.
2. Staff be directed to report back to Toronto and East York Community Council on the remaining and final deliverables of the Danforth Avenue Planning Study upon completion in Q4, 2017.

### **Financial Impact**

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

On May 10, 2016, Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) adopted recommendations outlined in a preliminary report on the future Danforth Avenue Planning Study (the Study). As part of those recommendations, staff were directed to consult with the community on the Terms of Reference for the study, and report back to TEYCC with a final Terms of Reference, as well as a completed Area Profile Report for the study area.

The meeting minutes from that meeting of TEYCC are available at the following link:  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE16.39>

## **COMMENTS**

### **Community Engagement**

A key aspect of the study will be to fully engage and work with the community on all portions of the study as it progresses to completion. City Planning staff have been very active in engaging with the larger community and have retained an independent facilitator, Lura Consulting, to assist with the community engagement for this study.

The following summarizes the community engagement events that staff have held on this study throughout 2016.

## Community Consultation Meeting – June 27, 2016

On June 27, 2016, City Planning staff, in conjunction with Lura Consulting, held a community consultation meeting to introduce the study to the community, review the proposed terms of reference and engage in various group exercises to help the community assist in outlining a future vision for the study area. The meeting was held at Hope United Church, 2550 Danforth Avenue, and attracted approximately 170 members of the public. A full meeting summary report is available on the project website at [www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy](http://www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy).

The feedback received was both helpful and enlightening to City staff and helped shape the revised study terms of reference and will continue to help shape the outcomes of the study. The community were posed a series of questions that they were to answer in groups, or individually. The questions, and a short summary of the responses received, are as follows:

**Question #1** - What aspects of Danforth Avenue in the study area do you really like (e.g., community assets)? What 3 key words (“vision ingredients”) would you use to describe the area in the future?

Top three community assets:

- Public spaces
- Access to multiple modes of transportation
- Small, independent and diverse retail sector

Figure 1 – Vision Ingredients Word Cloud



**Question #2** – What planning elements would you like to see improved or changed?

Element 1 – Public Realm

Top three suggestions received:

- Adding more trees, landscaping, seating and lighting along Danforth Avenue
- Creating more parks and other green spaces
- Incorporating more community and art spaces for residents of all ages

Element 2 – Built Form

Top three suggestions received:

- Promoting mixed-use development that has commercial or community uses on the main floor and residential or employment uses on the upper levels
- Providing adequate building setbacks from the street to allow for wider sidewalks and patios
- Ensuring new development complements and preserves the existing community character

Element 3 – Transportation

Top three suggestions received:

- Building separated bike lanes, adding bike signals and providing more bike parking
- Making Danforth Avenue safer and more inviting for pedestrians
- Building a better connection between TTC Main Street subway station and the Danforth GO station

**Question #3** – What changes or revisions, if any, should be made to the study Terms of Reference

Top suggestions:

- Include economic revitalization in the scope of work
- Expand the study area to include areas to the North and South of Danforth Avenue
- Outline growth projections and neighbourhood demographics to ensure new development is appropriate and accompanied by necessary CS&F
- Emphasize the importance of protecting the local history and heritage
- Be more specific

### Planners in Public Spaces (PiPS) Event – September 29, 2016

On September 29, 2016, City Planning staff held an informal PiPS event at the East Lynn Farmer's Market, to further consult with community members in a more casual atmosphere and to try and reach as many area residents as possible. Unfortunately, due to weather conditions, the number of attendees at the Market was less than average; however, staff were able to speak with numerous residents to discuss their vision of the study area, and their thoughts on the future Study.

### Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting – October 24, 2016

In addition to larger community consultation meetings and events, Lura Consulting, in consultation with the Ward Councillors for Wards 31 and 32 and City Planning staff, established a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), comprised of various interested residents, business owners and others who reside and/or work close to the study area.

The first SAC meeting was held on October 24, 2016 at the Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Avenue. At this meeting, a terms of reference for the SAC was established, members were explained their roles and responsibilities, staff provided an update on the work done to date, and a more refined visioning exercise was conducted. A full meeting summary report is available on the project website.

### Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting – January 26, 2017

The second SAC meeting was held on January 26, 2017 at the Danforth Mennonite Church. At this meeting, City staff presented a draft vision statement for the study, reviewed work conducted to date and received feedback from the SAC on the matters presented. A full meeting summary report will be posted on the project website when it is available.

### Future Engagement

City Planning staff, working with Lura Consulting, are planning an intensive community engagement schedule over the upcoming months. The next event will be a larger community consultation meeting, which is planned for the late February, 2017.

### **Terms of Reference**

As noted above, the study Terms of Reference has been revised based on feedback received from the community at-large. Much of the feedback that has been received to date has reiterated what was in the original draft of the terms of reference, including:

- Reviewing the appropriate built form based on local character. This includes reviewing and outlining appropriate heights, setbacks, stepbacks (both front and rear stepbacks and evaluation of an appropriate streetwall height) and transition policies to low-rise areas, among other matters

- Identifying strategies to enhance the public realm. This includes reviewing and outlining appropriate new street furniture and amenities, appropriate sidewalk widths, ensuring walkability and opportunities for new parks and open spaces, among other matters
- Transportation matters, including developing complete streets policies, coordinating the study with the 10-year cycling network plan (Danforth Corridor Study) and better connectivity between the TTC Main Street subway station and the Danforth GO station

The revised Terms of Reference is found in Attachment #1 to this report. Staff have revised the document based on feedback to:

- Restate the purpose of the study to be more clear and specific
- Include a goals section to better articulate the goals of the study
- Revise the study area to specifically include TTC stations (Coxwell, Woodbine and Main Street) for the explicit goal of examining access to said stations
- Modify the scope of work for the study to be more clear and specific, including emphasizing the need for a character statement, identifying opportunities for public art, outlining growth projections and reviewing local history and cultural-heritage resources

City staff are of the opinion that the revised terms of reference is appropriate in this final form, reflecting feedback received from both the community and the local Councillors.

### **Area Profile Report**

In addition to engaging with the community through the summer and fall months of 2016, City staff have prepared an Area Profile Report. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the study area with particular focus on current demographic, employment and other trends, and describes the existing transportation, employment and community services and facilities context. The report further informs City staff, and any future consultants, on the study area and assists in the progression of long-term planning for the study area. The report contains information on the policy framework, demographics, employment, land ownership, urban design, parks, heritage, transportation and infrastructure for the study area.

The Area Profile Report was prepared by City staff from divisions including City Planning; Economic Development; Parks, Forestry and Recreation; Transportation Services; and Toronto Water.

The Area Profile Report is found in Attachment #2.

## Updated Study Timelines

Based on the work done to date and the timing to complete the work, City staff have refined the estimated timelines for the study, which are presented as follows:

Q2 to Q3 2016	Consult on, and finalize, the Terms of Reference
Q3 2016 to Q1 2017	Conduct research and prepare Area Profile Report
Q1 to Q3 2017	Community engagement and development of Planning and Urban Design Guidelines
Q4 2017	Preparation of Official Plan Amendment and Final Report to Toronto and East York Community Council

## CONTACT

Daniel Woolfson, Planner  
Tel. No. 416-392-7574  
E-mail: Daniel.Woolfson@toronto.ca

## SIGNATURE

---

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

(P:\2017\Cluster B\pln\TEYCC\3083437055.doc) - vc

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Final Terms of Reference for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)

Attachment 2: Area Profile Report

## **Attachment 1: Final Terms of Reference for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)**

### **Purpose**

On July 8, 2014, City Council adopted a motion to request the Chief Planner and the Executive Director, City Planning to undertake a planning study of Danforth Avenue in two segments, from the Don River to Coxwell Avenue and from Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue, and to report on the funds necessary to complete these studies.

The purpose of the study is to conduct a review of the study area to identify the existing and planned character, including heritage resources and character-defining features, which will inform future development opportunities, guide new development proposals and enhance the public realm.

### **Goals**

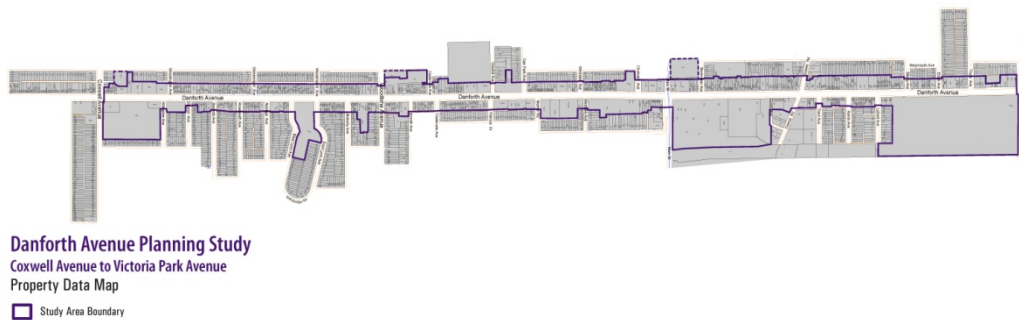
Based on the purpose of the study, the goals of the study are to:

- implement a new site and area specific policy for the study area;
- create new Urban Design Guidelines that support the implementation of a site and area specific Official Plan policy and that will supplement the existing Avenues and Mid-Rise Building Guidelines;
- identify specific public realm and streetscape improvements that use local character-defining features to enhance the public realm of Danforth Avenue;
- determine area demographics, existing community services and facilities inventory, and growth projections;
- outline areas for future investment to support growth; and
- examine potential future rights-of-way for Danforth Avenue that are based on a principle of Complete Streets.

### **Study Area**

For the purposes of this study, the study area includes properties with frontage on Danforth Avenue between Coxwell Avenue to the west and Victoria Park Avenue to the east. The study area will also include existing TTC subway stations (Coxwell, Woodbine and Main Street) north of Danforth Avenue, for the explicit purpose of reviewing connectivity to the stations.





## Policy Context

The land use policy context anticipates and encourages intensification along Danforth Avenue. The entire section of Danforth Avenue, from the Don River to Victoria Park Avenue, is identified as an *Avenue* on Map 2 – Urban Structure in the Official Plan.

The lands fronting Danforth Avenue from Coxwell Avenue, in the west, to Victoria Park Avenue, in the east, are primarily designated *Mixed Use Areas* on Map 18 and 21 – Land Use Plan in the Official Plan.

## Avenue

Section 2.2.3 of the Official Plan describes *Avenues* as “important corridors along major streets where reurbanization is anticipated and encouraged to create new housing and job opportunities, while improving the pedestrian environment, the look of the street, shopping opportunities and transit service for community residents”.

The *Avenues* will be reurbanized incrementally on a site-by-site basis and over the course of several years. The Official Plan states that not all *Avenues* are the same. “Each *Avenue* is different in terms of lot sizes and configurations, street width, existing uses, neighbouring uses, transit service and streetscape potential. There is no ‘one size fits all’ program for reurbanizing the *Avenues*”.

The Official Plan anticipates the creation and adoption of area-specific urban design guidelines to implement the Plan's objectives. Urban design guidelines provide guidance for built form and public realm improvements that are consistent with the policies of the Official Plan.

### Mixed Use Areas

The designation permits a broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses, and includes policies and criteria to guide development. New development should comply with the development criteria in *Mixed Use Areas* as outlined in the Official Plan.

### Parks and Other Open Space Areas

The designation generally prohibits development within *Parks and Other Open Space Areas* except for recreational and cultural facilities, conservation projects, cemetery facilities, public transit and essential public works and utilities where supported by appropriate assessment.

### Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study

City Council adopted the Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Study in 2010, and further adopted revised Mid-Rise Building performance standards, in 2016, to be used together with the 2010 approved Study and performance standards. The study, and its related performance standards, apply to this segment of Danforth Avenue.

### **Study Overview**

The Danforth Avenue planning study will be a multi-disciplinary review to be conducted as a comprehensive and integrated planning study. The study will focus on working with the community and other important stakeholders to develop the final set of deliverables.

### **Scope of Work**

The study will be led by the City Planning Division (Community Planning with support from Urban Design, Heritage Preservation Services and Transportation Planning). Transportation Services, Economic Development and Parks, Forestry and Recreation Divisions will also support the study as required.

City Planning staff will undertake the following scope of work:

#### Character and Place

- Articulate the existing and planned character of the Danforth, including establishing a vision for future growth and development;
- Establish a character statement that reflects the rich history of Danforth Avenue and provides a vision for future growth

#### Built Form

- Examine the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study within the local context of Danforth Avenue (from Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue);
- Supplement the existing Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Study to respond to specific local character by creating local Urban Design Guidelines to manage future growth and built form;
- Identify best practices for transitioning to adjacent low-scale neighbourhoods

#### Public Realm

- Identify strategies to enhance and animate the public realm and streetscaping on both the north and south side of Danforth Avenue within the study area to improve amenity and walkability;
- Identify opportunities for new parks and open spaces along Danforth Avenue;
- Identify opportunities for public art within the study area

#### Retail Vitality

- Identify any planning tools that may support a strong and diverse retail sector;
- Identify parking issues for local retail needs;

## Cycling

- Coordinate the study outcomes with the City's 10-year Cycling Network Plan and program;
- Develop complete streets policies for the study area;

## Transit Stations

- Explore how to improve pedestrian connectivity between the Main subway station and the Danforth GO station and work with Metrolinx to leverage opportunities from their Danforth GO planning study;
- Identify site-specific public realm and streetscaping improvements (such as improved wayfinding opportunities) within the existing Gateway Hub at the intersection of Danforth Avenue and Main Street;
- Examine pedestrian connectivity, public realm and other issues related to the Coxwell and Woodbine subway stations;

## Community Services and Facilities

- Outline neighbourhood demographics, future growth projections and a community services and facilities inventory;
- A review of community services and facilities for the area is underway and includes demographic analysis, as well as a community and facilities inventory. Based on the development and built form analysis being undertaken for this study, staff will identify future community service and facilities needs and priorities for the area;

## Heritage and Historic Character

- Identify built form heritage resources within the study area and strategies to achieve conservation;
- Review the local history, existing cultural heritage resources and character-defining features to determine heritage items that should be conserved.

## **Community Engagement**

The City will retain an independent facilitator to engage and lead community engagement. The facilitator will have no vested interest in the outcome of the study.

The study will include a series of four community meetings, as needed, which may take the form of workshops, charrettes or formal meetings. The first meeting is anticipated in June 2016 with additional meeting dates to be determined.

A Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), comprised of 12 to 15 members and including various residents, landowners, business-owners and other community stakeholders, will be established to maintain ongoing communication and provide advice to City staff with respect to the study and the community engagement process. The independent facilitator will be responsible for selecting the members of the SAC, in consultation with the City Planning Division and the local Councillors. Three to four meetings with the SAC are anticipated.

The community will have a fully integrated role in this study. The feedback gained from the community will inform the study process and outcomes, while guiding City staff throughout the study.

## **Study Deliverables**

Key deliverables expected from the study are as follows:

- Profile Report;
- Final report to Council that includes draft amendments to the Site and Area Specific Policies in the Official Plan;
- Official Plan Amendment, which includes development criteria for proposed development within the study area and provides clarity on how the Planning and Urban Design Guidelines are to be utilized; and
- Planning and Urban Design Guidelines.

## Estimated Timelines

The following represents an estimated timeline for this study. The timeline will continue to be refined as the study progresses.

Q2 to Q3 2016	Consult on, and finalize, the Terms of Reference
Q3 2016 to Q1 2017	Conduct research and prepare Area Profile Report
Q1 to Q3 2017	Community engagement and development of Planning and Urban Design Guidelines
Q4 2017	Preparation of Official Plan Amendment and Final Report to Toronto and East York Community Council

## **Attachment 2: Area Profile Report**

Report to be provided at the Toronto and East York Community Council meeting on February 22, 2017 and published online at [www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy](http://www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy) and at the City of Toronto's City Council and Committees online site.