

George Street Revitalization - Streetscaping Plan

Date: May 18, 2018

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Public Realm Section, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 27 - Toronto Centre-Rosedale

SUMMARY

At its meeting of November 7-9, 2017, in considering Official Plan, Zoning By-law and Municipal Shelter By-law, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to examine opportunities to prepare a public realm plan to provide an enhanced streetscape on George Street between its intersection with Gerrard Street East and Dundas Street East taking into account planned, proposed and potential future redevelopment in the area, recognizing the historic Indigenous presence and the relationship to some of the most vulnerable members of our society and to report back to the June 6, 2018 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council on boulevard, roadway and other public realm improvements to improve safety, security and mobility and create more pedestrian-friendly, liveable streets.

This report responds to Council's direction to the General Manager, Transportation Services and provides opportunities for the development and implementation of an integrated public realm as part of the George Street Revitalization Project. In accordance with City planning policy, the GSR Project has also committed one percent for public art, and there is potential to integrate the GSR public art with the public realm.

The George Street Revitalization Project (GSR), co-sponsored by Shelter Support and Housing Administration and Long-Term Care Homes and Services Divisions in collaboration with other City divisions, creates a significant opportunity for Indigenous placemaking in the downtown urban fabric and to celebrate and honour Indigenous culture as another step toward reconciliation. As directed by Council, the streetscape component includes and extends beyond the limits of the GSR site to include the full George Street right-of-way between Gerrard Street East and Dundas Street East. This report provides input into the Project Specific Outcome Specifications for streetscape design.

In recognizing the historic Indigenous presence in the area, the design of the streetscape for the George Street Revitalization project would explicitly take into account the Principles and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Recognizing the historic presence of the First Peoples of this land would also support

and accelerate development of the emerging Indigenous District within Toronto and contribute to establishing a more respectful relationship with some of the most vulnerable members of our society from all backgrounds.

The design concept will incorporate engineering and geometric improvements to address road safety, encourage active transportation (walking and cycling), improve mobility and generally enhance the experience of all road users. Consideration will be also be given to incorporating Green Street elements to capture and reuse rainwater to support tree and plant growth rather than directing it into the sewer system.

This approach is consistent with and complements and/or contributes to achieving many public policy goals including: City Council's Strategic Actions, Divisional Strategies, Plans and Initiatives (Shelter Support and Housing Administration; Long-Term Care Homes and Services; Affordable Housing Office; City Planning; Economic Development & Culture; Equity, Diversity & Human Rights; Parks, Forestry & Recreation; Toronto Community Housing; Transportation Services), Poverty Reduction Strategy, Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020, Toronto Seniors Strategy, Downtown East Revitalization Action Plan, Healthy Toronto by Design as well as Provincial Policy Statements, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe; and federal policy direction.

This approach has been developed in consultation with the GSR Project Executive Committee and project staff, City Planning and Economic Development & Culture staff and GSR consultants. The integrated plan concepts presented in this report are in the early stages of development and require consultation with the Indigenous community and local residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council endorse the approach proposed in this report to developing a public realm plan to provide an enhanced streetscape on George Street between its intersection with Gerrard Street and Dundas Street taking into account planned, proposed and potential future redevelopment in the area, recognizing the historic Indigenous presence and the relationship to some of the most vulnerable members of our society, such improvements to also address safety, security and mobility and create more pedestrian-friendly, liveable streets.
2. Subject to approval of the release of Section 37 contributions to fund streetscape improvements on George Street between Gerrard Street and Dundas Street, City Council authorize the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration, General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services, co-sponsors of the George Street Revitalization (GSR) project and the GSR Project Executive Committee to direct the GSR consultants to:
 - a) incorporate an approach to improving the public realm on this section of George Street, as generally proposed in this report, into the Project Specific Outcome Specifications (PSOS) currently being prepared;

b) undertake respectful and meaningful engagement and consultation with the Indigenous community as well as the local community and other stakeholders in the planning, design and implementation of a streetscape that is culturally based and responsive to local needs, goals and objectives and cohesively integrated with the GSR project;

c) require potential Design Build Finance (DBF) proponents to engage Indigenous designers as part of the design team; and

d) include Indigenous persons as evaluators on the Selection Committee for implementation of the GSR project and streetscape improvements.

3. City Council authorize the Deputy City Manager, Internal Corporate Services to negotiate and execute agreements, as required, to engage Indigenous consultants to undertake community consultation, design and review activities and to amend the scope of work and fees for the GSR consultants including Infrastructure Ontario to undertake the work described in recommendations 1 and 2 above.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no immediate financial impacts as a result of approving the recommendations in this report.

The preparation and implementation of a public realm plan to provide an enhanced streetscape on George Street between its intersection with Gerrard Street East and Dundas Street East is contingent on Council approving the release of Section 37 contributions to fund the proposed streetscape improvements.

In order to ensure a public realm design that is fully integrated with the George Street Revitalization (GSR) project, it is necessary to engage Indigenous persons or organizations to undertake consultation, design and review activities. As well, the scope of work and the contracts for the GSR project management consultants and the architect consultants would need to be amended to add further services (i.e. Recommendations 2 and 3). The funding required for these additional services and the related implementation costs is approximately \$3 million.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 16, 2013, as part of a broader initiative to revitalize the Downtown East neighbourhood and address outdated service delivery and aging infrastructure at the Seaton House (a 634 bed men's shelter), Toronto City Council adopted an initiative to redevelop Seaton House.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX33.17>

At its meeting of March 31, 2015, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 82 with a specific direction that the Garden District Area Specific Policy be considered for amendment at such time as the zoning amendment application for 339 George Street (Seaton House) is submitted, if it is determined that modifications to the built form permitted by the Policy are required to implement the Council approved redevelopment of Seaton House.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE4.8>

The proposed development and related Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments are based on a project scope for the George Street Revitalisation and the Seaton House transition plan which was adopted by City Council on November 3-4, 2015. This scope identified the proposed development including built form considerations and programming requirements.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX9.6>

On November 3 and 4, 2015, City Council adopted the report, "Long-Term Care Homes & Services 2016-2020 Service Plan" which will guide the planning and delivery of long-term care services over the next five years provided in City-operated long-term care homes and to clients receiving services in the community.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.CD7.1>

On November 3 and 4, 2015, City Council adopted the report, "Long-Term Care Homes & Services Capital Renewal Plan" which outlines a staged approach to mandatory redevelopment of City-operated long-term care homes, subject to future Capital Budget approvals.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX9.7>

At its April 5, 2016 meeting, Toronto and East York Community Council received a Preliminary Report on the Zoning and Official Plan Amendment applications. The Preliminary Report is available at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE15.25>

At its meeting of July 12-15, 2016, City Council authorized staff to proceed with an Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP) model for the implementation of the project using a Design Build Finance (DBF) approach and referred the project to the 2017 Capital Budget process. Council authorized staff to initiate negotiations towards an agreement with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) as procurement lead. Council also authorized staff to begin implementing the Seaton House transition plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX16.13>

At its meeting of December 13-15, 2016, City Council authorized staff to develop the Project Specific Outcome Specifications (PSOS) by engaging four firms for an 18-month duration: Infrastructure Ontario as advisors, Prism Partners as Owner's Representative and a joint venture of Hilditch Architects and Montgomery Sisam Architects as Planning, Design and Compliance consultants.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX20.12>

At its meeting of March 26-27, 2017, City Council adopted a correction to the Floor Space Index Permissions in Amending Zoning By-laws 1252-2017 and 1253-2017 Enacted by Council Pursuant to Item TE27.5 - 295-349 George Street - Official Plan and Zoning Amendment Applications.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.MM38.12>

At its meeting of November 7-9, 2017, City Council adopted a modification to Official Plan Amendment 82 and amendments to the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and Municipal Shelter By-law to establish the basic permissions for the George Street Revitalization redevelopment. City Council also directed the Manager, Cultural Partnerships, Arts and Culture Services to work with Planning, Urban Design and Heritage Preservations Services in conjunction with George Street Revitalization project staff to develop a public art plan that recognizes the historic Indigenous presence and reflects on the relationship to the site to some of the most vulnerable members of our society and commemorates the historic connection to the British Home Children movement. Additionally, Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to examine opportunities to prepare a public realm plan to provide an enhanced streetscape on George Street between its intersection with Gerrard Street and Dundas Street taking into account planned, proposed and potential future redevelopment in the area, recognizing the historic Indigenous presence and the relationship to some of the most vulnerable members of our society and to report back to the June 6, 2018 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council on boulevard, roadway and other public realm improvements to improve safety, security and mobility and create more pedestrian-friendly, liveable streets.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.TE27.5>

At its meeting on April 24-27, 2018, City Council adopted a series of recommendations authorizing staff to issue the Request for Qualification and Request for Proposal for the implementation of the George Street Revitalization Project using an Alternative Financing and Procurement approach and a Design-Build-Finance model as previously approved by City Council, to negotiate and enter into a Phase Two Agreement with Infrastructure Ontario as Commercial Procurement Lead and to engage other professional services.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EX33.4>

Decisions related to Heritage:

At its meeting of November 29, 30 and December 1, 2011, Toronto City Council stated its Intention to Designate the property located at 295 George Street under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.TE11.83>

At its meeting of April 10 and 11, 2012, Toronto City Council stated its Intention to Designate the properties located at 297, 303, 301A, 309, and 311 George Street Under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.TE14.5>

At its meeting of February 3 and 4, 2016, Toronto City Council stated its Intention to Designate 349 George Street under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE13.15>

At its meeting of January 31, 2017, City Council adopted the Designation of the Garden District Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.TE21.12>

At its meeting of August 24, 2017, Toronto Preservation Board adopted the report Alterations and Demolitions of Heritage Properties - 349 George Street, 309 and 311 George Street, 305 George Street, 301 George Street (also known as 301A George Street), 303 George Street, 297 George Street, and 295 George Street.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.PB25.3>

At its meeting of September 6, 2017, Toronto and East York Community Council deferred a decision on the Alterations and Demolitions of Heritage Properties - 349 George Street, 309 and 311 George Street, 305 George Street, 301 George Street (also known as 301A George Street), 303 George Street, 297 George Street, and 295 George Street.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.TE26.17>

COMMENTS

The George Street Revitalization Project (GSR), co-sponsored by Shelter Support and Housing Administration and Long-Term Care Homes and Services Divisions in collaboration with other City Divisions, creates a significant opportunity for Indigenous placemaking in the downtown urban fabric and to celebrate and honour Indigenous culture as another step toward reconciliation. Recognizing the historic presence of the First Peoples of this land would also support and accelerate development of the emerging Indigenous District within Toronto and contribute to establishing a more respectful relationship with some of the most vulnerable members of our society from all backgrounds.

George Street is a north-south local road in the downtown area extending from Gerrard Street East to Front Street East, with a discontinuity between Shuter Street and Queen Street East created by the Moss Park Armoury. It is a two-way street for most of its length except for the section between Shuter Street and Dundas Street East which is one-way northbound. The northerly section of George Street is bounded by two major parks, Allan Gardens at Gerrard Street East and Moss Park Armoury at Shuter Street. The existing pavement width on this section of George Street is 7.3 metres, the posted speed limit is 30 kph and there are 'No Stopping Anytime' restrictions on both sides of the street. The minimum pavement width to provide for emergency service vehicles is 6.0 metres.

The GSR project (295-349 George Street) is located on the east side of the most northerly block of George Street between Gerrard Street East and Dundas Street East as shown on Map A (Attachment 1). The GSR site includes Seaton House and eight separate heritage buildings. Two of the heritage buildings were severely damaged by fire and will be demolished as part of the redevelopment. The remaining buildings will

be fully integrated into the GSR Project. The redevelopment will provide 378 long-term care beds, 130 transitional living beds, 100 emergency shelter beds, 21 affordable housing units and a 4,500 square metre community service hub, as well as indoor and outdoor amenity space in the form of courtyards, gardens, terraces and decks. The site is surrounded on three sides by laneways and on the fourth side by George Street.

The Indigenous Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurship is currently under construction at the south end of the GSR block on the north east corner of Jarvis Street and Dundas Street East. The Centre will serve many Indigenous organizations and be the economic and cultural catalyst for an Indigenous District within the City.

At its meeting of December 13-15, 2016, City Council authorized staff to engage three firms (Infrastructure Ontario as advisors, Prism Partners as Owner's Representative and the joint venture of Hilditch Architects and Montgomery Sisam Architects as Planning, Design and Compliance consultants) to develop the Project Specific Outcome Specifications (PSOS) to implement the George Street Revitalization Project. This report provides input into the Project Specific Outcome Specifications for streetscape design. As directed by Council, the streetscape component includes and extend beyond the limits of the GSR site to include the full George Street right-of-way between Gerrard Street East and Dundas Street East.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission defined 'reconciliation' as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships, a critical component of which involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change.

This section of George Street is home to many vulnerable residents with complex health, mental health and addiction issues who also struggle daily with socio-economic issues including poverty, homelessness, nutrition, safety and security concerns. Previous reports have noted that there is a significant amount of street activity and that drug use and trafficking by people from outside the area is a constant concern. These issues impact the entire community and many residents feel uncomfortable walking along George Street, and consequently there is a lack of eyes on the street which contributes to the ongoing issues. The goals of the George Street Revitalization Project are to improve facilities and services for vulnerable homeless individuals; better address the multiple needs of clients; provide additional affordable housing; establish a mixed use community with affordable housing units, supportive housing, transitional and emergency shelter beds and long-term care beds; attract additional commercial and residential investment to the area and create community street space.

The streetscape design concept proposes the transformation of this section of George Street from a street where many people feel uncomfortable and disrespected by society to a destination that local residents of all backgrounds are proud of and that other residents and visitors to Toronto will choose to experience. This section of George Street provides a unique opportunity to advance all of the above objectives. The design concept will incorporate engineering and geometric improvements to address road safety, such as realigning the curb to narrow the roadway and reduce pedestrian

crossing distances, reducing curb radii, constructing bump-outs and widening boulevard areas as well as constructing tablespots while maintaining basic functionality including access for emergency vehicles, service and delivery vehicles (e.g. waste removal, moving trucks), Wheel-Trans, taxicabs, and local residents and businesses. In addition to improving road safety, the design will encourage active transportation (walking and cycling), improve mobility by addressing AODA concerns and generally enhance the experience of all road users by creating new spaces for gathering, street trees, plantings, public art and other amenities. Consideration will be given to incorporating Green Street elements into the streetscape design to capture and reuse as much rainwater as possible to support tree and plant growth rather than directing it into the sewer system.

Given the context of the health issues being addressed in the community the streetscape design will also give consideration to incorporating Indigenous approaches to medicine, such as drum circles and the use of medicinal plants, to assist in the healing process. Public art and amenities could include contemporary artworks that reflect past and present Indigenous culture. This approach would build on the strengths of the local community, recognize and showcase distinct cultural traditions, foster a greater sense of belonging and pride of place, and create an educational experience for non-Indigenous Peoples while continuing to address the needs of vulnerable residents. The Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP) model for the implementation of the GSR project using a Design Build Finance (DBF) approach based on Project Specific Outcomes Specification (PSOS) is ideally suited to this innovative approach to streetscape design and ensuring the development of an integrated design.

Respectful and meaningful engagement and consultation with the Indigenous community and local residents in the planning, design and implementation of the streetscape is essential to providing solutions that are culturally and community based. To ensure the final results deliver on the design intentions the PSOS should require proponents to engage Indigenous designers and the review committee should include Indigenous evaluators.

CONTACT

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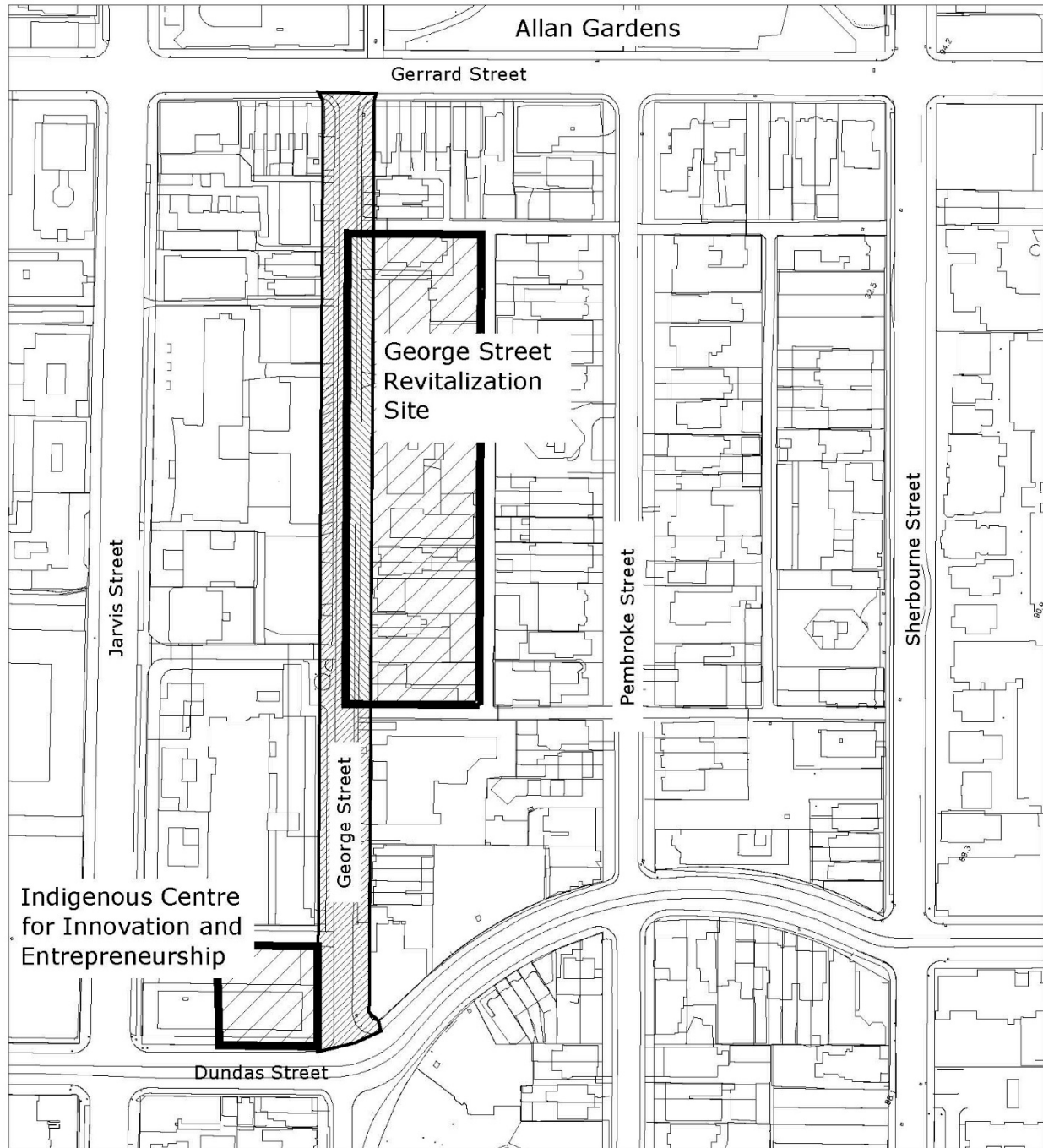
Elyse Parker
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Context - George Street

Attachment 2: Context - Allan Gardens and Moss Park

Attachment 1: Context - George Street



Attachment 2: Context - Allan Gardens and Moss Park

