



April 30, 2019

To: Members, Planning and Housing Committee

RE: Initiating a Comprehensive Study of the Geary Ave corridor

I am writing to request your support for the following recommendations that requests the City of Toronto initiate a comprehensive study of the Geary Ave corridor:

1. Planning and Housing Committee request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, to initiate a planning study for the Geary Avenue corridor generally between Ossington Avenue and Primrose Avenue including:
 - a. An inventory of current applications and development proposals along Geary Avenue and in the surrounding area;
 - b. An inventory of existing establishments and detailed analysis of existing and permitted land uses;
 - c. The development of urban design and built form guidelines and land use provisions that promote and enhance the continued non-residential uses analysed through a. above including compatibility with and transition to adjacent residential uses;
2. Planning and Housing Committee request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division to work with the General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation and the General Manager, Transportation Services to identify and coordinate parks and public realm improvements that enhance the character of the area;
3. Planning and Housing Committee request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to develop a terms of reference for and undertake an economic development study for the Geary Avenue corridor generally between Ossington Avenue and Primrose Avenue, such study would include:
 - a. Consultation with area businesses, tenants and to understand the current challenges and future opportunities in developing a long term vision for the Geary Avenue corridor including cultural uses;
 - b. In consultation with the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing & Standards, consider the feasibility of developing and implementing financial and regulatory mechanisms to promote the continued arts-based, cultural, light industrial and employment uses in the area;



Background

The Geary Ave corridor is a neighbourhood in Toronto's West End undergoing rapid change in use from a previous industrial and warehouse space, to one that is now a burgeoning hub for artist workshops, cultural organizations, and light industrial and small commercial businesses. With land price, development and growth pressures, moving quickly into the area, the continued viability of many of these small businesses and local artists is of concern.

Across the City, this is a scenario we have seen play out over and over with artist and small business communities displaced due to rising land prices and development pressures. Many businesses, property owners, residents and others in the Geary Avenue neighbourhood agree with the need to address these pressures and agree that the City of Toronto needs to undertake a comprehensive Planning and Economic Development study done along the Geary Ave. Corridor.

By working together with local residents, businesses and cultural organizations on a comprehensive planning, economic development and culture-led strategy we have the opportunity to proactively plan and continue to foster success.

Your support for this request would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ana Bailao
Deputy Mayor
Chair, Planning and Housing Committee
Councillor, Ward 9 – Davenport