

Danforth Avenue Planning Study: City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment - Preliminary Report (Broadview Ave. to Coxwell Ave.)

Date: Dec 11, 2019

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

Ward: 14 - Toronto - Danforth

Planning Application Number: 19 116448 SPS 00 OZ

SUMMARY

On July 8, 2014, City Council adopted a motion to request the Chief Planner and 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. The first stage of this study from Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue was adopted by TE34.22 by City Council on July 23, 2018. The second stage of the Danforth Avenue Planning Study, currently underway, focuses on the area from Broadview Avenue to Coxwell Avenue, and is being conducted as part of the broader Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Study process.

A broader Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Study is being led by Transportation Services in partnership with City Planning and Economic Development and Culture. A project website is available through the following link:
www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy.

The full study area spans a six kilometre stretch of Danforth Avenue between Broadview Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue. Within that stretch, three types of studies are being undertaken as part of the overall integrated work program:

- Complete Street Study (Broadview Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)
- Economic Analysis and Retail Study (Broadview Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)
- Planning Study (3km - Broadview Avenue to Coxwell Avenue)

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Area Profile Report related to the Planning Study Area, as shown in Attachment #1, which describes the existing planning context. This report also provides an update on the overall Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Study Terms of Reference (Attachment #2) and community engagement process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 8, 2014, City Council adopted a motion to request the Chief Planner and 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. The first stage of the study from Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue was adopted by TE34.22 by City Council on July 23, 2018.

The Council decision can be found via the following link.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.TE34.22>

In July 2018, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services and the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in cooperation with Economic Development and Culture, to initiate a comprehensive Complete Street Study of the Danforth corridor in 2019 with a focus on Danforth Avenue as a "complete street" with a vibrant commercial sector, and include a consultation process that involves a broad range of stakeholders such as Business Improvement Areas, resident, community, and cycling groups.

The Council decision can be found via the following link.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.TE34.22>

The Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Study is a joint project between Transportation Services, Economic Development and Culture, and City Planning to develop a Complete Street Design and Implementation Plan, Economic Analysis and

Retail Study, and a Planning Framework. The study will bring together these elements through a coordinated public engagement process.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Planning component of the Study will continue the planning work of the previous segment of the Danforth Avenue Planning Study that was conducted between Coxwell Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue, this time focusing on the second segment of the study for the 3-kilometre area between Broadview Avenue to Coxwell Avenue. The purpose of the Planning Study is to conduct a planning review and analysis to inform future city-building opportunities, guide development and growth, and enhance the public realm and quality of place towards developing a new planning framework and urban design guidelines for the area. The Planning Study is being carried out in parallel to two other studies described below.

The Complete Street component of the Study will include a detailed examination of the right-of-way and a feasibility design study to review traffic, parking, and other impacts specific to determining a complete streets design, including the potential for on-street cycling facilities along Danforth Avenue for the 6-kilometre study area between Broadview Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue.

The Economic Analysis and Retail component of the Study is focussed on providing an analysis of the retail profile in the study area and identify economic characteristics including trends, market types, gaps, and an origin and destination survey. The Retail Study is aligned with the Complete Street Study Area boundary between Broadview Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Land use planning in the Province of Ontario is a policy led system. Any decision of Council related to this application is required to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) (the "PPS"), and to conform with applicable Provincial Plans which, in the case of the City of Toronto, include: the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) and, where applicable, the Greenbelt Plan (2017). The PPS and all Provincial Plans may be found on the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website.

Growth Plan Overview

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (the "Growth Plan (2019)") came into effect on May 16, 2019. This new plan replaces the previous Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017. The Growth Plan (2019) establishes requirements that need to be implemented through a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR).

The updated Growth Plan contains policies pertaining to population and employment densities that must be planned for in Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) along priority transit corridors or subway lines. MTSAs are generally defined as the area within an approximately 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, an increase from the 500 metres required by the previous Growth Plan. Once established, areas within MTSAs will be required to achieve minimum density targets. The Growth Plan requires that the City update its Official Plan to delineate MTSA boundaries and demonstrate how the MTSAs achieve appropriate densities at the time of the next MCR.

Ontario Line

In April 2019, the Province introduced its proposed Transportation Vision for the City of Toronto, which outlined changes to the Relief Line South project. These changes include re-naming the corridor to the Ontario Line, re-alignment of the proposed route, revised station locations and alterations to the track structure. The Ontario Line is currently proposed to connect with Pape Station.

In October 2019, City Council approved a motion to negotiate an agreement with the Province on planning provincial priority transit projects including the Ontario Line, and directing Metrolinx to work with the City to mitigate the local impacts of projects including the Ontario Line through the detailed design process.

Toronto Official Plan Policies and Planning Studies

The City of Toronto Official Plan is a comprehensive policy document that guides development in the City, providing direction for managing the size, location, and built form compatibility of different land uses and the provision of municipal services and facilities. Authority for the Official Plan derives from The Planning Act of Ontario. The PPS recognizes the Official Plan as the most important document for its implementation. Toronto Official Plan policies related to building complete communities, including heritage preservation and environmental stewardship may be applicable to any application.

Toronto Official Plan policies may be found via the following link:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

The entire section of Danforth Avenue, from Broadview Avenue to Coxwell Avenue, is identified as an Avenue on Map 2 – Urban Structure in the Official Plan, and is primarily designated Mixed Use Areas on Map 18 and 21 – Land Use Plan in the Official Plan. The lands immediately adjacent to and east of the Don River are designated Parks, on the north side of Danforth Avenue, and Other Open Space Areas, on the south side of Danforth Avenue.

Section 2.2.3 Avenues: Re-Urbanizing Arterial Corridors

Avenues are 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 transformed incrementally. They will change building-by-building over a number of years. The framework for new development on each Avenue will be established through a local Avenue study, created in consultation with the local community.

Planning studies on Avenues are intended to create a vision and implementation plan to show, among other matters:

- How the streetscape and pedestrian environment can be improved;
- Where public open space can be created and existing parks improved;
- Where trees should be planted; and
- How use of the road allowance can be optimized and transit service enhanced.

Section 4.3 Parks and Open Space Areas

The Parks and Open Space Areas 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. These areas generally include the parks and open spaces, valleys, watercourse and ravines, golf courses and cemeteries that comprise a green open space network in Toronto.

Section 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

The Mixed Use Areas 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.

Development criteria for Mixed Use Areas include:

- Creating a balance of high quality commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses that reduces automobile dependency and meets the needs of the local community;

- Providing for new jobs and homes for Toronto's growing population on underutilized lands;
- Locating and massing new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale, through means such as providing appropriate setbacks and/or stepping down of heights, particularly towards lower scale Neighbourhoods;
- Locating and massing new buildings to frame the edges of streets and parks;
- Providing an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment;
- Providing good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors;
- Locating and screening service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and
- Providing indoor and outdoor recreation space for building residents in every significant multi-residential development.

Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Guidelines

At its meeting of July 8, 2010, Toronto City Council adopted the recommendations contained in the staff report prepared by City Planning entitled Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study and Action Plan, with modifications. The main objective of this study is to encourage future intensification along Toronto's "Avenues" that is compatible with the adjacent neighbourhoods through appropriately scaled and designed mid-rise buildings.

The Avenues and Mid-rise Buildings Study identifies a list of best practices, and categorizes Avenues based on historic, cultural and built form characteristics. The Study also establishes a set of performance standards for new mid-rise buildings, and identifies areas where the standards should be applied.

The Performance Standards are intended to be used as tools to implement both the Official Plan's Avenues and Neighbourhoods policies in order to maintain a balance between reurbanization and stability. The Performance Standards provide guidance regarding the size, shape and quality of mid-rise buildings and are also intended to implement Section 2.3.1 of the Official Plan.

The Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Guidelines apply to this section of Danforth Avenue and have been used as a tool in addition to the Mixed Use Area development criteria.

Broadview Avenue Planning Study (Official Plan Amendment #343)

In June 2016, City Council amended the Official Plan and adopted Urban Design Guidelines for the lands fronting onto Broadview Avenue between Danforth Avenue and O'Connor Drive. The Danforth Study abuts the study area boundary of the Broadview Study. Aspects of the previous study will be reviewed to determine their applicability to the current study, with particular attention to the Danforth/Broadview intersection.

A link to the Broadview Avenue Planning Study and background information can found via the following link.

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/broadview-avenue-planning-study/>

Zoning By-laws

The majority of the study area is zoned MCR T3.0 C2.5 R2.5 and MCR T3.0 C2.0 R2.5 under the former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86. This zone permits a wide range of commercial and residential uses with a maximum density of 3.0 times the area of the lot. The maximum permitted height is between 14 and 16 metres.

The majority of the study area is zoned CR3.0 (c2.5; r2.5) SS2 and CR3.0 (c2.0; r2.5) SS2 under City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013, which is currently under appeal at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (formerly Ontario Municipal Board) and is not in force and in effect. The zoning permissions are consistent with those outlined in Zoning By-law 438-86.

There are some properties within the study area that are zoned G and Gr (Parks Zone), and R2 (Residential Zone) under the former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86, and ON and OR (Open Space Zone) and R (Residential Zone) under City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013.

The City's Zoning By-law 569-2013 may be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/zoning-by-law-preliminary-zoning-reviews/zoning-by-law-569-2013-2/>

COMMENTS

Area Profile Report

As part of the Phase 1 work program related to the Planning Study scope of work, City staff have prepared an Area Profile Report (APR), as shown in Attachment #1. The APR provides a comprehensive overview and analysis with respect to the existing policy framework; land use and urban design; demographics, employment, and community services; parks and open space; heritage; transportation; and servicing. The APR also

informs City staff and future consultants on the Planning Study Area and assists in the progression of long-term planning.

Scope of Work for the overall Danforth Avenue

Complete Street & Planning Study

In order to take a more comprehensive look at Danforth Avenue, the Planning Study is partnered with a Complete Streets Study. The Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Study together will follow a multi-disciplinary approach. The Study has been designed to include extensive stakeholder consultation in order to understand community priorities, assess existing conditions, and to create a plan for the area culminating in a Complete Street Design and Implementation Plan, an Economic Analysis and Retail Study, and a comprehensive Planning Framework.

The Complete Street component of the Study is focussed on the 6km study area between Broadview Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue and will provide a detailed examination of Danforth Avenue as a "Complete Street" to evaluate opportunities and impacts of cycling lanes and other changes within the right-of-way, and develop an implementation strategy.

The Economic Analysis and Retail component of the Study is also focussed on the 6 km study area between Broadview Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue will identify key demographic and economic trends, researching who lives and works in the area, what stores and services are available and identify where people are going and where they are coming from to support and promote the economic vitality of Danforth Avenue.

The Planning component of the Study is focussed on the 3 km study area between Broadview Avenue and Coxwell Avenue and will be a vehicle for long-range planning, and urban design. The City will develop recommendations for land use and policy updates, heritage, urban design guidelines, public realm improvements, and other strategic recommendations to guide investment, development, and infrastructure improvements within the study area.

The overall study will be completed in 5 phases (24 Months), with the planning component of the Study anticipated to be completed by the end of Phase 4.

- Phase 1 (Q2-Q3 - June 2019 to December 2019) Work Plan Development: Consultation on the Study Scope & Preliminary Area Profile
- Phase 2 (Q4 - December 2019 – February 2020) Finalize Area Profile, Issues Identification & Analysis
- Phase 3 (Q1-Q2 - March 2020 – July 2020) Develop Planning Framework and Complete Street Design Concepts

- Phase 4 (Q3-Q4 - August 2020 – December 2020) Final Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Reports
- Phase 5 (Q1-Q2 - January 2021 - June 2021) Detailed Complete Streets Designs/Implementation & Phasing

Community Engagement for the overall Danforth Avenue

Complete Street & Planning Study

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. Staff have been active in engaging with the community and have retained an independent facilitator to assist with the community engagement for this study.

Community meetings, workshops, pop-ups and online surveys will be utilized in order to build consensus and broad based support by engaging with the community, interest groups, stakeholders and decision makers.

In addition to larger community consultation meetings and events, a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) has been established comprised of various interested residents, community agencies, BIAs, business owners and others who reside and/or work close to the study area. The goal of the SAC composition is to provide a balanced group (gender, cultural/ethnic diversity), include representation from Wards 14 and 19, in order to provide a diversity of representation and perspectives.

The following summarizes community engagement activities that staff have held to date.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting – November 4, 2019

The first SAC meeting was held on November 4, 2019 at Monarch Park Collegiate Institute. At this meeting, an overview of the study was presented and discussed, in addition to SAC roles and responsibilities. Staff also provided an update on the work done to date, and a high-level exercise to review the study Terms of Reference.

Community Consultation Meeting – November 7, 2019

Together with Dillon Consulting, City staff held a community consultation meeting to introduce the study to the community, provide an overview of the Terms of Reference, and to engage in various group exercises. The meeting was held at Monarch Park Collegiate Institute, and was attended by approximately 450 members of the public. The feedback received was insightful and will help shape the outcomes of the overall study.

Full meeting summary reports for the SAC and Community Meetings can be found on the project website via the following link: www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy.

The community was supportive of the study and its overall objectives. Their comments focussed on making sure that the Terms of Reference would clearly identify community interests and priorities. The changes to the Terms of Reference below incorporate the comments from the community.

Future Engagement

Together with Dillon Consulting, City staff are planning an extensive community engagement schedule throughout the duration of the study. The next public event will be a community consultation meeting scheduled for January 27, 2020.

Terms of Reference for the overall Danforth Avenue

Complete Street & Planning Study

Staff have prepared a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Danforth Avenue Complete Street and Planning Study, as shown in Attachment #2. The ToR establishes study goals and objectives and a scope of work being led by Transportation Services in partnership with City Planning and Economic Development and Culture Divisions. The ToR has been revised based on feedback received from the community through the first community meeting and a stakeholder advisory committee meeting. Staff have revised the document based on feedback to include additional consideration for the following matters:

- Incorporating sustainability and climate change considerations in the development of the plan.
- Review and consider approaches to ensure small businesses will invest and stay in the area and contribute to a greater sense of identity and to attract business and jobs.
- Establish building height limitations to preserve views, avoid obstructing sunlight, and maintain the existing streetscape.
- Provide greater emphasis on affordable housing.
- Undertake a review of best practices to learn from other studies and pilot projects implemented in Toronto and other jurisdictions.
- Include a greater emphasis on placemaking and arts & culture.
- Incorporate a greater emphasis on accessibility and diversity in the community engagement process and overall study approach.

The revised ToR in its final form reflects feedback received from the community.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Area Profile Report
Attachment 2: Terms of Reference

Attachment 1: Area Profile Report

Report to be provided at the Toronto and East York Community Council meeting on January 8, 2020 and published online at www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy and at the City of Toronto's City Council and Committees website.

Attachment 2: Draft Terms of Reference

Study Terms of Reference to be provided at the Toronto and East York Community Council meeting on January 8, 2020 and published online at www.toronto.ca/danforthstudy and at the City of Toronto's City Council and Committees website.