

625 Church Street – Zoning Amendment Application – Preliminary Report

Date: February 25, 2020

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 11 - University-Rosedale

Planning Application Number: 19 263839 STE 11 OZ

Notice of Complete Application Issued: December 20, 2019

Current Use(s) on Site: A 6-storey, 8,100 square metre office building, with surface parking facilities

SUMMARY

This report provides information and identifies a preliminary set of issues regarding the application for a mixed use development including a 59-storey tower located at 625 Church Street. Staff are currently reviewing the application. It has been circulated to all appropriate agencies and City divisions for comment. Staff will proceed to schedule a community consultation meeting for the application with the Ward Councillor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Staff schedule a community consultation meeting for the application located at 625 Church Street together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within 120 metres of the application site, and to additional residents, institutions and owners to be determined in consultation with the Ward Councillor, with any additional mailing costs to be borne by the applicant.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

City Planning confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in the report in the current budget year or in future years.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Application Description

This application proposes to amend the Zoning By-law for the property at 625 Church Street to permit a 59-storey (201.9 metres) mixed use development consisting of 10,079 square metres of office gross floor area, 593 square metres of retail gross floor area, and 45,742 square metres of residential gross floor area. The total proposed density on the site is 18.1 FSI. The residential component proposes a total of 651 dwelling units consisting of 66 studio units (10%), 319 one-bedroom units (49%), 200 two-bedroom units (31%), and 66 three-bedroom units (10%). The form of the proposed development is a 5-storey base building which incorporates portions of the existing building façade, and a 54-storey tower above. A total of 260 parking spaces are proposed in five underground parking levels as well as 718 bicycle parking spaces.

Detailed project information is found on the City's Application Information Centre at:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/application-information-centre/>

See Attachments 1 and 2 of this report for a three dimensional representation of the project in context, Attachment 3 for the location map, Attachment 4 for the proposed site plan drawing and Attachment 6 for the application data.

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: A Place to Grow: 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.

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019)

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (the "Growth Plan") 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) continues to provide a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which the City forms an integral part. The Growth Plan establishes policies that require implementation through a Municipal Comprehensive Review ("MCR"), which is a requirement pursuant to Section 26 of the *Planning Act* that comprehensively applies the policies and schedules of the Growth Plan (2019), including the establishment of minimum density targets for and the delineation of strategic growth areas, the conversion of provincially significant employment zones, and others.

Policies not expressly linked to a MCR can be applied as part of the review process for development applications, in advance of the next MCR. These policies include:

- Directing municipalities to make more efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure to reduce sprawl, contribute to environmental sustainability and provide for a more compact built form and a vibrant public realm;
- Directing municipalities to engage in an integrated approach to infrastructure planning and investment optimization as part of the land use planning process;
- Achieving complete communities with access to a diverse range of housing options, protected employment zones, public service facilities, recreation and green space that better connect transit to where people live and work;
- Retaining viable lands designated as employment areas and ensuring redevelopment of lands outside of employment areas retain space for jobs to be accommodated on site;
- Minimizing the negative impacts of climate change by undertaking stormwater management planning that assesses the impacts of extreme weather events and incorporates green infrastructure; and
- Recognizing the importance of watershed planning for the protection of the quality and quantity of water and hydrologic features and areas.

The Growth Plan (2019) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2019) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

In accordance with Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform with the Growth Plan. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform with the Growth Plan (2019).

The Growth Plan (2019) contains policies pertaining to population and employment densities that should 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, representing about a 10-minute walk. The Growth Plan requires that, at the time of the next municipal comprehensive review (MCR), the City update its Official Plan to delineate MTSA boundaries and demonstrate how the MTSAs achieve appropriate densities.

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 here:

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

The current application is located on lands within the Downtown and Central Waterfront Area on Map 2 and is designated Mixed Use Areas on Map 18 of the Official Plan, as shown on Attachment 5 of this report.

The application is also subject to Site and Area Specific Policy 211 and is located within the Downtown Secondary Plan.

Site and Area Specific Policy 211

Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) 211 in the Official Plan relates to the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area which forms the north edge of the Downtown and provides for transition in density and scale towards the boundaries of the area from the more intensive use and development forms to the south and within the Height Peak at Yonge Street and Bloor Street.

Map 2 of SASP 211 provides a height structure plan for the area, comprising of a "Height Peak," "Height Ridges," and "Low-Rise Areas." The site is located at the eastern edge of the Church Street Height Ridge. The policy states that the tallest buildings in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area will be located in the Height Peak, located in the vicinity of the intersection of Yonge Street and Bloor Street, with height and density permissions generally diminishing the further one gets from Bloor Street. Development along the Height Ridges will be at a lesser height and physical scale than the Bloor/Yonge Height Peak, and in a form compatible with adjacent areas. Building heights will step down from the Bloor/Yonge intersection within the Mixed Use Area in descending ridges of height along the major streets, including Church Street.

The Downtown Plan

City Council adopted OPA 406 at its meeting on May 22-24, 2018. OPA 406 included amendments to the Downtown section of the Official Plan and Map 6 of the Official Plan and brought forward a new Secondary Plan for the entire Downtown area.

On August 9, 2018 the City's application under Section 26 of the Planning Act was sent to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for approval. The Ministry issued its decision regarding OPA 406 on June 5, 2019. Since this application was submitted after June 5, 2019, OPA 406, the new Downtown Secondary Plan, applies to this application. The in-force Downtown Plan may be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/cc/bgrd/backgroundfile-135953.pdf>

The site is designated Mixed Use Areas 2 - Intermediate. Development in Mixed Use Areas 2 will include building typologies that respond to their site context, including mid-rise and some tall buildings.

Church Street is identified as a Priority Retail Street where retail and service commercial spaces on the ground floor frontage are prioritized.

Official Plan Amendment 352 - Updating Tall Building Setbacks Downtown

On October 5-7, 2016, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 352 - Downtown Tall Building Setback Area ("OPA 352"). OPA 352 is currently under appeal before the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and the owner of 625 Church Street has submitted a site-specific appeal. The purpose of OPA 352 is to establish the policy context for tall building setbacks and separation distances between tower portions of all buildings in the Downtown. At the same meeting, City Council adopted area specific Zoning By-laws 1106-2016 and 1107-2016 (also under appeal), which provide detailed performance standards for portions of buildings above 24 metres in height. Further background information can be found at www.toronto.ca/tocore

Official Plan Amendment 231

Official Plan Amendment 231 ("OPA 231"), an amendment to the City's economic health and employment lands policies, was approved by City Council on December 18th, 2013, and subsequently approved, with minor modifications, by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing ("MMAH") in July 2014. Various appeals have been submitted to the LPAT from MMAH's decision. The LPAT has approved certain policies and mapping of OPA 231 including the Employment Areas land use designations, except as they pertain to lands that are subject to site-specific appeals. The appeal and approval process is ongoing. *Planning Act* applications submitted after approval of OPA 231 by the Province shall meet the intent of both City Council's and the Province's direction. The owner of 625 Church Street has not appealed OPA 231.

OPA 231 amends Section 3.5.1 of the Official Plan by adding Policy 9 which states that in certain specified growth areas, new development containing residential units on a property with at least 1,000 square metres of existing non-residential gross floor area used for offices is required to increase the non-residential gross floor area used for office purposes. The property at 625 Church Street currently contains over 8,100 square metres of office space on-site.

Zoning By-laws

The site is zoned CR T4.0 C1.0 R4.0 in the former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86, as amended, which permits a mix of commercial and residential uses. The maximum permitted height is 30 metres and the maximum permitted density is 4 times the lot area. Other site specific permissions and exceptions apply, including Section 12(2)80 which limits the use of parking facilities, Section 12(2)132 which prohibits commercial parking garage uses, and Section 12(2)260 which contains development on the property within a 44 degree angular plane measured from a base height of 16 metres at the Church Street lot line.

The site is zoned CR 4.0 (c1.0; r4.0) SS1 (x2550) in the City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013, as amended. The CR zone permits a range of uses similar to the former designation under Zoning By-law 438-86 and a maximum permitted height of 30 metres. The (x2550) provisions indicate site specific permissions and exceptions that are carried over from Zoning By-law 438-86.

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/>

Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines will be used in the evaluation of this application:

- City-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines
- Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Guidelines; and
- Growing Up: Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities Draft Urban Design Guidelines; among others.

The City's Design Guidelines may be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/design-guidelines/>

Site Plan Control

The application is subject to Site Plan Control. A Site Plan Control application has not been submitted.

COMMENTS

Reasons for the Application

The proposal requires an amendment to Zoning By-laws 438-86 and 569-2013 for the property at 625 Church Street to vary performance standards, including: increase in gross floor area, increase in building height, and reduced parking standards, among others.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

The application has been circulated to City divisions and public agencies for comment. At this stage in the review, the following preliminary issues have been identified:

Provincial Policies and Plans Consistency/Conformity

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* requires municipalities to have regard for matters of provincial interest, including: the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions; conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest; the appropriate location of growth and development; the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians; and the promotion of a built form that is well designed, encourages a sense of place, and provides for public spaces that area of high quality, safe and accessible, attractive and vibrant.

The application will be evaluated against the PPS and the Growth Plan to establish the application's consistency with the PPS and conformity to the Growth Plan, including but not limited to whether: the proposal makes efficient use of land and resources, infrastructure and public facilities; the proposal is directed at an appropriate location; appropriate development standards are promoted which facilitate compact form; the proposal adequately conserves significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes; and the proposal represents an appropriate type and scale of development and transition of built form to adjacent areas.

Official Plan Conformity

Staff will continue to evaluate this planning application against the Official Plan to determine the application's conformity to the Official Plan including the Downtown Plan and the applicable Site and Area Specific Policies.

Built Form, Planned and Built Context

Staff will continue to assess the suitability and appropriateness of the proposed height, massing, and other built form issues based on Section 2 (d), (j), (k), (p), (q) and (r) of the *Planning Act*; the PPS (2014); the Growth Plan (2019); the City's Official Plan, Secondary Plan, and SASP policies; and the City's Design Guidelines.

The following preliminary issues have been identified:

- The suitability of the proposed height and massing in relation to the area's existing and planned built form character and scale;
- The appropriateness of the building floor plate sizes;
- The impacts of new shadowing on the public realm and open spaces. A Shadow Study was submitted and is currently under review by City staff;
- The impacts of any changes to the pedestrian level wind conditions along adjacent and nearby streets, as well as the proposed amenity spaces of the building and impacts on surrounding properties. A Pedestrian Wind Assessment was submitted and is currently under review by City staff;

- The appropriateness of the streetscape and mid-block connection design, including minimum clearway widths and the proposed landscape concept;
- The identification of opportunities for parkland or open space; and
- The appropriate conservation of the property at 625 Church Street, which has the potential to hold cultural heritage value.

Tree Preservation

The application is subject to the provisions of the City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813 Articles II (Street Trees By-law) and III (Private Tree By-law). Nineteen trees were surveyed on and within six metres of the subject site. The applicant is proposing to remove fourteen of the existing trees and plant thirteen new trees within the property and the adjacent City road allowance.

- An Arborist Report, Tree Preservation Plan and Landscape Plans were submitted and are currently under review.

Heritage Impact & Conservation

The subject site is located adjacent to several properties that are either included on the City's Heritage Register and/or designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. These include the properties at 68-70 Charles Street East and 628, 634 and 636 Church Street.

Staff have identified the property at 625 Church Street as having the potential to hold cultural heritage value. Staff will be researching and evaluating the property using the criteria prescribed under the *Ontario Heritage Act* for determining significance. If the property is found to meet the Provincial criteria staff will be seeking its conservation through the development proposal.

- A Heritage Impact Assessment was submitted and is currently under review by City staff.

Community Services and Facilities

Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) are an essential part of vibrant, strong and complete communities. CS&F are the lands, buildings and structures used for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by the City or other public agencies, boards and commissions. They include recreation, libraries, childcare, schools, public health, human services, cultural services and employment services, etc.

The timely provision of community services and facilities is as important to the livability of the City's neighbourhoods as "hard" services like sewer, water, roads and transit. The City's Official Plan establishes and recognizes that the provision of and investment in community services and facilities supports healthy, safe, liveable, and accessible communities. Providing for a full range of community services and facilities in areas

experiencing major or incremental growth, is a responsibility shared by the City, public agencies and the development community.

- A Complete Community Assessment was submitted and is currently under review by City staff. Staff will assess the impact of the proposed development and local development activity on community services and facilities, including assessment of existing capacity to support the proposed future population.

Infrastructure/Servicing Capacity

The proposed development is to be serviced by connections to the existing watermain on Hayden Street and Church Street, the sanitary sewer on Church Street, and the storm sewer on Charles Street East. Staff are reviewing the application to determine if there is sufficient infrastructure capacity to accommodate the proposed development and the cumulative impact of all the proposed developments in the area. The proposed development will need to meet the requirements of the City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Management Guidelines. The proposed development will need to ensure the discharging of groundwater to the City's sewer system can be adequately supported.

- A Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report, Geotechnical Investigation and Design Report, and Hydrogeological Review were submitted and are currently under review by City staff to evaluate the effects of the development on the City's municipal servicing infrastructure and identify and provide the rationale for any new infrastructure and upgrades to existing infrastructure, necessary to provide adequate servicing to the proposed development.

A five level underground garage that provides 260 vehicular parking spaces for the development is proposed to be accessed from a drive aisle running between Charles Street East and Hayden Street. Four ground-level loading spaces are also proposed to be accessed from the private drive aisle.

- A Transportation Impact Study has been submitted and is under review by City staff to evaluate the effects of the development on the transportation system, and to identify any transportation improvements that are necessary to accommodate the travel demands and impacts generated by the development.

Toronto Green Standard

Council has adopted the four-tier Toronto Green Standard (TGS). The TGS is a set of performance measures for green development. Applications for Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision and Site Plan Control are required to meet and demonstrate compliance with Tier 1 of the Toronto Green Standard. Tiers 2, 3 and 4 are voluntary, higher levels of performance with financial incentives. Tier 1 performance measures are secured on site plan drawings and through a Site Plan Agreement or Registered Plan of Subdivision.

The applicant is required to meet Tier 1 of the TGS. Performance measures for the Tier 1 development features to be secured through the zoning by-law process include: automobile infrastructure; cycling infrastructure; and storage and collection of recycling and organic waste.

- A TGS Checklist was submitted and is currently under review by City staff for compliance with the Tier 1 performance measures. Staff will encourage the applicant to achieve Tier 2 performance measures or higher as part of the review process.

Section 37 Community Benefits

The Official Plan provides for the use of Section 37 of the *Planning Act* to pass by-laws for increases in height and/or density not otherwise permitted by the Zoning By-law in return for the provision by the applicant of community benefits in the form of capital facilities. It is standard to secure community benefits in a Section 37 Agreement which is then registered on title.

The proposal at its current height and density will be subject to Section 37 contributions under the *Planning Act*. Section 37 benefits have not yet been discussed. City staff intends to apply Section 37 provisions of the *Planning Act* should the proposal be approved in some form.

Other Matters

Additional issues may be identified through the review of the application, agency comments and the community consultation process.

CONTACT

Katherine Bailey, Planner
Tel. No. (416) 397-1761
E-mail: Katherine.Bailey@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Lynda H. Macdonald, MCIP, RPP, OALA, FCSLA
Director, Community Planning
Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

City of Toronto Drawings

Attachment 1: 3D Model of Proposal in Context (Looking Northwest)

Attachment 2: 3D Model of Proposal in Context (Looking Southeast)

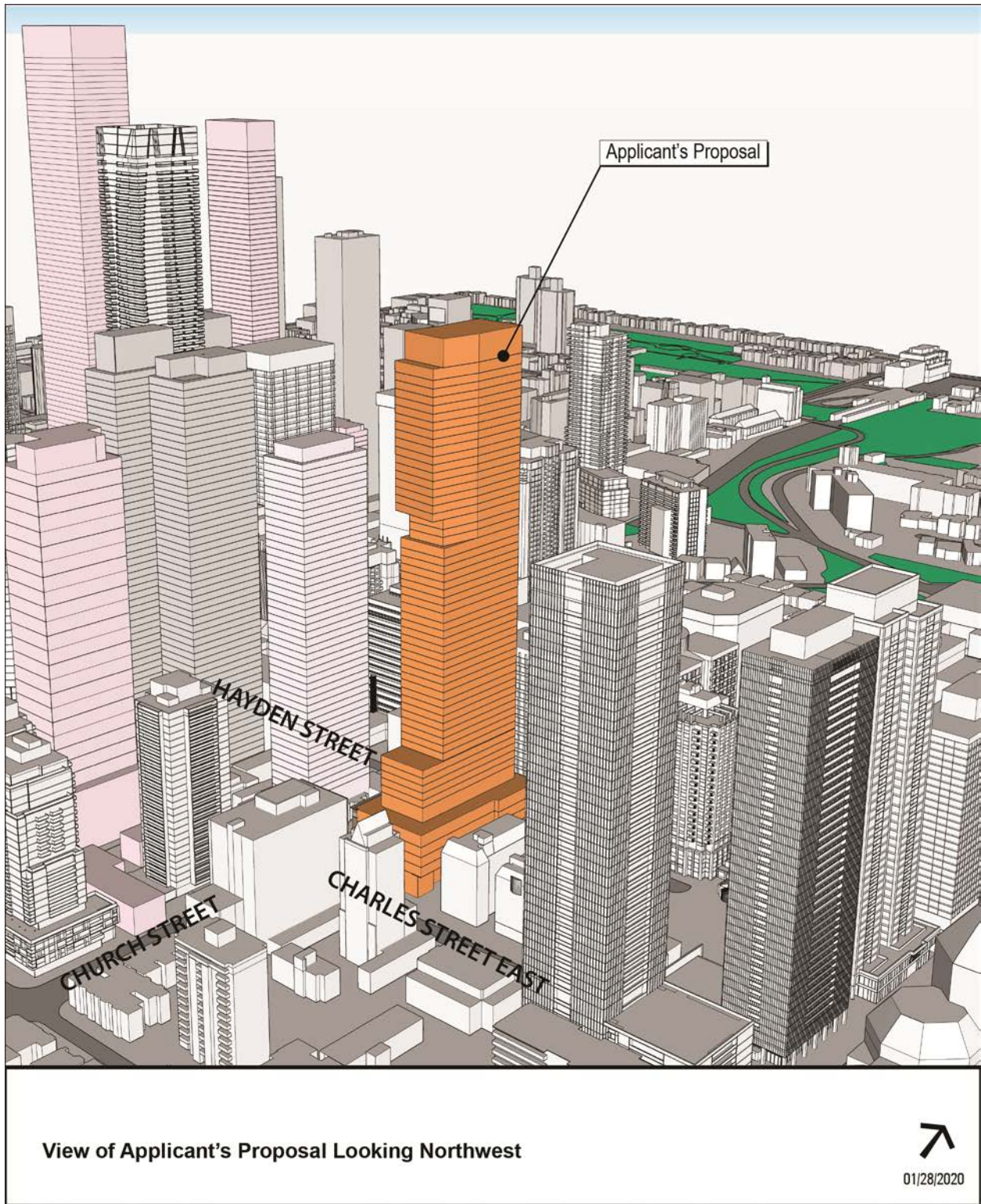
Attachment 3: Location Map

Attachment 4: Site Plan

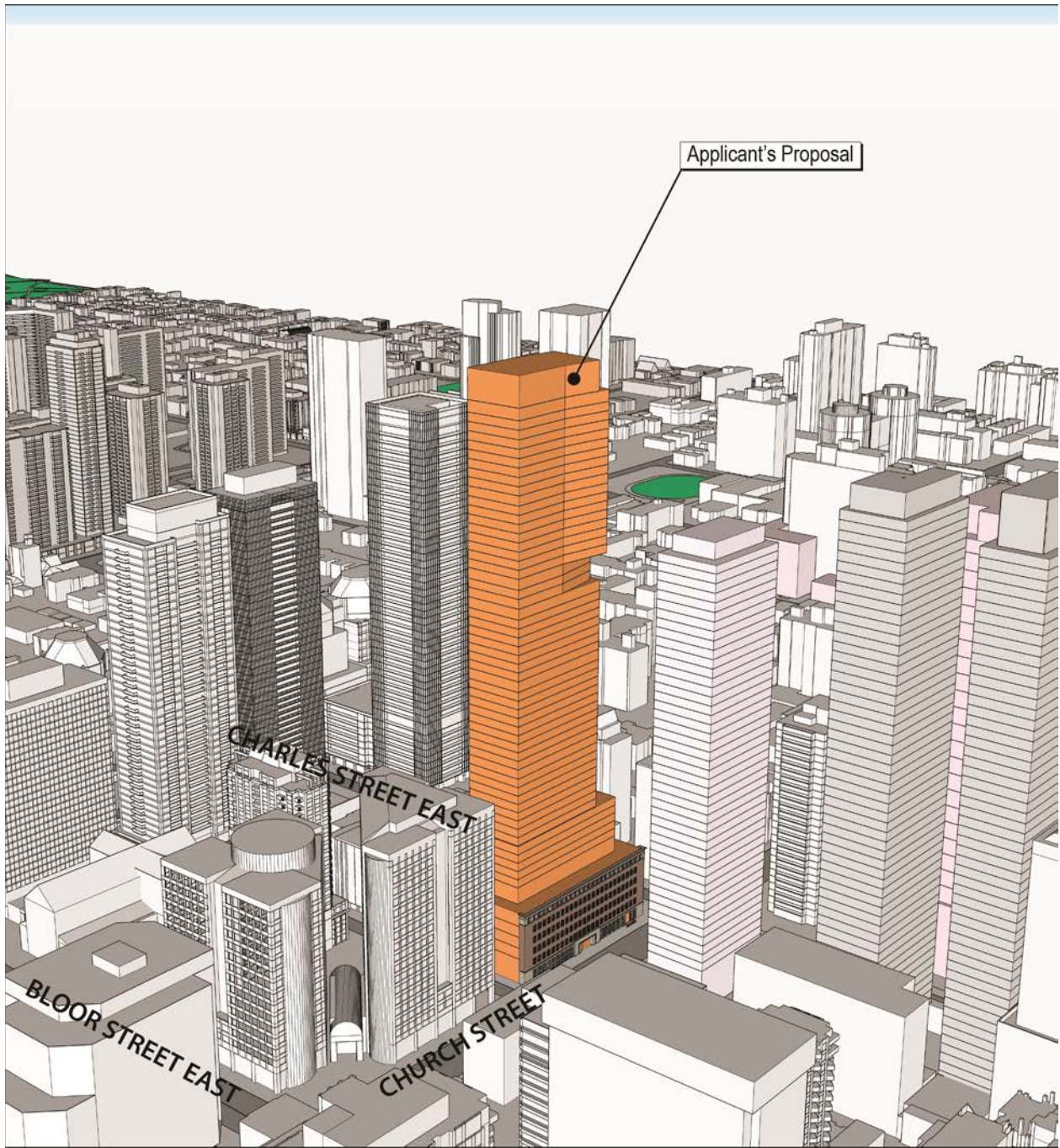
Attachment 5: Official Plan Map

Attachment 6: Application Data Sheet

Attachment 1: 3D Model of Proposal in Context (Looking Northwest)



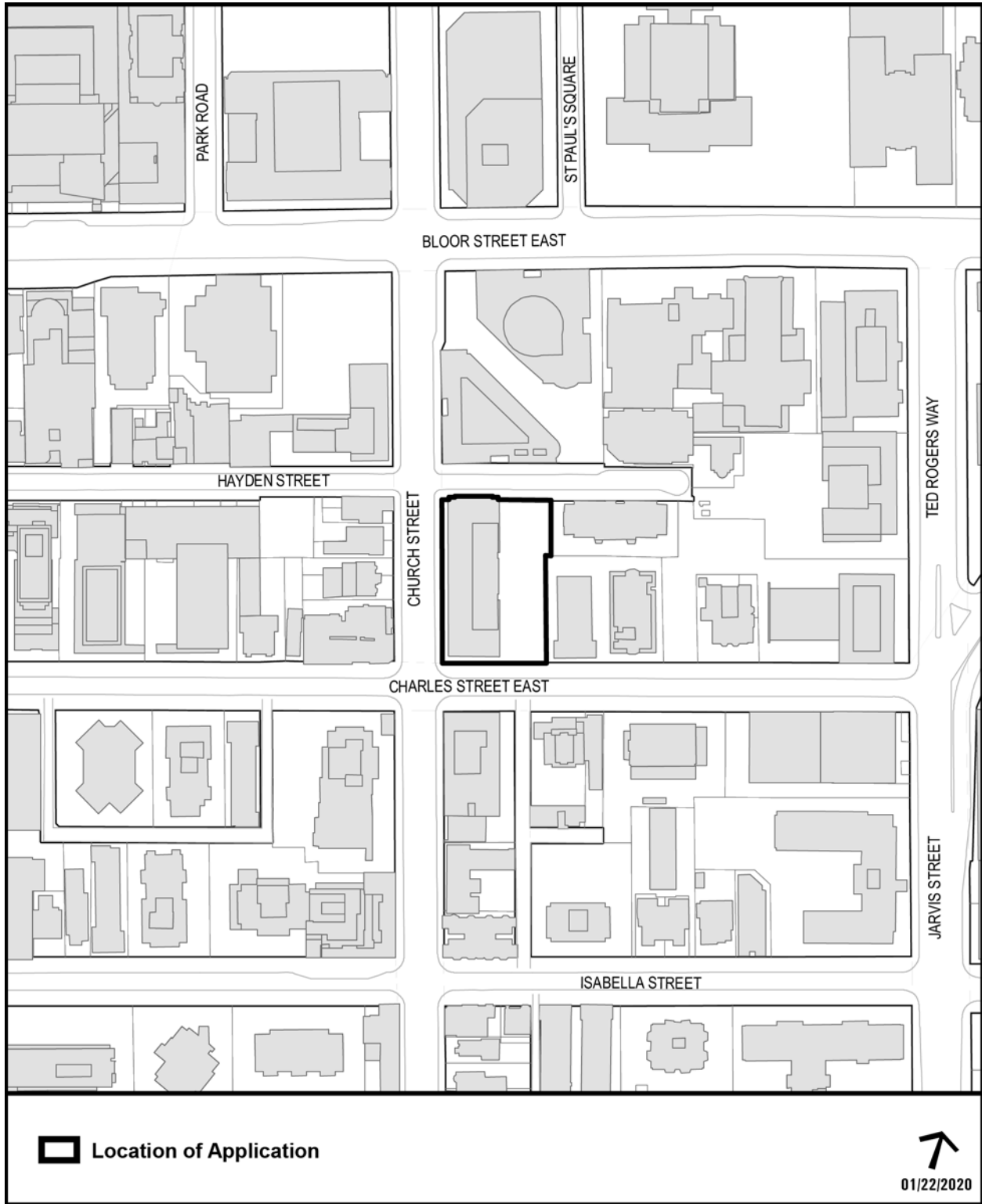
Attachment 2: 3D Model of Proposal in Context (Looking Southeast)

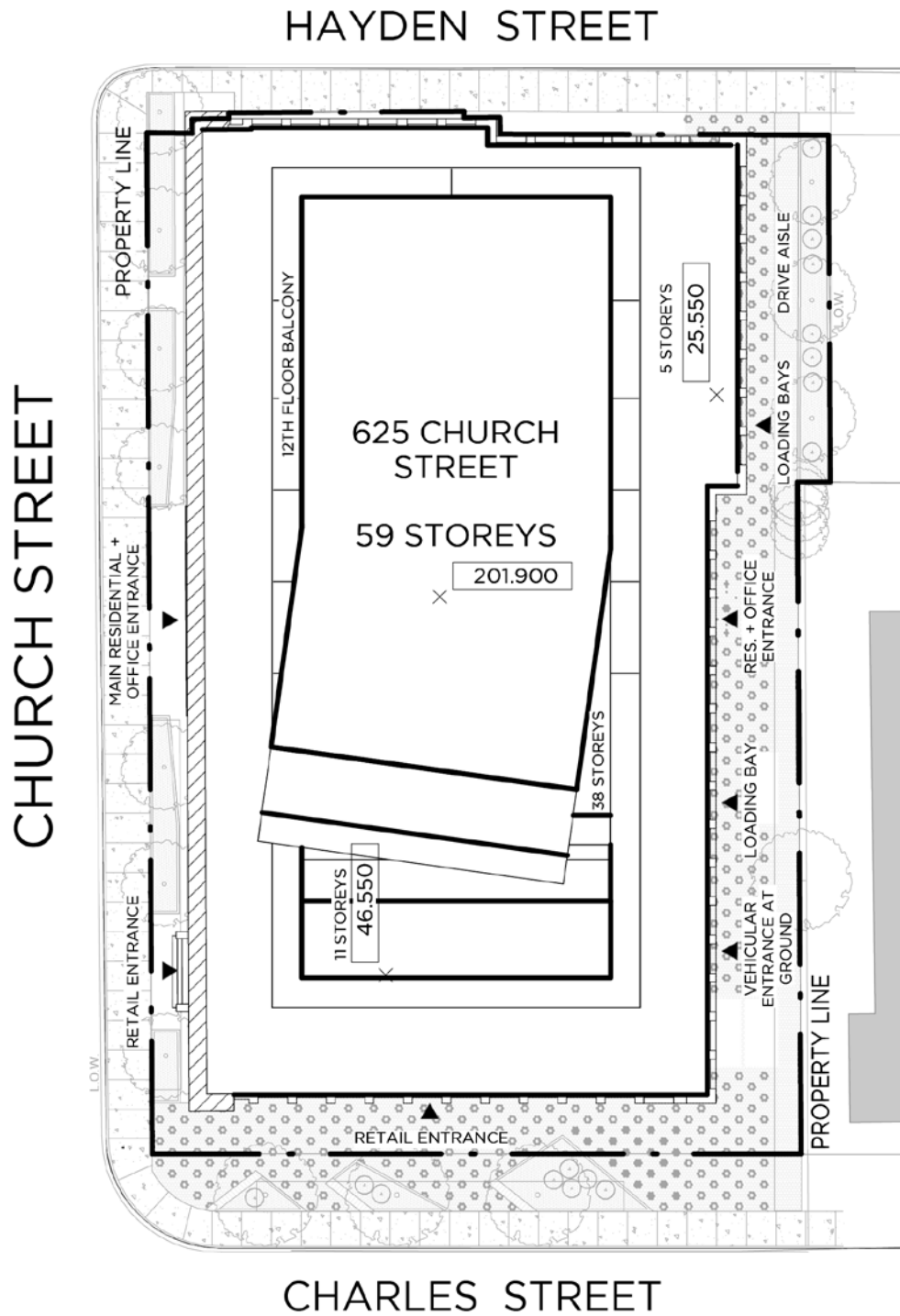


View of Applicant's Proposal Looking Southeast

↙
01/28/2020

Attachment 3: Location Map

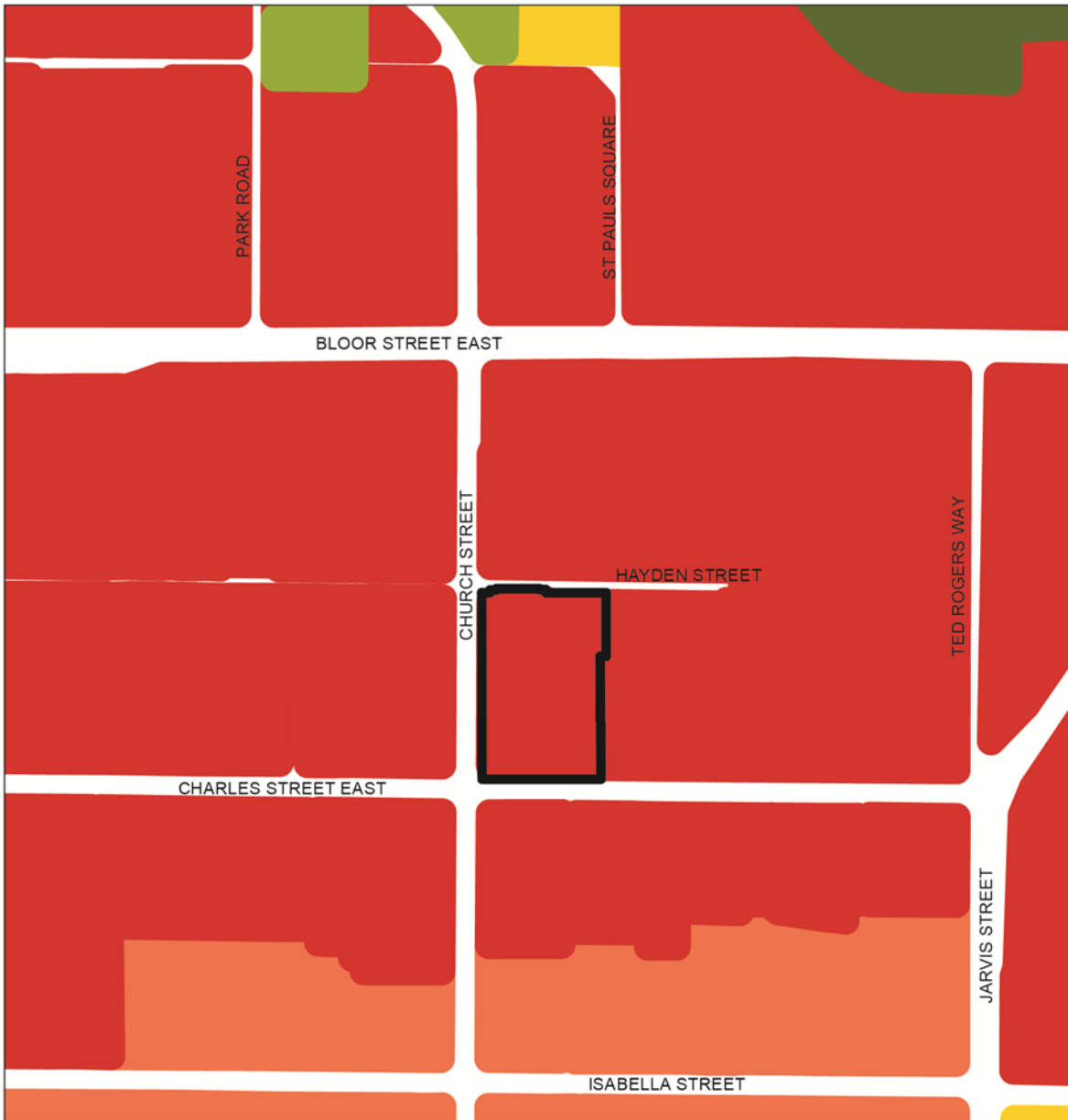




Site Plan



Attachment 5: Official Plan Map



625 Church Street

Official Plan Land Use Map

File # 19 263839 STE 11 OZ

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Location of Application |  Parks & Open Space Areas |
|  Neighbourhoods |  Natural Areas |
|  Apartment Neighbourhoods |  Parks |
|  Mixed Use Areas | |


Not to Scale
01/22/2020

Attachment 6: Application Data Sheet

APPLICATION DATA SHEET

Municipal Address: 625 CHURCH ST **Date Received:** December 20, 2019

Application Number: 19 263839 STE 11 OZ

Application Type: OPA / Rezoning, Rezoning

Project Description: A Zoning By-law Amendment application for a new 59-storey mixed-use building. The development proposes to retain the west elevation of the existing 6-storey building in its entirety, as well as a portion of the north and south elevations. The proposed development includes 10,672 square metres of office and retail uses, 651 dwelling units, and 260 parking spaces.

Applicant	Agent	Architect	Owner
COLLIERS PROJECT LEADERS		RAW DESIGN INC.	MANULIFE FINANCIAL

EXISTING PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	Mixed Use Areas	Site Specific Provision:	
Zoning:	CR T4.0 C1.0 R4.0	Heritage Designation:	N/A
Height Limit (m):	30	Site Plan Control Area:	Yes

PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq m): 3,096 Frontage (m): 69 Depth (m): 44

Building Data	Existing	Retained	Proposed	Total
Ground Floor Area (sq m):	1,459		1,903	1,903
Residential GFA (sq m):			45,742	45,742
Non-Residential GFA (sq m):	8,100		10,672	10,672
Total GFA (sq m):	8,100		56,414	56,414
Height - Storeys:	6		59	59
Height - Metres:			188	188

Lot Coverage Ratio (%): 61.46 Floor Space Index: 18.22

Floor Area Breakdown	Above Grade (sq m)	Below Grade (sq m)
Residential GFA:	45,742	
Retail GFA:	593	
Office GFA:	10,079	
Industrial GFA:		
Institutional/Other GFA:		

Residential Units by Tenure	Existing	Retained	Proposed	Total
Rental:			651	651
Freehold:				
Condominium:				
Other:				
Total Units:			651	651

Total Residential Units by Size

	Rooms	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3+ Bedroom
Retained:					
Proposed:		66	319	200	66
Total Units:		66	319	200	66

Parking and Loading

Parking Spaces:	260	Bicycle Parking Spaces:	718	Loading Docks:	4
-----------------	-----	-------------------------	-----	----------------	---

CONTACT:

Katherine Bailey, Planner
(416) 397-1761
Katherine.Bailey@toronto.ca