

JUNE 2022



LIBERTY VILLAGE

DRAFT PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY



LIBERTY VILLAGE DRAFT PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge this land is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and is within the territory of the Dish With One Spoon treaty.

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1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Mandate

On July 16, 2020, Toronto and East York Community Council directed City staff to undertake a study of public space and other City-owned properties in the Liberty Village area, in order to assess and identify the need and opportunity to leverage City assets to improve and expand the range of open space and community services and facilities to serve the area. The Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services and Facilities Study was initiated to address the needs resulting from significant residential and commercial growth in the area.

The study will develop both short-term and long-term priorities that can be implemented in consultation with the Liberty Village community including residents, businesses, property owners, employees and other key community stakeholders. The study is not intended as a heritage or land use study and does not make any recommendations on changes to land use or development permissions.

This document provides guidelines for capital projects and public and private development that recognize the ongoing changes to the area and the introduction of new transit facilities and crossings.

Study Area

The study area is generally bounded by King Street West to the north, Strachan Avenue to the east, Dufferin Street to the west and the GO/Metrolinx Corridor and Exhibition Place to the South.

Liberty Village was historically an industrial/manufacturing district. The study area has two distinct areas: a residential community on the east side of Liberty Village generally east of Hanna Avenue, and employment uses on the west side of the area. The employment lands are characterized by the adaptive reuse of existing buildings as new office, creative and information technology spaces.

Study Direction - Public Realm Strategy:

- Review inventory of existing parks, open spaces and streetscapes within the study area including current and future programming needs;
- Identify potential streetscape improvements in the study area;
- Identify mobility and site access improvements, and additional opportunities within the right-of-way such as:
 - Wider sidewalks, new active transportation connections;
 - Curbside management strategies;
 - Traffic management strategies;
 - Parking management strategies;
 - Opportunities for parkettes and restaurant and cafe patio spaces;
- Identify opportunities for new parkland, park improvements and open spaces; and
- Identify opportunities for short and long term public realm improvements such as: street furniture, tree planting and other plantings; and public art

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of key needs and opportunities identified to date for parks and public realm. These have been identified in consultation with the community.

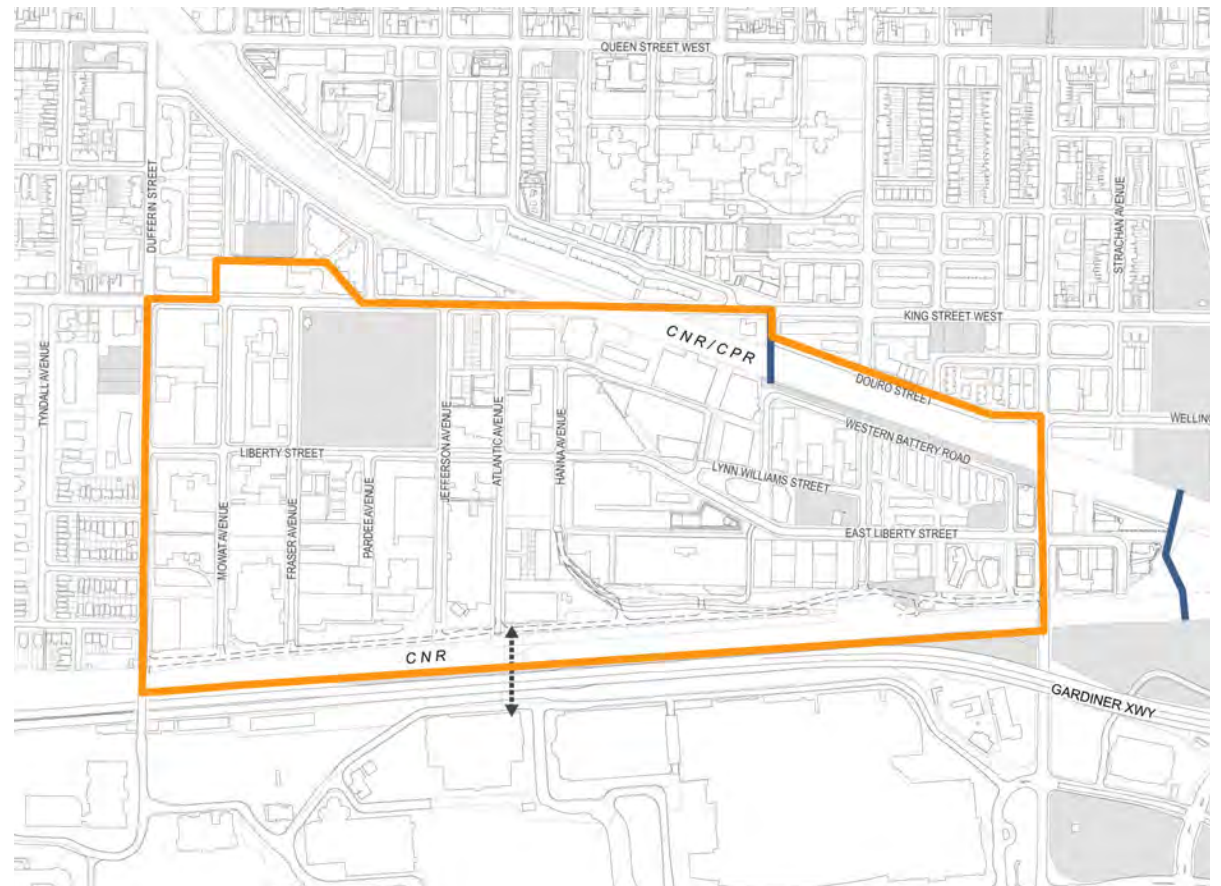
Further work for a final implementation strategy will include the following:

- **Future Precinct Parking Study:** A study will be initiated to assess current and forecasted parking demand and supply in the study area, to inform decisions about the future of the Toronto Parking Authority surface parking lots at 34 Hanna Avenue and Lamport Stadium, as well as on-street parking and the provision of on-site parking in future developments. The

findings of the study will allow staff to explore alternative measures in the public realm such as repurposing excess road space for landscape or other right-of-way streetscaping elements.

- **Liberty Village Streets Plan:** Ongoing work by Transportation Services to improve conditions for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users and address safety, site access and mobility issues. An action plan will be included in the Final Study Recommendations.
- **Liberty New Street:** Interim conditions along Liberty Street and East Liberty Street may need to be considered until such time as the new street will be constructed.

Refer to section 4.0 Action Plan at the end of this document, for details.



Map: Study Area

Legend

- Study Area
- Future New Liberty Street alignment is being adjusted. Shown is the outline from the approved Environmental Assessment 2016.
- Pedestrian and Cycling Bridges
- Exhibition GO tunnel

1.2 City-Owned Sites

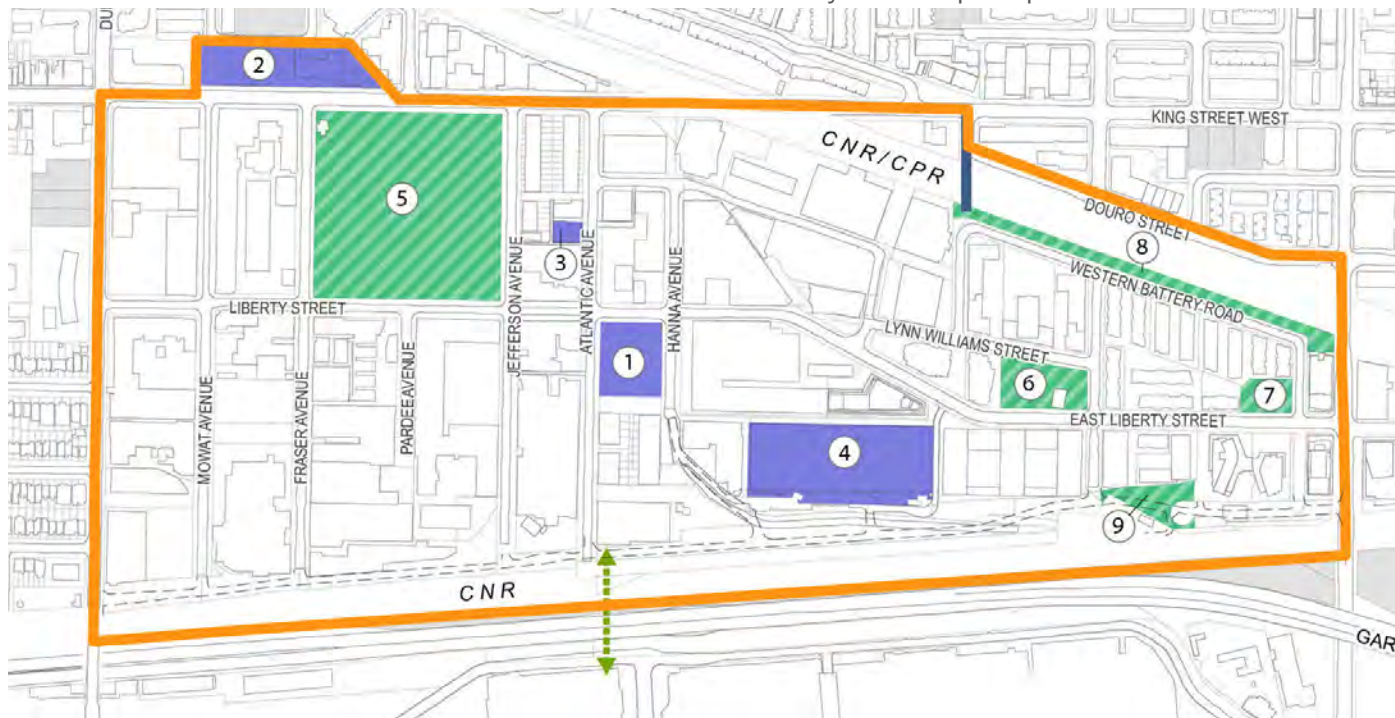
The City is a major landowner in Liberty Village. Staff are continuing to assess the future municipal real estate needs and develop opportunities to use City land to deliver much needed community infrastructure, including expanded parks and public realm to service the area land assets for enhanced municipal service delivery.

The following City-owned properties are included in the review:

1. 34 Hanna Avenue (Green P Parking Lot)
2. 1116 King Street West (Transportation Services Facility)
3. 98 Atlantic Avenue (City Archives)
4. 9 Hanna Avenue (Toronto Police Services)




Existing Parks and Open Spaces:

5. Lamport Stadium Park
6. Liberty Village Park
7. Gateway Park
8. Bill Johnston Park
9. City-owned Open Space



Map: City-Owned Sites

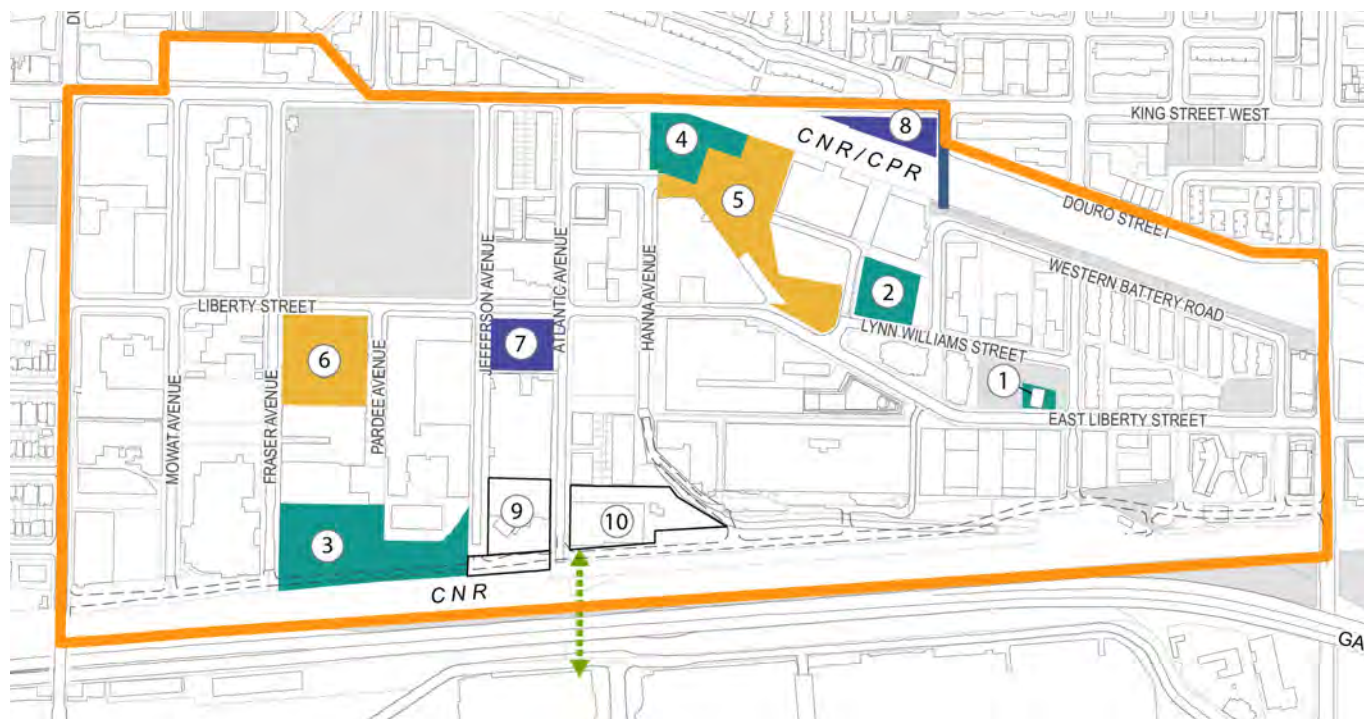
Legend

-  Study Area
-  City Property Assets
-  City Property Assets (Parks)
-  King Liberty Pedestrian Bridge

1.3 New Development

There are a number of development applications currently under review shown in the below map. New development will provide along their frontages, coordinated plans for sidewalks, tree planting and landscape. Mid-block connections, new streets, parks and open spaces as per city policies are also required as appropriate.

1. 70 East Liberty Street
2. 80 Lynn Williams Street
3. 7 Fraser Avenue
4. 85 Hanna Avenue
5. 61-75 Hanna Avenue and 120 Lynn Williams Street
6. 41 Fraser Street
7. 58 Atlantic Avenue
8. 1071 King Street West
9. 1 Jefferson Avenue and 2-20 Atlantic Avenue
10. 1 Atlantic Avenue



Map: New Development

Legend

- Study Area
- Development Proposal**
- Site Plan
- Rezoning
- Council/ Tribunal Approval
- Minister's Zoning Order Approval

Note for 1 Jefferson Avenue and 1 Atlantic Avenue (Sites 9 and 10 on the Map):
The Province has approved the Infrastructure Ontario/Metrolinx towers adjacent to the Exhibition GO station through a Minister's Zoning Order, April 8, 2022. Approved are four mixed-use towers from approximately 21 to 23 storeys (66.8m and 72.8m plus mechanical). Drawings are not available on the City's application information website, as there are no planning applications submitted to the City.

1.4 Distinct Character

Liberty Village has a unique area character that is distinct from the neighbourhoods that surround it. A former industrial district, the area emerged in the 1850s when two rail lines expanded westwards into the previously unbuilt Garrison Commons to facilitate growing industrial demands. This rail expansion served to establish the physical boundaries for the future Liberty Village, and industrial uses soon followed, capitalizing on the proximity to the new rail lines.

Street Network: By the early twentieth century Liberty Village was an established industrial hub. The proximity to the rail lines was key to the industrial operations and as the area developed, additional spur lines and road linkages connecting to the main rail lines were built, resulting in the unusual street layout in the area.

By the late nineteenth century, Liberty Street had developed as the east-west spine for the neighbourhood. During this period, the present day Atlantic, Jefferson, and Hanna Avenues were similarly laid out. Today they act as the primary north-south connections, bringing people into the neighbourhood and providing direct linkages both north to King Street West and south to Exhibition Place/Ontario Place and the rail line. A cluster of north-south streets established during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries run off King Street West and terminate at the southern rail line. This street network is filled in with additional internal streets to the east of the area.

Character Areas: The end of the Second World War saw the beginning of the decline of the industrial hub as many industries moved out to the suburbs for more space. Eventually, artists began to move into the empty factory buildings and established live/work spaces and art collectives. In the 1990s and early 2000s Liberty Village was rediscovered by the broader city and the historic industrial buildings were adapted for office uses. This was soon followed by an increase in residential high-rise

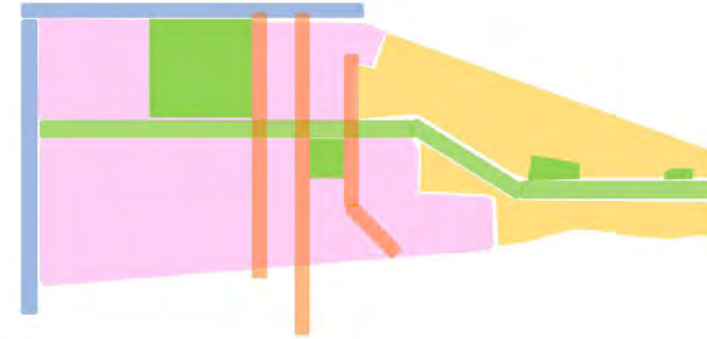


Diagram of character areas and main streets

buildings concentrated in the eastern half of the neighbourhood.

Today, as illustrated by the diagram above, Liberty Village is broadly composed of two key areas: the western half is designated as employment lands and is dominated by industrial heritage buildings that have been rehabilitated and adapted into employment and retail uses, while the eastern half is designated as mixed-use and is predominantly residential high-rise buildings and low-rise townhouses.

The three primary north-south connections (Atlantic, Jefferson, and Hanna Avenues) collectively function as main streets creating a "village" node at the centre of the neighbourhood and linking the employment and residential halves together. This village character should be reinforced as the area evolves.

The east-west Liberty Street/East Liberty Street functions as the key community spine for the neighbourhood. All the major existing and proposed parks and open spaces are located off this street; should significant greening be able to occur on Liberty Street/East Liberty Street this would serve to establish a green network for the area.

Public Realm Character

As a result of the existing and historic context, the public realm in Liberty Village also has distinct character defining elements.

Fine grain connections: Due to the history of the area as an industrial district, one of the distinct character defining elements in the public realm is a series of finer grained routes and connections through the neighbourhood separate from the primary street network. This is reflective of the industrial landscape typology that developed from the 1850s through to the First World War in Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, and elsewhere.

As the Industrial Revolution advanced in the nineteenth century manufacturing and industry became increasingly specialized, oftentimes necessitating the construction of a series of functionally interdependent buildings each with their own uses organized around a central internal open space or exterior connections to facilitate the factory operations.

The typology has been described as resembling a cloister or campus due to this interrelationship between the built form and open spaces.

Distinct Public Realm Character: The resultant public realm character that can be perceived throughout much of the western portion of Liberty Village is indicative of the former industrial uses in the area. Today, these routes and mid-block connections are well utilized by the residents and visitors to Liberty Village, as evidenced by the animation and retail/office uses that are oriented off them.

This fine grain fabric is also significant as it contributes to the public realm qualities that make Liberty Village a landmark destination that attracts people to the area.

The historic pattern of mid-block and public realm connections in Liberty Village should be conserved and this distinct public realm character should be continued and reinforced throughout the rest of the neighbourhood.



Photos of Toronto Carpet Factory courtyard and mid-block connection, from Jefferson Avenue to Mowat Avenue



Photo of mid-block connection from Dufferin to Mowat Street, south of Liberty Street



2.0 Public Realm Network

2.1 Greater Context - Pedestrian North-South Connections

For area planning to the south of Liberty Village, links are being coordinated with a number of projects for: Exhibition GO station and connections, Exhibition Place, Ontario Place, and the Bentway.

- North: For connections across the north rail corridor, the recently constructed King Liberty pedestrian bridge and Fort York bridges have improved links to Queen Street and north areas. The planned addition of a Smart Track pedestrian bridge linking Joe Shuster Way and Sudbury Street/Abell Street will provide a much needed western crossing.
- South: The south connection across the rail corridor at Exhibition GO station is planned for a bridge in addition to capacity improvements to the existing tunnel. The future west-east Liberty New Street will be transformative for the area. The approved environmental assessment alignment is shown, and is undergoing alignment adjustments due to Metrolinx rail corridor requirements.



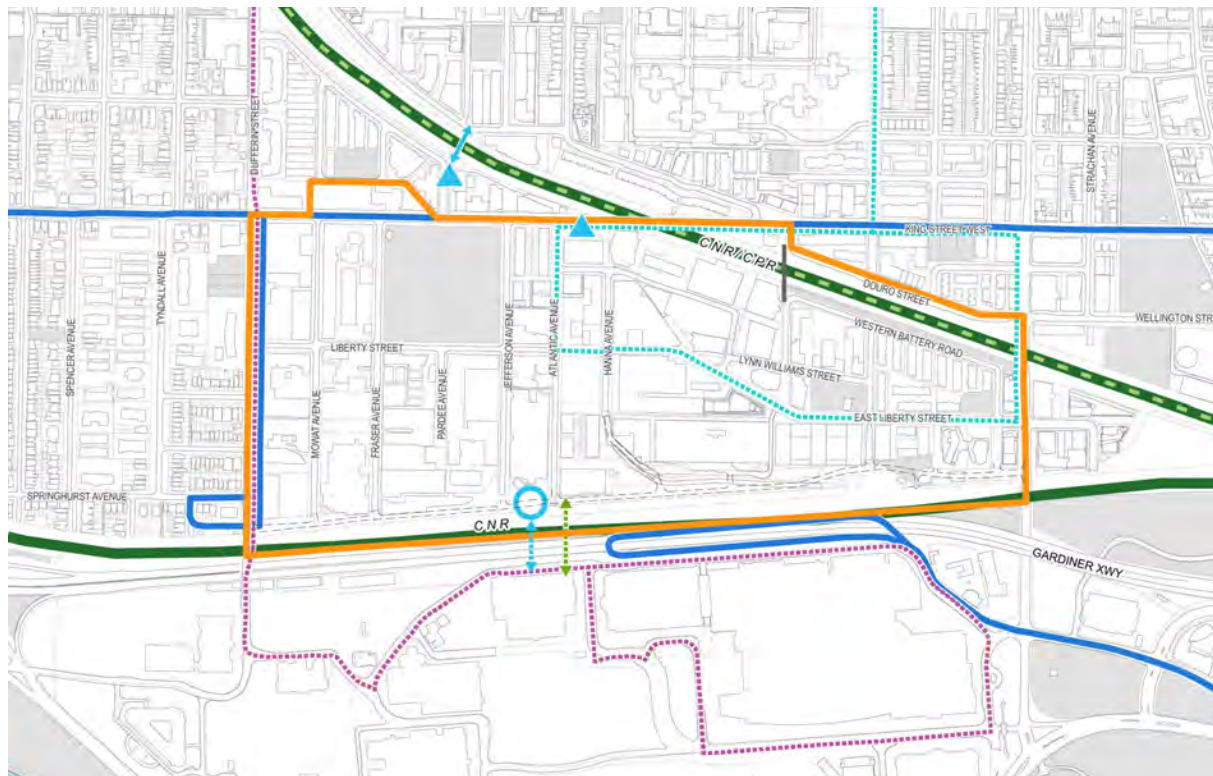
The Context Map shows key north-south routes to access areas north of Liberty Village, south to the waterfront, and to the greater park network. The black dotted lines show future planned links from the Smart Track station to the north, and New Liberty St to the south (Environmental Assessment 2006 alignment for the new street is shown).

Map: Context - Key Pedestrian North-South Connections













2.2 Transit Network

With an expected number of transit infrastructure projects for SmartTrack, Ontario Line, Exhibition GO, the planned Liberty New Street, and the recently opened King Liberty pedestrian bridge, there is an increased need to improve, establish and plan for increased mobility and pedestrian connections throughout the area. It is also critical to ensure that the locations, safety and design of the connections are carefully considered.

- North: The new Smart Track Station will have entry access from King Street West and from Joe Shuster Way, and a bridge across the rail corridor.
- South: Modifications are planned to the existing Exhibition GO station to accommodate the expansion required for the planned Ontario Line Exhibition GO stop. Metrolinx's infrastructure plan includes providing entry access from both Jefferson Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, a bridge across the rail corridor, and improvements to the existing tunnel. In order to implement the Ontario Line Exhibition stop, the construction of the west-east Liberty New Street is being considered.



Legend

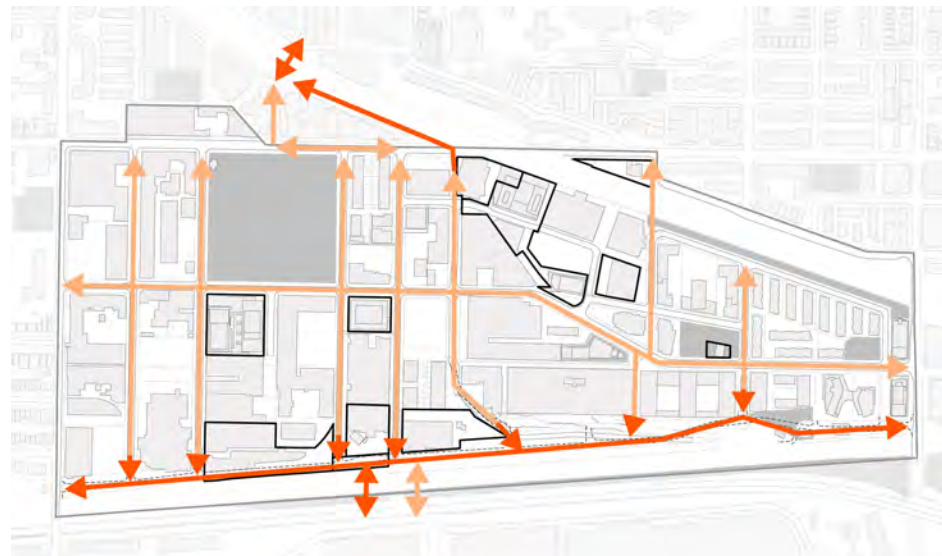
-  Study Area
-  Smart Track Entrances
-  Smart Track Bridge or Exhibition GO Station Bridge ON Line Station Entrance
-  ON Line Station Entrance
-  Exhibition GO tunnel
-  Future New Liberty Street
-  Lakeshore West GO Line
-  Barrie, Georgetown, Milton GO Line
-  Streetcar
-  Dufferin Bus
-  Ossington Bus
-  Future New Liberty Street alignment is being adjusted. Shown is the outline from the approved Environmental Assessment 2016.

Map: Transit Network

2.3 Existing and Planned Pedestrian Connections

Existing and Planned Pedestrian Connections:

- Future planned connections are shown in dark orange.
- North connections from Sudbury Street through a bridge across the rail corridor will be provided by the new Smart Track Station.
- South connections will be created with the construction of the new west-east Liberty New Street.

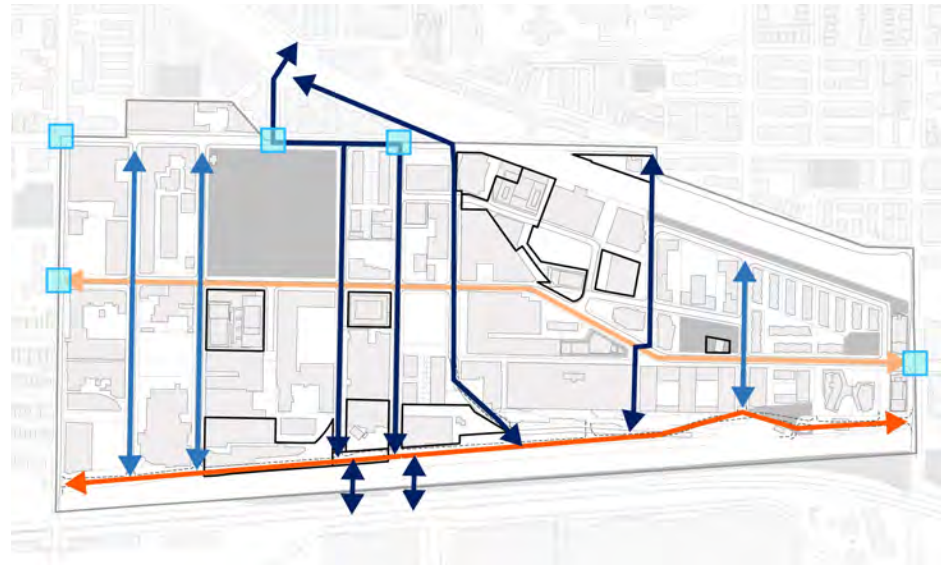


Map: Existing and Planned Pedestrian Connections

Future North-South Major Connections:

After the SmartTrack and Exhibition GO stations, and Liberty New Street are built, there will be increased pedestrian usage of:

- Atlantic Avenue which will link across the rail corridors to the north and south.
- Jefferson Avenue and Hanna Avenue, will also see increase in use due to proximity to connections across the north and south rail corridors.
- King West Laneway (east of the Toronto Police Services building) will see an increase in pedestrians travelling to the north existing King-Liberty pedestrian bridge, and south to the Liberty New Street and its connection across the south rail corridor.

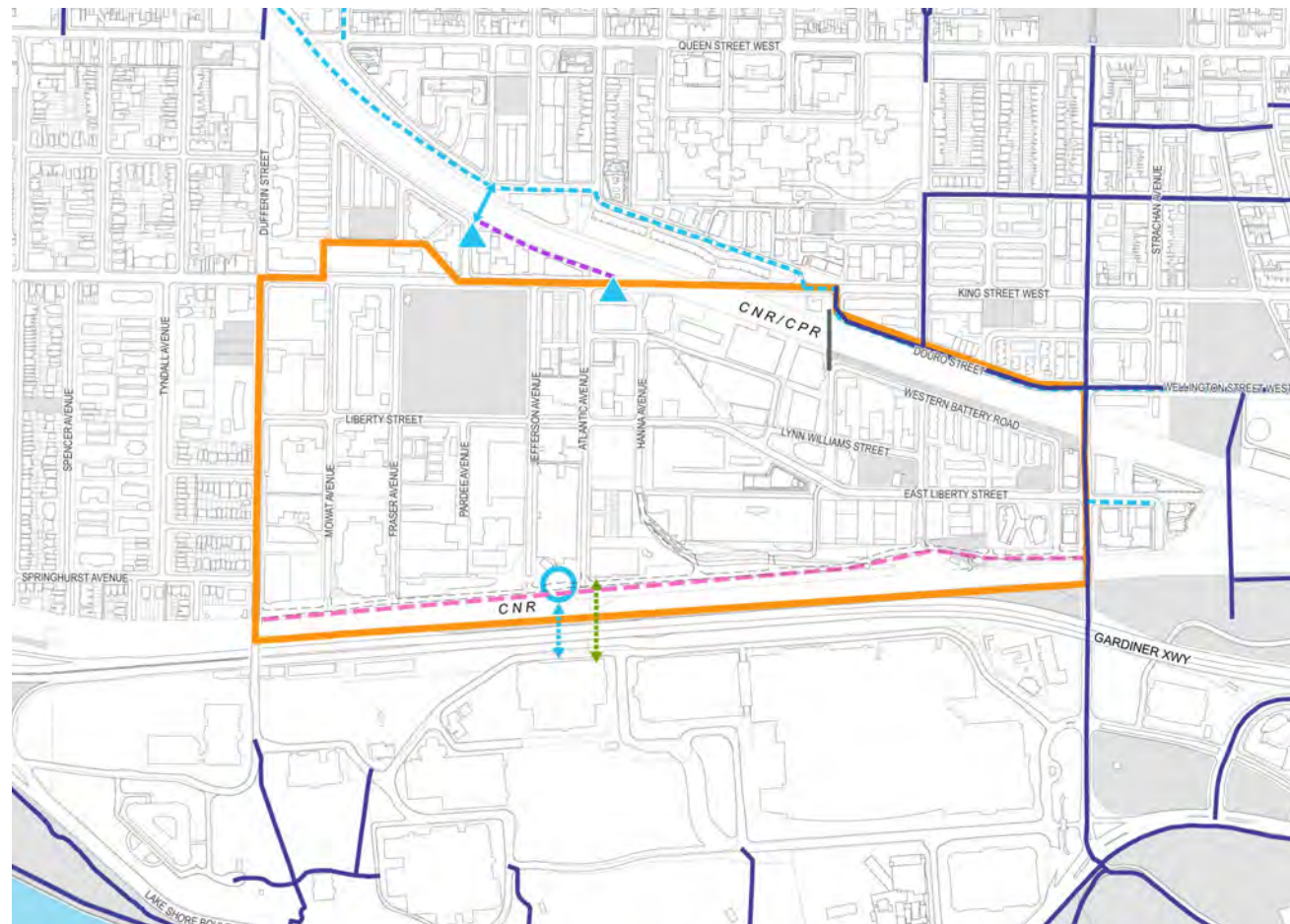


Map: Future North-South Major Connections

2.4 Cycling Network

Expanding cycling opportunities not only improves safety but is also grounded in many city policies and strategies including the Official Plan, the Road to Health, Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, TransformTO Climate Action Strategy, and Complete Streets. There are a number of upcoming projects in the Study Area that will enhance the cycling network and allow increased connection route opportunities beyond the area.

Along the south portion of the Study Area, Liberty New Street is planned to accommodate a cycling facility from Dufferin Street to Strachan Avenue. To the north, the SmartTrack station will introduce a bridge over the rail tracks. The bridge will create an access point along Sudbury Street to the north with a planned entrance from the West Toronto RailPath extension that will connect pedestrians and cyclists from Joe Shuster Way. Additionally, a cycling path has been built along the rear of the development at 1100 King Street West that can be accessed from Joe Shuster Way and will extend across the existing King Street bridge, bringing cyclists and pedestrians to the Hanna Avenue area.



Map: Cycling Network



Refer to the City's Cycling Network Plan for the most recent plans and programmed implementation projects. Link: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/cycling-in-toronto/cycle-track-projects/cycling-network-10-year-plan/>

The Cycling Network Near-Term Implementation Program for 2022-2024 includes several projects that will improve access to Liberty Village. These include:

- Upgrades to bi-directional cycle track on Douro Street between Strachan Avenue and King Street West;
- Renewal of bike lanes on Strachan Avenue between Lake Shore Blvd West and Queen Street West, and new bikeway on Ordnance Street;
- New bikeways on Sudbury Street between King Street West and Abell Street;
- Extension of West Toronto Rail Path to Sudbury Street and Abell Street; and
- Renewal and upgrades to Wellington Street West bi-directional cycle track between Bathurst and Strachan Avenue.

3.0 Public Realm Strategy

3.1 Public Realm Objectives

Liberty Village is a unique area with a distinct character. This character can be reinforced through public realm improvements that better support the changing community. The study has identified a number of objectives to guide public realm improvements in Liberty Village to achieve this goal:

- 1. Increase and Improve Parks and Open Spaces
- 2. Increase Green Landscaping over Hardscape
- 3. Maximize Tree Planting and Create Conditions that Allow for Mature Healthy Trees
- 4. Provide Pedestrian-Priority Design
- 5. Improve and Increase the Number of Mid-block Connections
- 6. Improve Liberty/East Liberty Street
- 7. Improve the Sidewalk and Landscape Condition of North-South Streets, particularly south of Liberty Street on Atlantic Avenue, Hanna Avenue, and Jefferson Avenue.



3.2 Guidelines

In keeping with Official Plan policies, all new development will provide the following to respond to the needs of the area.

Streetscape

1. Sidewalk, tree planting and landscaping will be provided along frontages of the development. Boulevard parking (between the property line and curb) will not be permitted for new development.
2. Curb extensions or 'bump outs' will be considered where deemed appropriate by the City, in consultation with the BIA. Coordinated tree planting, landscape and sidewalk provisions within the curb extensions will be undertaken. Opportunities may exist in areas with no on-street parking, and at intersections where on-street parking is prohibited.
3. Sidewalk and Boulevard: Through development review and capital projects, traffic lane width guidelines and curb radii guidelines should be used to find opportunities to maximize width of boulevard to increase sidewalk size and opportunities for soft landscaping/tree planting. Link: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/building-construction/infrastructure-city-construction/construction-standards-permits/standards-for-designing-and-constructing-city-infrastructure/>
4. Tree planting openings and softscape: Unless there are unusually constricted pedestrian areas or unique public realm elements, tree planting should be in large softscape planting or permeable areas, with as large an opening as possible. Due to the area having one of the lowest tree canopy coverage in the city, it is imperative that tree health and provisions for trees are a priority.
5. Tree planting with more than the minimum required soil volume is encouraged through larger tree planting areas and the use of soil cells and/or continuous soil trenches.
6. Soil for tree planting and landscape: Good quality soil will be provided to replace existing soil, particularly in areas converted from hardscape. The historically industrial nature of the area typically has poor quality soil. Refer to TS 5.10 Construction Specification for Growing Medium, specifically, "Boulevard Mix".
7. Identify constraints and opportunities for tree planting and growth with appropriate subsurface utility investigation and multi-divisional coordination.

Open Spaces

8. To address specific issues in Liberty Village and in keeping with Official Plan policies, all open spaces in Liberty Village should maximize:
 - a. tree planting with conditions for mature tree growth,
 - b. landscape planting areas/softscape, while providing seating and other amenities
 - c. seating areas with shade from trees, and sense of enclosure

Mid-block Connections

9. Mid-block connections are a fundamental character feature of Liberty Village and every development and city initiative in Liberty Village should retain, enhance and expand the mid-block connection network, as per the Mid-Block Connections Map on page 25 of this document. New developments should secure mid-block connections with public access, wherever possible.

The map demonstrates how continuous west-east connectivity can be increased with the provision of mid-block connections. As it is difficult to anticipate development sites and consolidated parcels, the location of the development's mid-block connection will be secured with the specific application, as deemed appropriate by the City.

- a. The locations of new mid-block connections should align with other mid-block connections or pedestrian routes, to provide a continuous linked pedestrian network wherever possible, as deemed appropriate by the City.
- b. Context block plans should be provided and indicate the mid-block connection network.
- c. West-east connections particularly south of Liberty Street are of key importance to reflect the prevailing character and allow for greater access through the area, and should be provided with special care as to location and design.
- d. These west-east connections are needed to remedy the lack of connections due to the existing long block lengths. Typically in the city there are commercial city lanes and often a greater frequency of west-east streets.
- e. Mid-block connections should be visible from the street, with clear sightlines for legibility and safety.

10. Vehicular shared lanes

Mid-block connections with vehicular traffic should be provided with dedicated sidewalk zones where deemed appropriate by the City, in compliance with all applicable accessibility standards. Refer also to the Complete Streets Guidelines.

11. Adjacent to residential uses

Mid-block connections adjacent to residential uses should include landscaping and be designed to address privacy issues related to the surrounding residential uses.

12. Design

To ensure that potential mid-block connections are high quality, usable spaces, they should comply with the following design directions:

- a. The width of the connection should be sized to be a comfortable, safe and inviting environment for pedestrians;
- b. Existing private and public laneways should be widened, where possible, to allow for small format and narrow frontage retail at-grade, in conjunction with new developments. This approach will make these laneways not just a passage for vehicular access, but a space for interaction and leisure;
- c. Buildings should have appropriate designs to provide for mid-block connections that create a pedestrian friendly corridor with a minimum height of 6 metres;
- d. Pedestrian-scale lighting should be provided for safety and visibility;
- e. Special pavement treatments should be considered to emphasize to the public that the connection is open to the public and provides for access and circulation routes;
- f. Animated frontages and active uses at grade should be provided wherever possible to increase pedestrian safety, vitality and visibility; have sitting areas when appropriate; outdoor patios and other forms of spill out activities; and
- g. Signage for safety and way-finding should be considered where appropriate.

3.3 Parks and Open Spaces

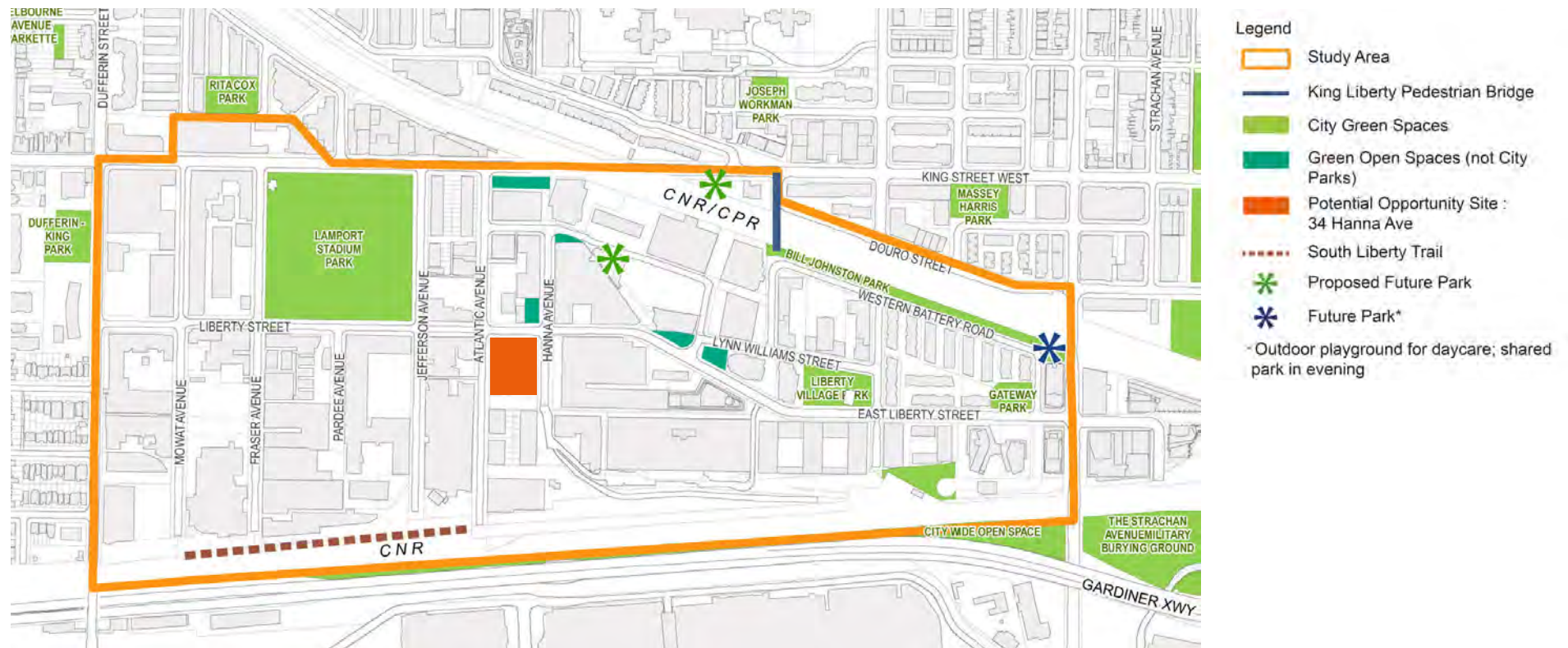
The City of Toronto Parkland Strategy has identified a need for new parks as well as improvements to existing parks in the study area.

Link to the Parkland Strategy: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/97fb-parkland-strategy-full-report-final.pdf>

Existing Parks

a. Liberty Village Park

Park improvements are planned to the Liberty Village Park which will create more play amenities including a playground expansion, splash pad, seating, as well as improvements to pathways and landscaping. Construction started in May 2022, with completion targeted by Fall 2022. This time line is subject to change and is weather permitting. The City's project site on the improvements can be found at the following link: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/construction-newfacilities/improvements-expansion-redevelopment/liberty-village-park-improvements/>



Map: Parks and Open Spaces

b. Allan A. Lamport Stadium Park – 1155 King St West

Playground-related improvements at Lamport Stadium Park are targeted for design in 2024 and construction in 2025.

Lamport Stadium Park is approximately 37,300 square metres in area (3.73 hectares). The site contains a number of uses including a sports stadium, a Toronto Parking Authority surface parking lot, a temporary Respite Centre, open park space with a small children's playground, seating, table tennis tables, pathways and a listed heritage house. City staff are presently undertaking a review of stadium operations, management and long-term use opportunities. Staff are also exploring opportunities in and around the stadium for optimizing and improving the design and functionality of the entire property in order to create a more usable and programmed park space.

Where possible in any future redesign, Lamport Stadium Park should treat Liberty Street as a key community frontage with improved physical and visual links, in keeping with the vision of Liberty Street/East Liberty Street as a park and community connector.

c. Bill Johnston Park – North of 19 Western Battery Road

A vacant parcel of land abutting the south-eastern edge of Bill Johnston Park has been secured by the City as future Parkland. The land is currently under private ownership but following the conveyance to the City, the land will be improved to expand the existing Bill Johnston Park with a shared children's playground. During the day, the play area will be exclusively used by the daycare facility operating within the building at 19 Western Battery Road, and during non-operating daycare hours, the play area will be available for the general public to use.



Map: Open Spaces shown in dark green



Photo of 34 Hanna Avenue Parking Lot

Potential Opportunity Site

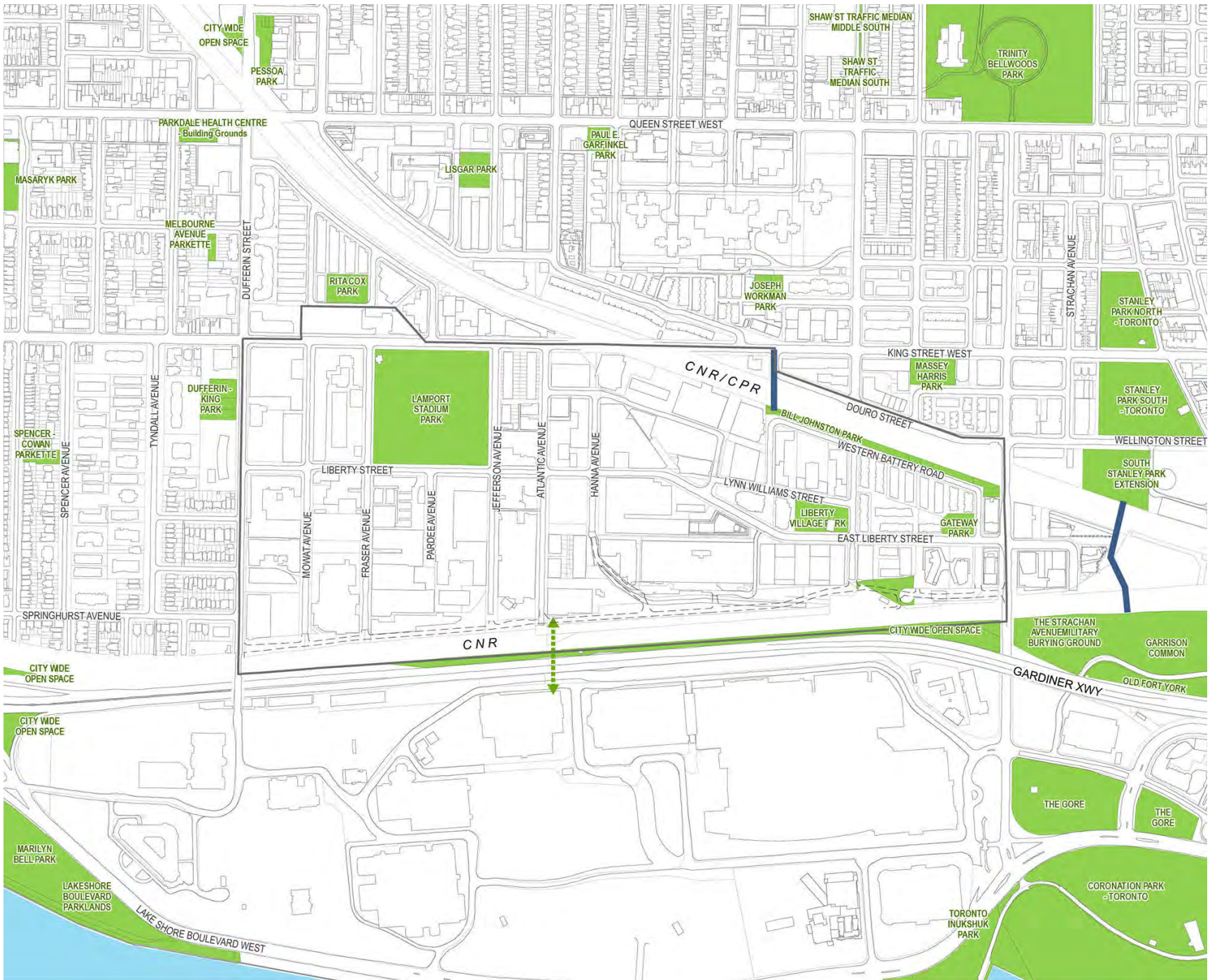
34 Hanna Avenue Parking Lot

The Toronto Parking Authority surface parking lot (Carpark #224) at 34 Hanna Avenue, contains 184 parking spaces and is an important City-owned property within Liberty Village. The property has frontage on Liberty Street, Hanna Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, and is approximately 4,886 square metres in size. In 2015, Toronto and East York Community Council requested staff from Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Real Estate, City Planning and the Toronto Parking Authority, and any other necessary City staff in consultation with the ward Councillors, to explore how the property could be better utilized to serve the local community. Through the current study, City Planning and Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and the Toronto Parking Authority, in consultation with CreateTO are exploring potential opportunities to re-develop this site to serve the local community. The link to the motion can be found at: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE10.124>

Open Spaces

The smaller open spaces on public and private lands currently are clustered near the centre of the study area. These are key assets in the open space network and should be continued as a provision in future development as per Official Plan policies. To address issues specific to Liberty Village, all open spaces should maximize:

- tree planting with conditions for mature tree growth;
- landscape planting areas/softscape, while providing seating/other amenities; and
- seating areas with shade from trees, and sense of enclosure.



Map: Context of Surrounding Parks and Open Spaces

3.4 Public Realm

1. Priority Streetscape Improvement Areas

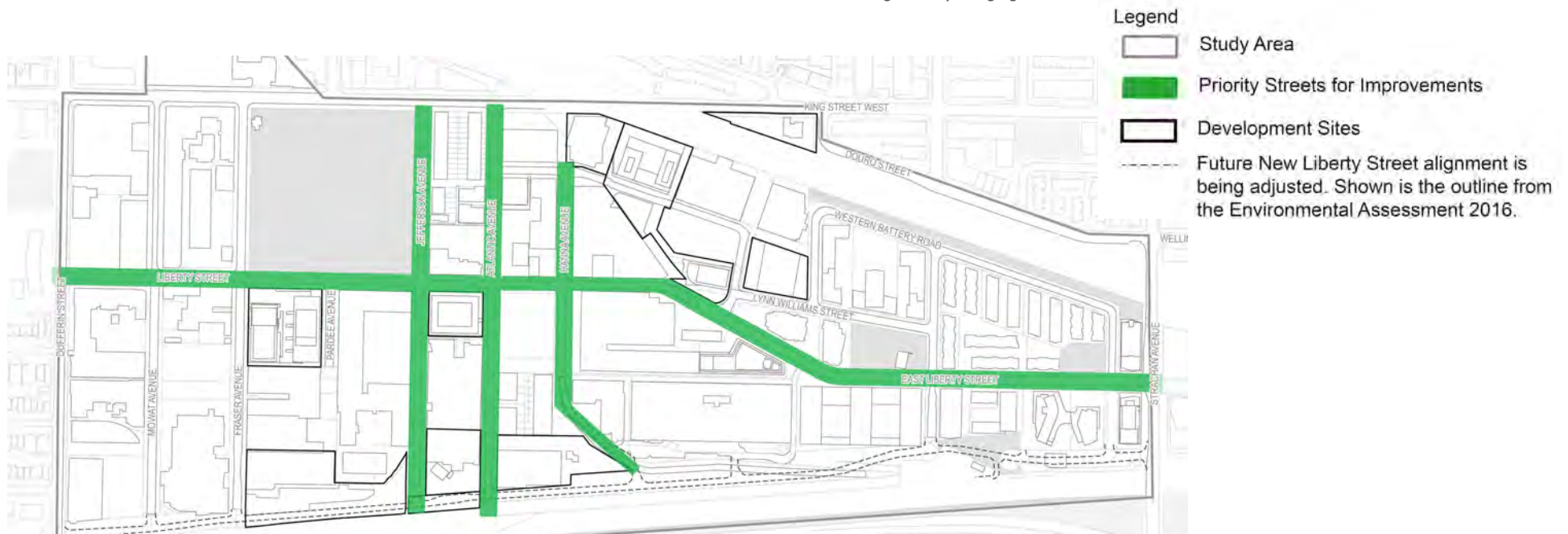
Priority Streets: Improvements such as introducing sidewalks, wider sidewalks, landscaping, pedestrian crossings and removal of boulevard parking, where possible to these following priority streets will create a strong public realm structure to support the community and future growth and linkages to north and south.

- Liberty Street and East Liberty Street**
- Atlantic Avenue, South of Liberty Street**
- Jefferson Avenue, South of Liberty Street**
- Jefferson Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, North of Liberty Street**
- Hanna Avenue, South of Liberty Street**

Priority Streets Objectives

Provide and prioritize:

- Sidewalk provisions and boulevard improvements;
- Landscape improvements;
- Tree planting improvements: manage sod boulevard compaction with a concrete curb surround/perimeter and protect trees with a tree fence;
- Public realm space increases;
- Safe pedestrian crossings;
- Park linkages to Liberty Street; and
- Green infrastructure opportunities with the Green Streets Implementation Working Group engagement.



Map: Priority Streetscape Improvement Areas



Enhancement Examples

Lower Cost

- BIA Banners and Pole wraps
- BIA Benches
- Pavement Mural art
- Building Mural art

Medium to High Cost

- Landscaped Curb Extensions
- Seating and planting areas
- Replace boulevard asphalt with sod/planting where feasible
- Tree planting with soil cells and/or continuous trench, with utility relocations as required
- Pedestrian lighting

Priority Streets

a. Liberty and East Liberty Streets

As the only community street connecting the west employment lands to the east residential community, any future capital work and new development along the corridor should explore opportunities for the implementation of public realm improvements.

- The removal of boulevard parking (between the building face and the curb) provides an opportunity to improve the public realm through the conversion of the parking spaces to wider sidewalks and additional landscaping.
- As a park connector, this west-east spine also directly links to all area parks including the TPA surface parking lot conversion opportunity at 34 Hanna Avenue. In order to maximize this park network, every effort should be made to increase landscape and tree planting with conditions supportive of mature tree growth.
- To increase space for more planting and sidewalk width, provide landscaped curb extensions where possible on the street and/or along the north-south streets intersection locations that can be seen from Liberty Street and East Liberty Street.
- The Liberty Village Streets Plan will explore how to allocate uses on Liberty/East Liberty Streets to best serve the community.



Liberty Street/East Liberty Street



b. Atlantic Avenue



c. Jefferson Avenue



d. Jefferson and Atlantic Avenues - North of Liberty St: Atlantic Ave shown



e. Hanna Avenue, South of Liberty Street

b. Atlantic Avenue, South of Liberty Street

Atlantic Avenue will continue to be a main north-south spine of the area, with a new Smart Track station entry planned on King Street, and a modified Exhibition GO station and its associated rail corridor crossing to the south. Improve areas of paved boulevard parking in the north and south portions of the street and provide missing sidewalks and landscaping.

c. Jefferson Avenue, South of Liberty Street

Due to the future Smart Track bridge spanning the north rail corridor, with a station entry from Joe Shuster Way leading to a traffic light location on King Street West that allows for safe passage to cross King Street West, it is anticipated that there will be increased pedestrian and cycling activity on Jefferson Avenue, which will allow for a link to the Exhibition GO station to the south.

South of Liberty Street, Jefferson Avenue is predominantly characterized by boulevard parking between the building and curb. Improvements should include:

- priority provision of sidewalks and planting to replace the parking areas where possible;
- landscaped curb extensions along Jefferson Avenue by new development and capital projects; and
- utility locations and soil volumes reviewed in early design as they will be key determinants.

d. Jefferson Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, North of Liberty Street

As a key entry to Liberty Village from King Street West, improvement opportunities for sidewalk and planting should be explored particularly on the west side of Atlantic Avenue where feasible. The east side of Atlantic Avenue near King Street West was identified as having narrow sidewalks coupled with prolonged TTC bus parking.

This typical main street character of the 2- storey retail area between Jefferson Avenue and Atlantic Avenue north of Liberty Street, should be better linked to Snooker Avenue and Hanna Avenue. A crossing west-east across Atlantic Avenue (as shown in the Pedestrian Safety map) and improved mid-block connection treatment would better link this area to the Hanna and Snooker district, and Lamport Stadium Park.

e. Hanna Avenue, South of Liberty Street

There are missing sidewalks and poor public realm at the south end of Hanna Avenue. This area is part of the New Liberty Street approved Environmental Assessment which is currently being revised as part of future Metrolinx works, and it is not yet determined if sidewalk provisions will be included.

3.4 Public Realm

2. Sidewalks and Boulevards

Due to its primarily industrial past, portions of the streets and sidewalks in Liberty Village west of Hanna Avenue often offer poor pedestrian environments, limited space for tree planting and street furniture, and boulevard parking instead of space for pedestrians or landscaping. In recent years, the Liberty Village BIA has been making some improvements to these streetscapes. Comments received through community consultation identified the narrow and missing sidewalk conditions throughout the study area.







Map: Priority Sidewalk Provisions

a. Priority Sidewalks: There is a need to provide sidewalks across the western portion of Liberty Village between Dufferin Street and Atlantic Avenue. Prioritize improvements to Liberty Street as the main community spine, and on Jefferson, Atlantic and Hanna streets which will be increasingly important with the planned Smart Track station to the north and GO station to the south. Stakeholder consultation is required to remove boulevard parking and install sidewalks.

b. Hanna Avenue: Improving the sidewalk condition for the pedestrian route on Hanna Avenue will be looked at with the Liberty New Street design.

c. Metro Driveway: Safety issues on the pedestrian routes to the Metro grocery store from East Liberty Street and Lynn Williams Street were raised by the community. Improvements to this area are being reviewed with the current development applications. The missing sidewalk at the east side of Metro Driveway is privately-owned land which will be reviewed for opportunities with the development application.

Legend

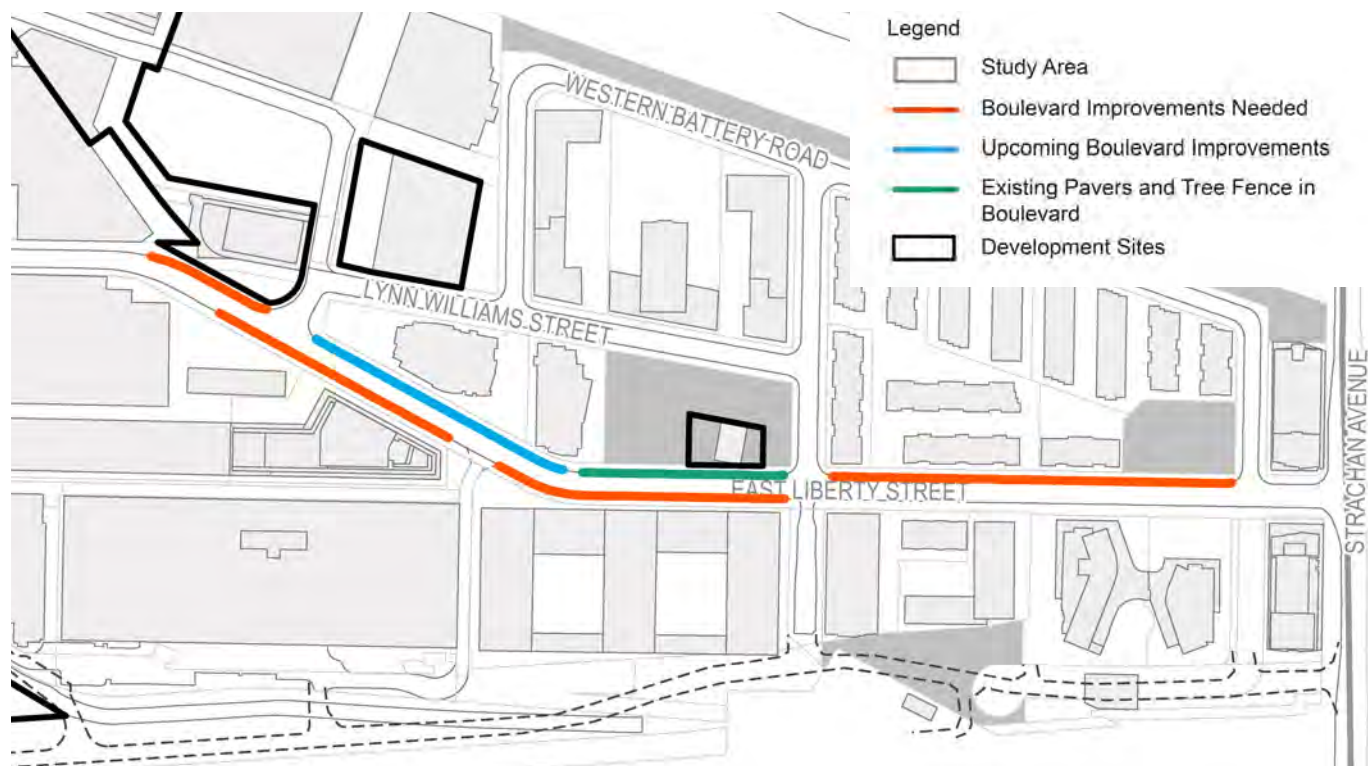
-  Study Area
-  Missing Sidewalk
-  Existing Boulevard Parking
-  Future New Liberty Street alignment is being adjusted. Shown is the outline from the Environmental Assessment 2016
-  Development Sites

Boulevard Improvements

East Liberty Street

Due to the increased volume of pedestrians and dogs in the residential area, there are worn-out sod areas in the boulevard, identified on the map below. The existing paver and tree fence detail in front of Liberty Village Park appears to have addressed these issues and is planned by the City to be extended to the west up to Lynn Williams Street. Additional funding will be required for other areas.

In other areas of Liberty Village, the key issue is the prevalence of boulevard parking (between the building face and the curb) that are remnants of its industrial history. These can be further reviewed with stakeholder consultation to determine conversion to sidewalk and landscape areas, focusing on the priority streets and sidewalks identified. Areas with boulevard parking provide an opportunity to improve the public realm through the conversion of the parking spaces to wider sidewalks and additional landscaping.



Map: East Liberty Boulevard Improvements



Photo of East Liberty Street boulevard, north side, abutting Liberty Village Park



Photo of East Liberty Street boulevard needing repair due to worn-out sod and pedestrian volumes.

3.4 Public Realm

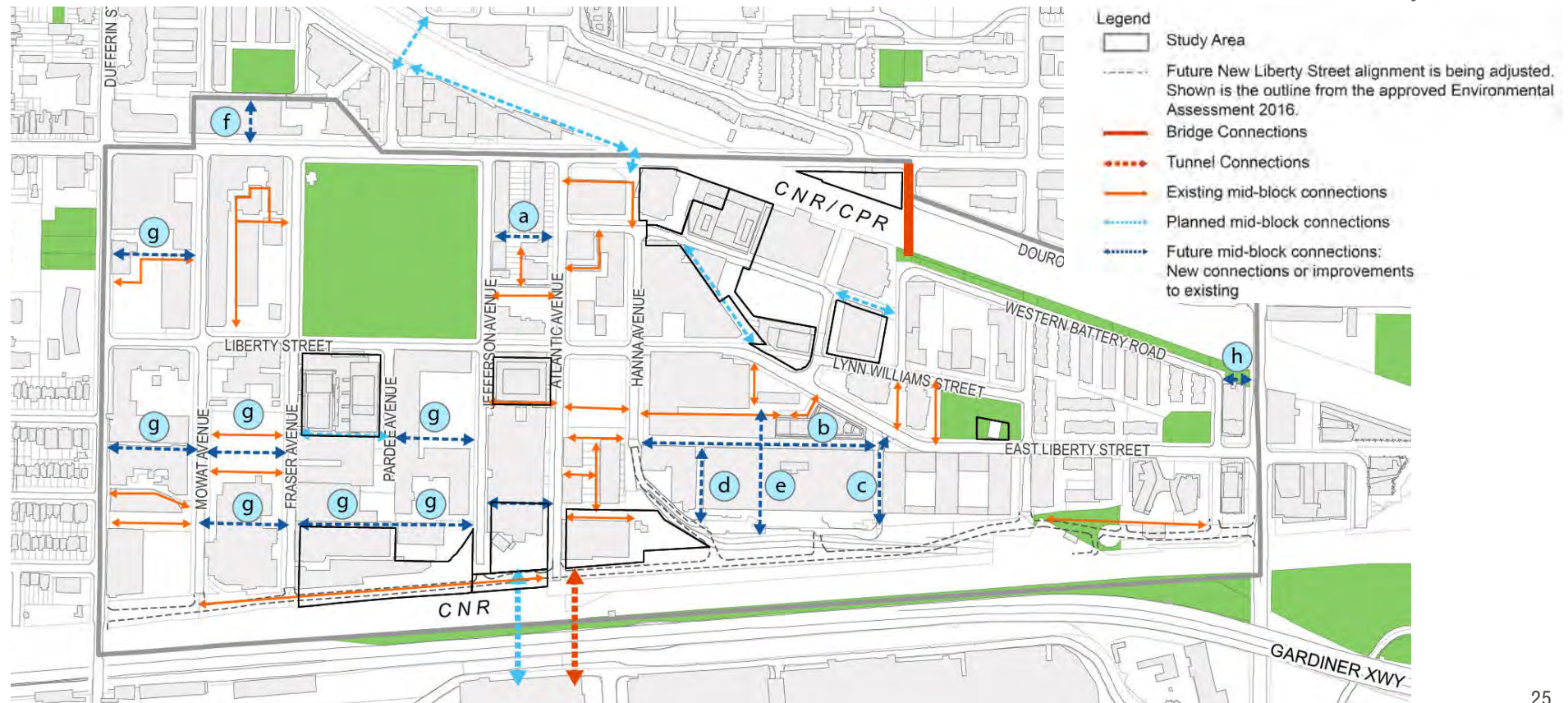
3. Mid-block Connections

Mid-block connections are essential assets of an urban area, providing a quieter human-scaled walking environment as compared to city streets and more options to access destinations. There are excellent examples in Liberty Village and across the city, of successful retention, enhancement, and expansion of this network by new development.

Mid-block connections are walkways where the public has access. They can be shared with vehicles and cycling but serve as key pedestrian links. They can become vibrant places with animated uses, expansion of frontages for businesses such as patios, and with art.

Map: The existing connections shown on the map are either formal (secured with public access by development) or informal, such as through parking lots prevalent on the west side of the area. New connections or improvements to existing connections should be provided as follows:

- Improve Jefferson Avenue to Atlantic Avenue private lane/driveway
- Improve West-East Driveway north of Toronto Police Services building
- Improve Connection East of Toronto Police Services building
- Improve Connection West of Toronto Police Services building
- New North-South connection through Toronto Police Services site
- New King Street to Rita Cox Parkette Connection
- New West-East Connections
- Potential Connection from Strachan Avenue to Western Battery Road



Map: Mid-block Connections



a. Jefferson Avenue to Atlantic Avenue



b. West-East Driveway north of the Toronto Police Services building



c. East of the Police Services building



d. West of the Police Services building



e. North-South connection through Police Services site

a. Improve Jefferson to Atlantic Avenue private lane/ driveway: Enhanced design pavement treatments to the private laneway will strengthen the link between the east Snooker/Hanna area to Jefferson Avenue and Lamport Park.

b. Improve West-East Driveway north of Toronto Police Services building: This is a private driveway that functions as a public lane. Should the adjacent sites redevelop, improvements should secure public access, pedestrian-friendly design and improved lighting levels. This is an important link to the Exhibition GO station and south corridor bridge and tunnel.

c. Improve Connection East of Toronto Police Services building: This King West Laneway will have increased usage when the Liberty New Street is constructed, as it already aligns with the existing King-Liberty Pedestrian bridge. A sidewalk and setback to provide landscaping and privacy, with appropriate lighting as needed, should be provided with any site redevelopment.

d. Improve Connection West of Toronto Police Services building: Adjacent to residential uses, this should be designed to mitigate impacts such as vehicular and lighting disturbance and provide setbacks for landscape and privacy.

e. New North-South Connection through Toronto Police Services site: A link through the site to connect East Liberty Street to Liberty New Street will break down the scale of the block for pedestrians.

f. New King Street to Rita Cox Parkette Connection, through the city-owned site: Should this site redevelop, at minimum one mid-block connection leading north from King St to the Parkette should be provided.

g. New West-East Connections: Potential mid-block connections shown on the map on page 27, demonstrate how continuous west-east connectivity can be increased.

h. Potential Connection from Western Battery Road to Strachan Avenue: The feasibility of this connection and grading are being reviewed by Parks to provide an alternate link to Strachan for residents through the future expanded Bill Johnston Park just north of 19 Western Battery Road.



f. King Street to Rita Cox Parkette

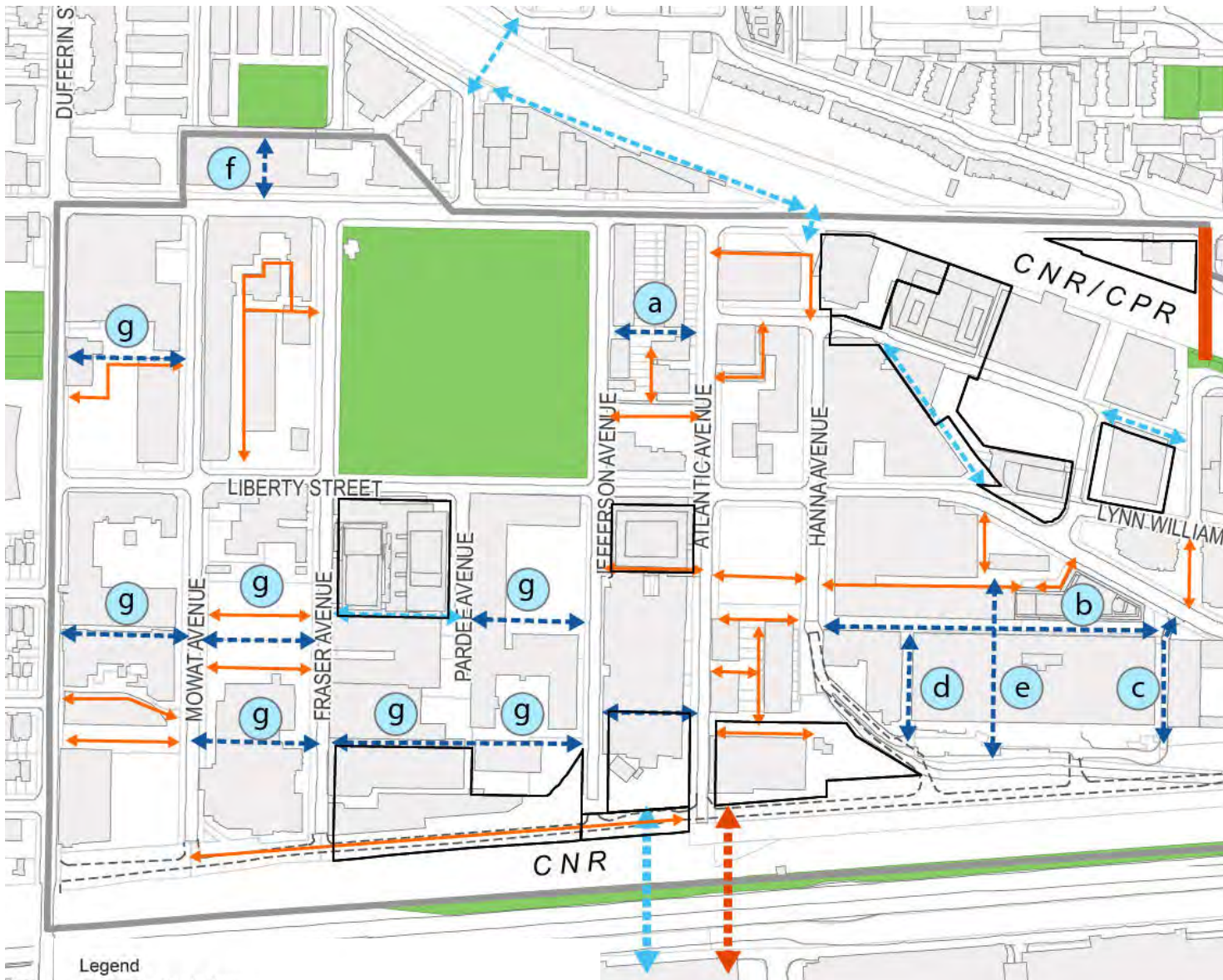


g. West-East Connections - Photo shows Dufferin St to Mowat Ave



h. Potential future connection from Western Battery Road to Strachan Avenue





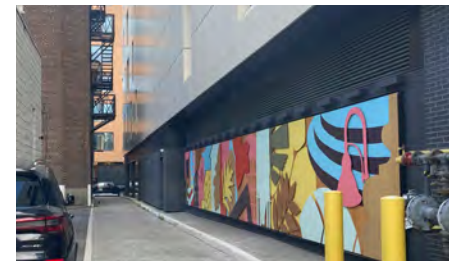
- Legend**
- Study Area
 - Future New Liberty Street alignment is being adjusted. Shown is the outline from the approved Environmental Assessment 2016.
 - Bridge Connections
 - Tunnel Connections
 - Existing mid-block connections
 - Planned mid-block connections
 - Future mid-block connections: New connections or improvements to existing



Existing mid-block connection at Hanna Avenue and Snooker Street. Well-designed mid-block connections can better accommodate future links and increased pedestrian volume as the city grows. This will lead to a future walkway on the existing King Street bridge.



Existing mid-block connection in Liberty Market.



Existing art and special paving on the mid-block connection from Jefferson Avenue to Atlantic Avenue.

3.4 Public Realm

4. Tree Planting and Landscape

Study Area Tree Canopy

While the residential area has far more tree coverage than the employment lands, using the 2018 canopy cover analysis, Urban Forestry estimates that the study area as a whole has only 5.7% canopy cover. This is far below the city-wide average canopy cover estimate of 28%-31%. Additionally, the land cover analysis estimates that over 42% of the study area is impervious land cover.

It is therefore imperative that all development activities and City-led projects maximize tree planting provisions and conditions to promote mature tree growth.

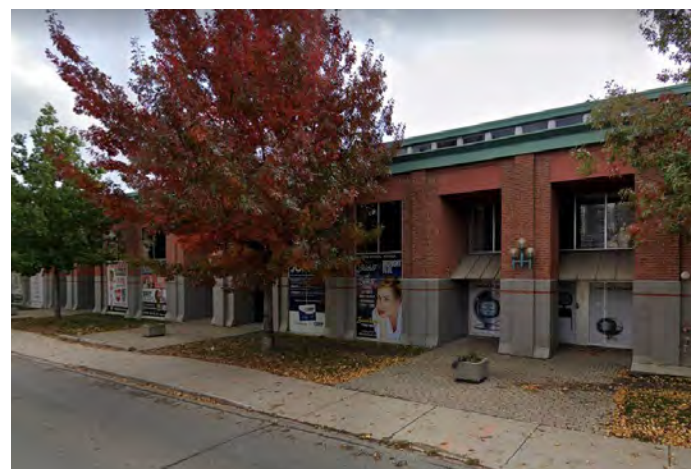
Converting boulevard parking to expanded sidewalks, tree planting areas and planting beds should be prioritized.

Tree Planting Key Objectives

- Achieve soil volume requirements and new tree planting areas, and include opportunities to add additional soil volume to existing tree planting areas;
- Provide utility review to quality Level A (highest accuracy level for sub-surface utilities, usually involving daylighting) to determine feasibility of tree planting, particularly in areas that can be converted from asphalt to planting beds;
- Improve existing soil quality, and mitigate compaction conditions; and
- Protect soil, tree planting area and sod by using an approved tree fence or concrete surround.



Example of tree planting on King Street, with greater soil volume on the right side versus the left, providing bigger trees.



Example of tree planting on Liberty Street with wide softscape openings to promote tree health and larger trees, versus having small openings in pavement.

Tree Planting Improvements - Quality and Quantity

There are few opportunities within the existing context to add trees due to narrow conditions. Areas to be considered are as follows:

- **King Street West near Dufferin Street, south side frontages:** Removing as much concrete as possible to expand the tree planting bed would improve tree health;
- **Southeast corner of Hanna Avenue and Liberty Street:** For this visually prominent corner, conversion of the asphalt in front of the patio area to allow for tree planting beds fronting Hanna Avenue should be considered, as well as parking space conversions to planting where possible;
- **Existing boulevard parking areas:** Conversion of boulevard parking areas between the sidewalk and building face, to planting beds with trees should be considered wherever possible. The dimension from tree trunk to building face should be generally a minimum of 3 metres, with as much distance as possible to the building face for tree access to sunlight and space to grow; and
- **Existing tree planting:** Existing areas such as on East Liberty Street should be provided with soil cells beneath the sidewalk to increase soil volume and improve conditions for tree growth.

Landscape

Prioritize an increase in landscaping and softscape wherever possible while providing sufficient space for pedestrian movement on sidewalks.



King Street near Dufferin Street: These trees would benefit from the removal of as much paving as possible, to provide larger planting beds for healthier trees.



Hanna Avenue and East Liberty Street, southeast corner: There is room for tree planting beside the patio, for this visually prominent corner. Removal of boulevard parking and conversion to softscape/ planting would improve the public realm on Hanna Avenue.

3.4 Public Realm

5. Curb Extensions (Bump-outs)

Curb extensions or 'bump-outs' repurpose space in the vehicular road, such as from on-street parking spaces, for sidewalk and landscape provisions. At intersections, with or without planting, they also improve pedestrian visibility, reduce crossing distance, and speed of vehicles. Due to existing narrow streetscape conditions in the area, curb extensions would provide a significant increase in pedestrian and planting zones. Further review is needed to take into account the findings and recommendations of the Liberty Village Streets Plan and Parking Study. Curb extensions can be planned for if there is excess room in the road, subject to Transportation Services approval and funding. Areas suitable for seating areas and landscaping should be explored with the BIA and community consultation.

In addition to curb extension opportunities, due to the previous industrial history of the area with wider roads, projects should consider opportunities to reduce the overall width of the road in order to apply current traffic lane width and radii guidelines.

As outlined in Section '3.2 Guidelines':

- Curb extensions or 'bump outs' will be considered where deemed appropriate by the City, in consultation with the BIA. Coordinated tree planting, landscape and sidewalk provisions within the curb extensions will be undertaken. Opportunities may exist in areas with no on-street parking, and at intersections where on-street parking is prohibited for sight lines.

- Sidewalk and Boulevard: Development and capital projects should apply the traffic lane width guidelines and curb radii guidelines to maximize width of boulevard to increase sidewalk size and opportunities for soft landscaping / tree planting. Link: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/building-construction/infrastructure-city-construction/construction-standards-permits/standards-for-designing-and-constructing-city-infrastructure/>



Photos of Roncesvalles Avenue curb extensions with landscape and seating

Refer to:

City of Toronto Curb Extensions Guide
City of Toronto Traffic Calming Guide

3.4 Public Realm

6. Furnishings and Lighting

- **Furnishings:** Identify opportunities for seating areas, planting/parkettes, art and street elements such as bike racks and garbage bins, in consultation with the Liberty Village BIA.
- **Lighting:** Coordinate lighting design and identify areas that need improved lighting, such as:
 - a. the north-south streets south of Liberty Street, particularly Jefferson Avenue. Pedestrian scale lighting exists on Atlantic Avenue, south of Liberty Street;
 - b. areas along the west-east Toronto Police Services lane; and
 - c. adjacent to Lamport Stadium Park.



7. Other Considerations

- **Interim Conditions until Liberty New Street is constructed:** Consider possible interim public realm improvements until such time as the Liberty New Street can be constructed. This could include improvements to the north-south street terminations and pedestrian connections west-east. The 2016 Environmental Assessment approved alignment is being revised to address Metrolinx requirements.
- **Billboards:** Consider the removal of billboards abutting residential uses in particular.
- **Newly constructed King Liberty Pedestrian Bridge:** Security and maintenance issues with the existing bridge, stair enclosures and elevators were raised by the community. There is ongoing monitoring by Transportation Services and there should be further consideration towards deterrent safety measures such as lighting and graffiti management.

An upcoming Mural Project is planned for the Douro Street entrance to the bridge through StreetARToronto. StreetARToronto is program through the City's Graffiti Management Plan that addresses graffiti and vandalism in an innovative manner through community-engagement street art while making a positive contribution to the public realm.



4.0 Action Plan

The realization of this Strategy depends on the City, its partners in the development community and the Liberty Village BIA to take action at every available opportunity. This section outlines the actions that can be taken immediately and those that are planned to take place in the future.

For Short Term Action items, the identified improvement projects will be implemented through divisional capital plans. Although the majority of those listed below are funded, additional funding will be required for the completion of all listed projects.

For Mid to Long Term Action items, where appropriate and feasible, staff will include recommended City-led capital projects in future budget submissions and secure funding.

Short Term Action

- a. Liberty Village Park is currently undergoing improvements to the play amenities, pathways, and landscaping. The work is expected to be completed by September 2022.
- b. Lamport Stadium Park: Playground-related improvements at Lamport Stadium Park are targeted for design in 2024 and construction in 2025.
- c. Crosswalk and pavement markings will be refreshed with new paint at intersections. The work is scheduled to take place in 2022.
- d. Boulevard improvements, on the north side of East Liberty Street, between Liberty Village Park and Lynn Williams Street including pavers, tree fences and planting. The work is scheduled to take place in 2022.
- e. Cycling Network Near-Term Implementation Program for 2022-2024 includes several projects that will improve access to Liberty Village.
- f. Tree Planting: Enlarge existing tree planting areas when possible during state-of-good-repair projects.
- g. A capital project for landscape and stormwater enhancements is planned for the east side of the parking lot at 34 Hanna Avenue.

Mid Term Action

a. Repurposing of 34 Hanna Avenue

Feasibility research and community consultation is underway to determine whether the Green P surface parking lot at 34 Hanna Avenue can be repurposed as a park or another community use. Feasibility research includes a parking study to determine what alternatives are available or could be made available for displaced public parking demand.

b. Liberty Village Parking Study

A study will be initiated to assess current and forecasted demand for parking and supply of parking in Liberty Village to inform decisions about the future of the Green P surface lot at 34 Hanna Avenue, as well as inform decisions about existing on-street parking throughout the study area and the provision of on-site parking.

c. Liberty Village Streets Plan

A study has been initiated to review the form and function of all streets in Liberty Village to reinforce the role of streets as key elements of the public realm to serve all modes of mobility, while identifying actions that can be taken to improve safety, site access, and accessibility. These streets also play a key role in place making, community interaction and greening of the village. The overall objective of the study is to determine the best use of space in the right-of-way to meet the needs of road users. Items the study will consider include, but are not limited to:

- Creating a sense of identity and prioritizing sustainable streets;
- Resizing vehicle lanes, sidewalks, furnishing zones, planting areas, etc.;
- Introduction of dedicated bikeways;
- Delineation of loading zones/passenger pick-up and drop-off areas;
- Changes to vehicle traffic regulations (e.g. introduction of one-way streets);
- Changes to traffic controls (e.g. signals, stop signs, crossing protections);
- Changes to on-street parking; and
- Boulevard improvements and permitted usage (e.g. parking, sidewalk cafes etc.).

d. Parks

Identify further opportunities to expand the parks system through parkland dedications from new development and leveraging City-owned properties, like 34 Hanna Avenue, as part of the parks and open space network.

The City will pursue a "land-first" approach to parkland dedication related to any future development proposals, prioritizing on-site or off-site parkland dedication that expands existing parks or provides complementary new parkland in keeping with the objectives of this Public Realm Strategy.

Staff will conclude an evaluation of options for the conversion of the 34 Hanna Avenue surface parking lot, supported by the results of the parking study. As appropriate, any recommended development of new parkland will require City Council approval of funding in future capital budgets and will be subject to community consultation on park design and programming.

Mid to Long Term Action

e. Liberty New Street

The previously completed Liberty New Street study is being revised and updated in order to coordinate with Metrolinx' plans for Exhibition GO Ontario Line and the surrounding area. The advancement of this work from planning to detailed design will present opportunities to consider placement of billboards and other such features that exist in the space intended to become the street.

f. Active Development Applications

The City will use these guidelines in their review of development applications to secure the following throughout Liberty Village:

- Publicly accessible walkways to provide mid-block connections;
- Provision of street trees, furnishings, open spaces and other public realm enhancements along street frontages;
- Parkland provisions; and
- Site access enhancements.

5.0 Appendices

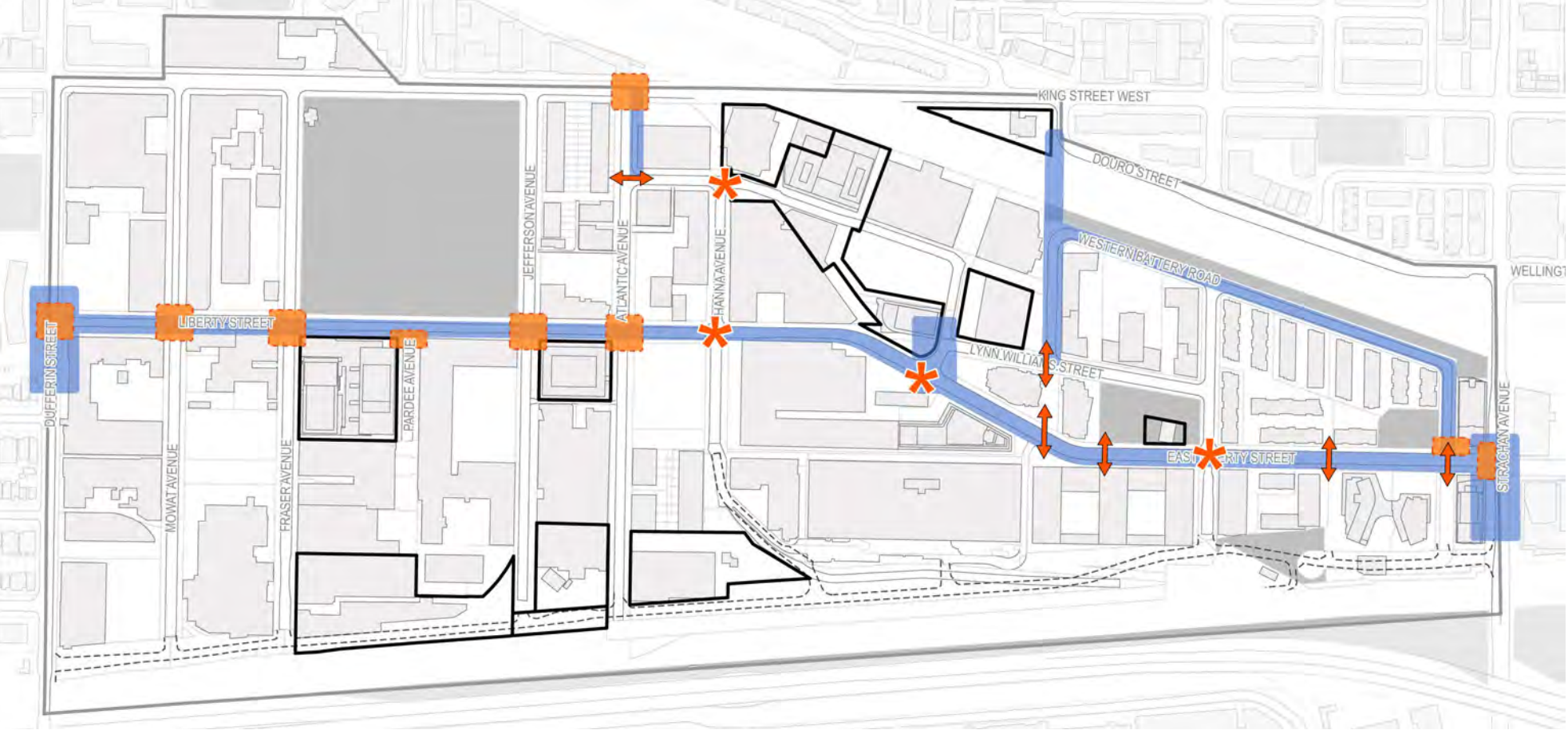
Appendix A: Pedestrian Safety, Traffic, Loading / Parking

Areas of pedestrian safety and traffic concerns were raised by the community, with key areas shown on the map:

- Pedestrian safety issues, particularly along Liberty and East Liberty Streets; and
- Traffic issues, such as the intersections at Dufferin Street and Strachan Avenue, short term loading needs for deliveries, and on-street parking, suggestions for a one-way Western Battery Road

Legend

- Study Area
- Repaint Crosswalks
- Potential Boulevard Crosswalks
- General Areas of Concern
- Enhanced crosswalk (residents suggested raised surfaces, lights, zebra stripes, bumpouts to reduce pedestrian crossings)
- Development Sites
- Future New Liberty Street alignment is being adjusted. Shown is the outline from the approved Environmental Assessment 2016



Map: Areas of Concern for Pedestrian Safety, Traffic, Loading/Parking

Appendix B: Liberty New Street

The alignment of the new west-east street is being adjusted for Metrolinx requirements. The plan below is from the approved 2016 Environmental Assessment.

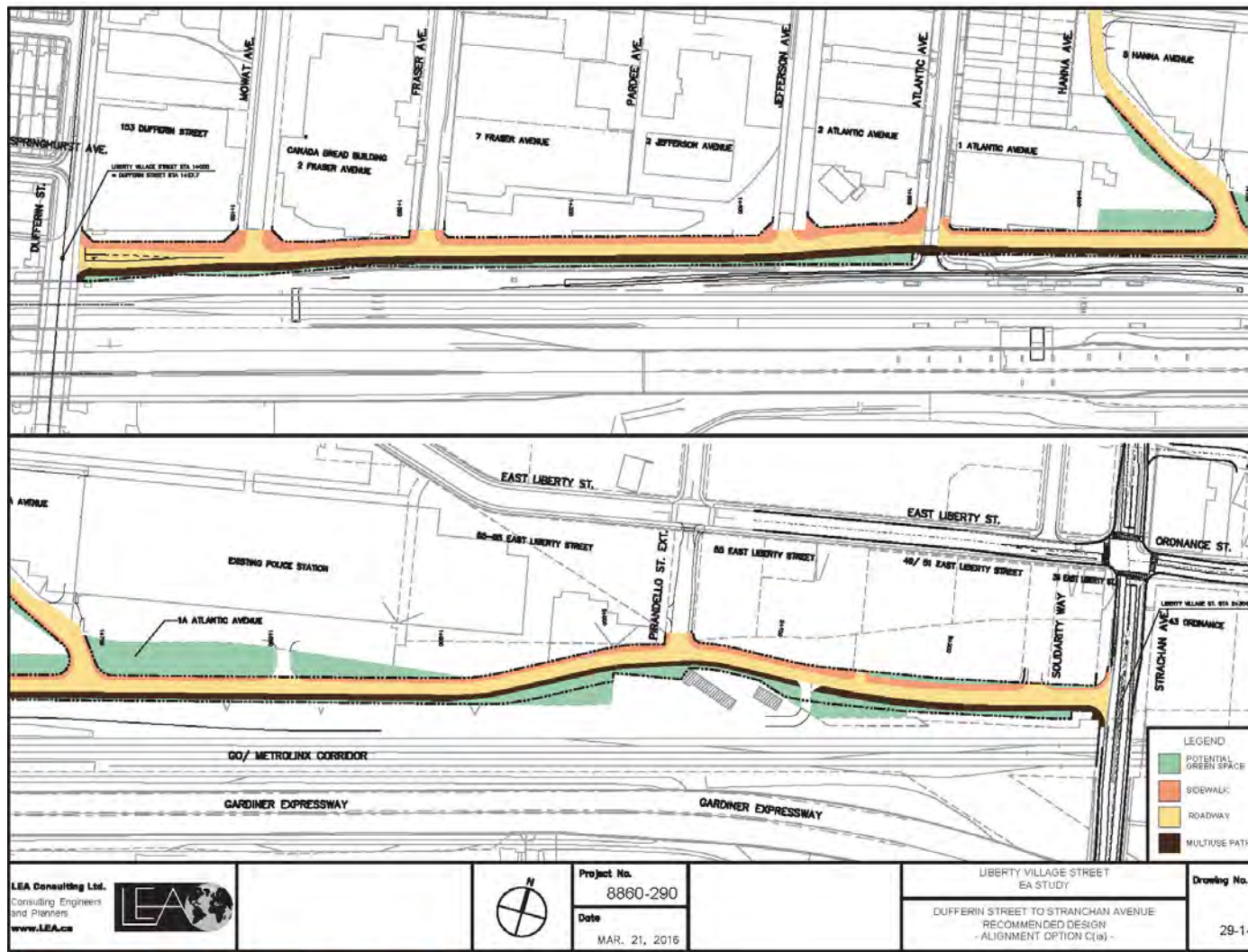


Figure 7-2 Option 2C – East-West Link with Multi-Use Path

Map: Liberty New Street, 2016 Environmental Assessment Plan

