

325 Gerrard Street East (Regent Park Phases 4 and 5) – City-Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment – Decision Report – Approval

Date: November 15, 2024
To: Toronto and East York Community Council
From: Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Ward: 13 - Toronto Centre

Planning Application Number: 24 189806 STE 13 OZ

Related Planning Application Number: 04 180319 STE 28 SB

SUMMARY

This Report recommends an amendment to the Zoning By-law for Phases 4 and 5 of the Regent Park revitalization to avoid conflicts with critical City infrastructure and increase the opportunity to provide a range of housing options. The amendment will modify the development permissions for Blocks 4B and 5C/5D to provide the necessary setbacks from City infrastructure and permit additional building massing elsewhere on the block to provide opportunities for additional housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District recommends that:

1. City Council amend Zoning By-law 1325-2023 for the lands at 325 Gerrard Street East substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment included as Attachment 5 to this Report.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Development Review Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this Report in the current budget year or future years.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 19, 2023, City Council approved a Zoning By-law Amendment application for Phases 4 and 5 of the Regent Park revitalization to permit the development of 12 buildings with heights ranging from 6 to 39 storeys. A total of 3,246 residential units were contemplated, of which 633 will be replacement Rent Geared to Income (RGI) social housing units and 637 were proposed as new affordable housing units. The proposal also includes 10,461 square metres of retail and office space, 3,714 square metres of community space, and a new Toronto Public Library branch relocated from Parliament Street. City Council also approved the Rental Housing Demolition application to demolish the remaining 527 social housing units in Regent Park, which will be replaced as part of the revitalization. The decision document can be found here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.TE6.21>. Zoning By-law 1325-2023 was enacted on December 15, 2023.

City Council's decision was appealed by a third party and the appeal was dismissed by the Ontario Land Tribunal on April 9, 2024. A Request for Review was dismissed on June 13, 2024.

On July 24, 2024, City Council requested the Executive Director, Development Review, in consultation with appropriate City Divisions, to determine the appropriate amendment to the Zoning By-law for Phases 4 and 5 of the Regent Park revitalization to avoid conflicts with critical City infrastructure and increase the opportunity to provide a range of housing options including rent-geared-to income, affordable, and market housing. City Council requested staff to bring forward any required reports on the Zoning By-law Amendment to a statutory public meeting under the Planning Act after holding a community meeting no later than the fourth quarter of 2024. The decision document can be found here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.MM20.40>

On September 17, 2024, the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, approved the removal of the holding symbol (H) for Phases 4 and 5 of the Regent Park revitalization.

BACKGROUND

In March 2024, a conflict was identified between the redevelopment plans for Phases 4 and 5 of the Regent Park revitalization and two pieces of existing City infrastructure located on the south side of Gerrard Street East at Sackville Street and Sumach Street. The infrastructure consists of two vortex chambers and associated ventilation, mechanical and electrical equipment, that divert several local sewers into a large trunk sewer below. Toronto Water requires a 10 metre clearance on all sides of the infrastructure, above and below ground, to ensure access for operations and maintenance. The required clearance area impacts the planned building footprints for Blocks 4B and 5C. City staff determined that it is not feasible to reduce the clearance requirements or relocate the infrastructure to avoid this conflict.

Block 4B is a market housing block located in Phase 4, and Block 5C/5D is a TCHC block in Phase 5 that will include a mix of replacement RGI social housing units as well as new affordable housing. The funding for the new affordable housing units at Block 5C/5D is currently undetermined.

Blocks 4B and 5C have been redesigned to accommodate the required setbacks from the City infrastructure. The redesign relocates the affected building area within each block and also adds to the total floor area to offset the financial impacts of the redesign and provide opportunities for additional housing. The increase is equivalent to seven tower storeys in the market housing Block 4B and seven tower storeys split between the TCHC Blocks 5C and 5D.

See Attachment 4 of this report for the Concept Plan for Phases 4 and 5 with the redesigned blocks.

THE ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

The amendment to Zoning By-law 1325-2023 is required to permit the redesigned buildings in Blocks 4B and 5C/5D and includes the following changes:

- **Blocks 4B and 5C** - a minimum 10-metre setback from the vortex chambers;
- **Block 4B** - replace the maximum height of 45 metres (12 storeys) with a new tower zone with a maximum height of 73 metres (19 storeys), a maximum tower floor plate of 800 square metres, and a minimum tower separation distance of 20 metres from Block 4C;
- **Block 5C** - replace the maximum height of 40 metres (11 storeys) with a new tower zone with a maximum height of 50 metres (13 storeys), a maximum tower floor plate of 800 square metres, and a minimum tower separation distance of 20 metres from Block 5D;
- **Block 5D** - increase the maximum height of the tower zone from 70 metres (18 storeys) to 86 metres (23 storeys) and increase the maximum tower floor plate from 800 to 900 square metres; and
- Minor adjustments to dimensions on the land use map and height map to align with the plan of subdivision.

See Attachment 1 of this report for the Location Map showing the location of the proposed amendment.

POLICY & REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Land-Use Policies

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and shall conform to provincial plans.

Official Plan

The site is located within the Downtown and Central Waterfront Area on Map 2 of the Official Plan. The site is designated Mixed Use Areas along the Gerrard Street East and River Street frontages and the remainder of the site is designated Apartment Neighbourhoods on Map 18 of the Official Plan. See Attachment 2 of this report for the Official Plan Land Use Map.

Downtown Secondary Plan

Official Plan Amendment 406 ("OPA 406" or the "Downtown Plan") identifies the site as Mixed Use Areas 2 along the Gerrard Street East and River Street frontages on Map 41-3.

Regent Park Secondary Plan

The site is located within the Regent Park Secondary Plan, which provides a framework to guide the phased redevelopment of Regent Park.

Zoning

The site is zoned CR along the Gerrard Street East and River Street frontages, G in the middle of the site, and R4A along the other frontages, all under the City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86. A variety of height limits apply across the site, ranging from 28-44 metres. Exception 12(1) 465 contains the specific zoning provisions for Regent Park, including locations where towers are permitted beyond the height limits specified above. The zoning for Phases 4 and 5 was most recently amended through Zoning By-law 1325-2023. See Attachment 3 of this report for the existing Zoning By-law Map.

The site is not subject to City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Community Consultation

A Virtual Community Consultation Meeting was hosted by City staff on October 30, 2024. Approximately 43 people participated, as well as the Ward Councillor. Following a presentation by City staff and representatives from Toronto Community Housing and their development partner, questions and comments were raised in relation to the redevelopment of Phases 4 and 5, specifically with respect to project timelines, affordable housing, retail on Gerrard Street East, the design of new streets, and parking.

Statutory Public Meeting Comments

In making their decision with regard to this Zoning By-law Amendment, Council members have an opportunity to hear the oral submissions made at the statutory public meeting held by the Toronto and East York Community Council, as these submissions are broadcast live over the Internet and recorded for review.

COMMENTS

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is recommended by Development Review staff following a review of the objectives identified by City Council within the specified timeframe. The proposed amendment provides a balanced approach to increase the flexibility of the Zoning By-law for the blocks affected by clearance requirements from City infrastructure and increases the opportunity to provide a range of housing options through additional residential zoning permissions. Staff note that over the timeframe of the build-out of Phases 4 and 5, there may be additional opportunities to adjust the development framework to respond to emerging opportunities and priorities.

Provincial Planning Statement and Provincial Plans

Staff has had regard for the relevant matters of provincial interest set out in the Planning Act. Staff has reviewed the current proposal for consistency with the PPS (2024). Staff find the proposal consistent with the PPS (2024).

Official Plan Policies and Design Guidelines

This proposal has been reviewed against the Official Plan policies and Secondary Plan policies described in the Policy and Regulation Considerations Section of this Report.

Housing

The proposed amendment provides opportunities for additional housing on Blocks 4B and 5C/5D.

The redesigned Block 4B is expected to accommodate approximately 98 additional market units, compared to the previous building design under the existing zoning permissions.

At this time, a detailed redesign has not been completed for Blocks 5C/5D to provide an updated unit count for the TCHC block; however, the increase in zoning permissions for the TCHC block is generally the same as the increase proposed for the market block. The proposed amendment will allow for a redesign that provides the required infrastructure setbacks and the opportunity for additional housing on the block in the event that funding is available at the time Block 5C/5D is being developed. The proposed tower floor plates will create additional flexibility for providing the large 3, 4, and 5-bedroom replacement RGI social housing units.

The proposed amendment does not change the housing commitments that were approved by Council in July 2023 to replace the final 633 RGI social housing units and provide a minimum of 637 new affordable rental housing units in Phases 4 and 5. The additional units that can be accommodated by the proposed amendment will also not significantly change the overall housing mix in Regent Park.

Built Form

The proposed amendment has been carefully considered to ensure that the built-form objectives of the development framework for Phases 4 and 5 will continue to be upheld. Overall, the proposed amendment maintains the previously established vision of a mix of midrise and tall buildings, the organization of building heights across the site with lower building heights located along Gerrard Street East and surrounding the central plaza and taller building heights located along Oak Street on the blocks west of Sackville Street and east of Sumach Street, and the creation of a continuous network of public streets and open spaces.

For Block 4B, no change is proposed to the maximum height of the midrise component fronting onto Gerrard Street East and future Street G. The proposed 19-storey tower will be set back a minimum of 20 metres from the Gerrard Street East frontage, consistent with the tower at Block 4A. The maximum floor plate of the tower is 800 square metres gross floor area, consistent with the other towers in Phases 4 and 5. The minimum tower separation distance to Block 4C is 20 metres, which is acceptable within the overall configuration of the block.

The same built-form parameters are proposed for Block 5C, with the exception of the height of the proposed tower, which is 13 storeys. Additional height permissions are proposed for the tower at Block 5D, which is proposed at 23 storeys to reinforce the vision for taller building heights located along Oak Street. The amendment will also permit a maximum tower floor plate of 900 square metres gross floor area for Block 5D if needed for larger TCHC units.

The Development Context Plan (urban design guidelines) for Phases 4 and 5 will continue to guide the detailed design and building massing for Blocks 4B and 5C/5D such as articulation, stepbacks, and other separation distances that are not prescribed by the Zoning By-law. The required infrastructure setbacks at both Sackville Street and Sumach Street will result in open spaces that require careful design consideration within the context of the Gerrard Street East frontage of Phases 4 and 5 and the system of streets and open spaces.

Community Planning and Urban Design staff are satisfied that the proposed amendment is consistent with the built-form objectives for Phases 4 and 5, and is appropriate to achieve the objectives of the City-Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to avoid conflicts with critical City infrastructure and increase the opportunity to provide a range of housing options.

Servicing

The building setbacks from the existing City infrastructure will meet the requirements of Toronto Water to ensure access for operations and maintenance.

Development Engineering and Transportation Review staff have reviewed the proposed amendment with respect to the anticipated unit increase and find that the changes can be accommodated from a servicing and transportation perspective.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

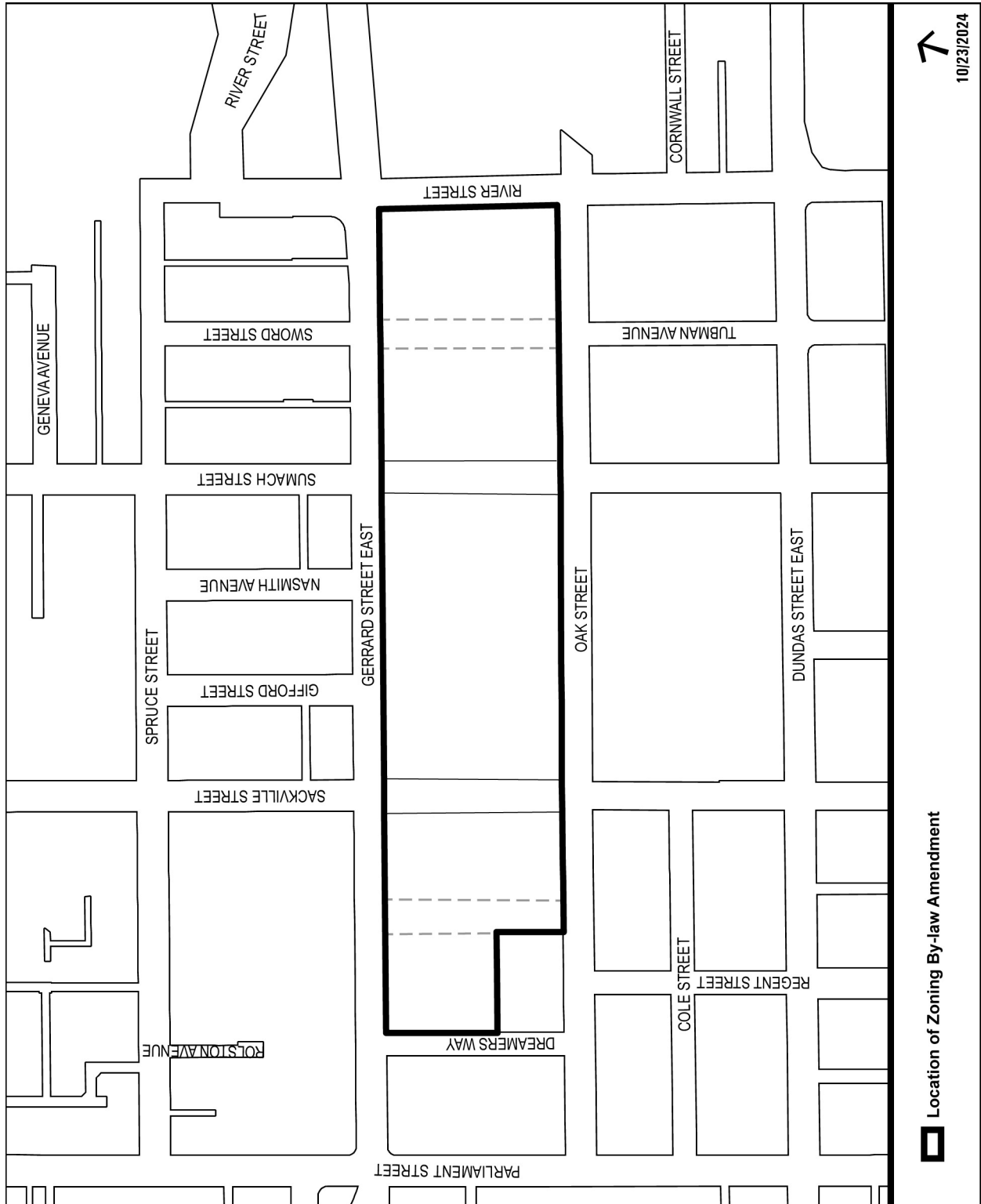
Oren Tamir
Director, Community Planning
Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

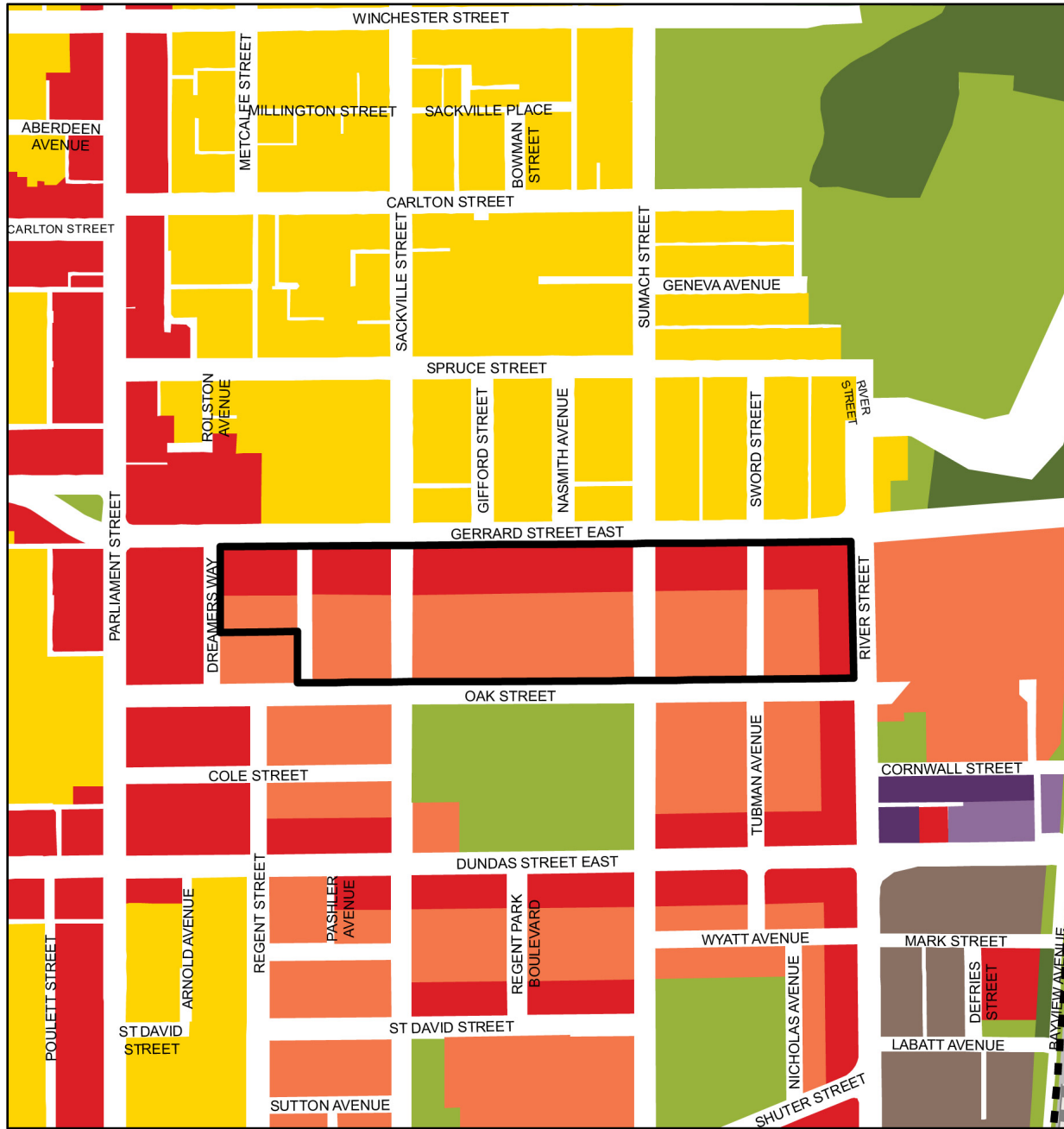
City of Toronto Information/Drawings

- Attachment 1: Location Map
- Attachment 2: Official Plan Land Use Map
- Attachment 3: Existing Zoning By-law Map
- Attachment 4: Concept Plan
- Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Attachment 1: Location Map



Attachment 2: Official Plan Land Use Map



Official Plan Land Use Map # 18

325 Gerrard St. E

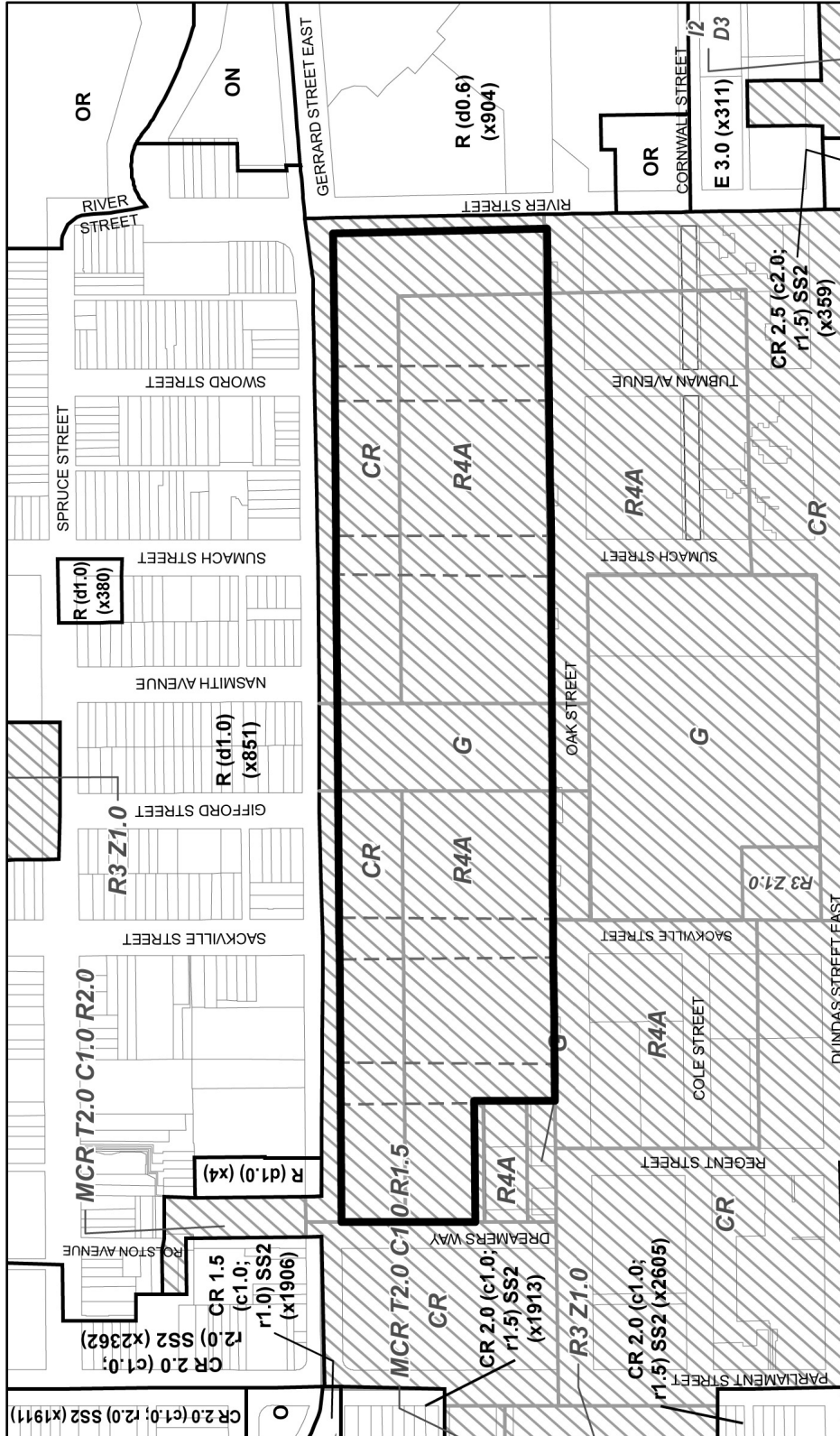
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- Location of Zoning By-law Amendment
- Neighbourhoods
- Apartment Neighbourhoods
- Mixed Use Areas
- Natural Areas
- Parks
- Other Open Space Areas
- Regeneration Areas
- General Employment Areas
- Core Employment Areas
- Utility Corridors



Not to Scale
Extracted: 10/22/2024

Attachment 3: Existing Zoning By-law Map



Toronto
325 Gerrard St E

Zoning By-law 569-2013
File # 24 189806 STE 13 0Z

See Former City of Toronto By-law No. 438-86

	Location of Zoning By-law Amendment		R3 Residential District
	R Residential		R4A Residential District
	CR Commercial Residential		CR Mixed-Use District
	E Employment Industrial		MCR Mixed-Use District
	O Open Space		I2 Industrial District
	ON Open Space Natural		G Parks District
	OR Open Space Recreation		

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Not to Scale
Extracted: 10/23/2024

Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

To be available prior to the December 4, 2024 Toronto and East York Community Council Meeting.