

## **7-9 Wardlaw Crescent – City-Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment – Decision Report – Approval**

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Executive Director, Development Review

Ward: 1 - Etobicoke North

**Planning Application Number:** 25 105482 WET 01 OZ

### **SUMMARY**

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This report reviews and recommends approval of a City-initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to permit a 4-storey (15-metre, excluding mechanical penthouse) residential apartment building with 51 new affordable rental dwelling units with wrap-around supports at 7-9 Wardlaw Crescent in the Rexdale neighbourhood.

This project will support the City in delivering a full range of housing opportunities, aligned with the objectives of the Official Plan. It also supports the delivery of the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan ("HousingTO Plan") target of approving 65,000 rent-controlled homes, including 18,000 supportive homes, within complete communities. Further, this project builds upon significant and successful City experience in leading or supporting the creation of new affordable and supportive housing, with twenty-five developments completed or underway in thirteen wards across Toronto since 2020.

Approval of the recommendations in this report will enable the City to move quickly to start construction on this project in summer 2025, with completion in fall 2026 to ensure 51 residents in need of permanent, affordable housing with supports have a safe place to call home. This includes people from equity-deserving groups such as seniors, youth, refugees/newcomers, and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Executive Director, Development Review recommends that:

1. City Council amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013 for the lands municipally known as 7-9 Wardlaw Crescent 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**

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There are no immediate financial implications resulting from the recommendations in this report. All associated project costs are already included within the Housing Secretariat's Capital Budget, and any necessary adjustments will be addressed through the annual budget process.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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The City of Toronto recognizes that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and wellbeing of a person and to building healthy, equitable, sustainable, and livable communities. Residents' quality of life, the city's economic competitiveness and its social cohesion, all depend on current and future residents being able to access and maintain adequate, safe, and affordable homes.

The City of Toronto's existing housing policies and action plans seek to improve housing outcomes for a range of residents and to support equity and climate resilience. Specifically:

- The HousingTO Plan is centred on a human rights-based approach to housing and envisions a city in which all residents have equal opportunity to develop to their full potential. It is focused on increasing the supply of new affordable homes that is part of a complete community with equitable access to a range of opportunities for residents to live, work, learn, and play; and
- The City's Official Plan contains policies relating to the provision of a diverse range of housing supply and choice that provides a full range of housing form, tenure, and affordability.

Council's approval of the recommendations in this report will support the rapid delivery of 51 new rent-geared-to-income and supportive homes for vulnerable residents in need of a permanent, affordable home, including members of equity deserving groups such as seniors, youth, refugees/newcomers, and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On February 5, 2025, City Council authorized Staff to negotiate, approve, and execute a long-term nominal rent lease and a municipal housing project facility agreement with Youth Without Shelter or a related entity for the site.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.PH18.6>

On November 8 and 9, 2023, City Council adopted item "EX9.3 - Generational Transformation of Toronto's Housing System to Urgently Build More Affordable Homes" which expanded the City's HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan targets and approved a range of strategic directions to respond to the housing crisis. This report identified a public list of 47 City-owned sites which will be prioritized for the delivery of new affordable and rent-controlled homes. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX9.3>

## THE SITE

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**Description:** The City-owned site is located northeast of the intersection of Albion Road and Islington Avenue in the Thistletown neighbourhood of Rexdale. It is situated on a corner lot with two frontages on Wardlaw Crescent, where the street bends at a 90-degree angle from an east-west to a north-south orientation. The 1,868 square metre lot has frontages of 41 metres to the north and 46 metres to the east and slopes up in elevation approximately 2 metres from the north to the south end of the site.

**Surrounding Context:** The east-west portion of Wardlaw Crescent was developed prior to 1954, earlier than the north-south portion which was constructed in the 1960s. This development history and the proximity of the street to the East Humber River top of bank results in a varied lot fabric along the street and distinguishes the northern stretch of Wardlaw Crescent from the neighbourhood to the south.

To the west of the site is a three-storey City-owned municipal shelter at 2669-2671 Islington Avenue for seniors and older adults, operated by the Salvation Army. The shelter and the development site were acquired together by the City in 2018 as part of an effort to grow capacity in the shelter system, but the lands at 7-9 Wardlaw Crescent remained vacant and uninhabited after 2669-2671 Islington Avenue was converted into a shelter. The site was subsequently identified as a housing-ready site by City Council in 2023.

**Uses:** The site is currently occupied by two vacant single-detached houses.

## THE PROPOSAL

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**Description:** The proposal is a four-storey (12.8 metres, excluding mechanical penthouse) residential apartment building. The proposed by-law amendment enables a maximum permitted height of 15 metres.

Subject to the City entering into agreements with the housing provider, the building will be operated by Youth Without Shelter (YWS), a local non-profit organization with significant experience in helping youth to exit homelessness, in partnership with a number of Rexdale based community and support service providers.

**Density:** The proposal has a density of 1.5 times the area of the lot.

**Affordable Rental Dwelling Units:** The proposal is for 51 new affordable studio rental dwelling units. All units in the proposal will be provided as rent-geared-to-income homes with wrap-around support services and no household will be paying more than 30% of their income for rent.

**Amenity Space:** The proposal includes a minimum of 4 square metres per unit of combined indoor and outdoor amenity space, including 108 square metres of indoor amenity and 330 metres of outdoor amenity space.

**Bicycle Parking, Vehicle Parking and Loading:** There are no vehicular parking or loading spaces proposed on the site and a total of 40 bicycle parking spaces at grade in an ancillary building.

### **Sustainability**

The proposal is for a mass timber structure consisting of a prefabricated Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) floor, roof panels, and loadbearing wall panels, and Glued Laminated Timber (Glulam) beams to reduce embodied carbon. Air source heat pumps will provide space heating and hot water, ensuring no on-site fossil fuel use. A high-performance envelope and ventilation system will minimize heat loss while delivering excellent air quality and thermal comfort. It will also include a green roof designed for future solar panel installation. The project will achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with the City's TransformTO Net Zero Strategy.

### **Additional Information**

See the attachments of this report for the Application Data Sheet, Location Map, a site plan, and elevations of the proposal. Detailed project information including all plans and reports submitted as part of the proposal can be found on the City's Application Information Centre at: [www.toronto.ca/7WardlawCres](http://www.toronto.ca/7WardlawCres)

## **POLICY & REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS**

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**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 designated Neighbourhoods, which allows for four-storey residential buildings. See Attachment 3 of this report for the Land Use Map.

**Zoning:** The site is zoned RD (f13.5; a510; d0.45) under Zoning By-law 569-2013 and the maximum height is 9.5 metres. See Attachment 4 of this report for the existing Zoning By-law Map.

## Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines have been used in the evaluation of this application:

- Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines
- Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines

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

## Toronto Green Standard

The TGS is a set of performance measures for green development. Council has directed that any affordable housing built on City land is subject to the TGS Version 4 for City Agencies, Corporation & Division-Owned Facilities, which meets and exceeds Tier 2 for Mid-to-High-Rise Residential targets. This includes the requirement that the building have net zero operational carbon and low embodied carbon. It must be prepared for the future installation of solar panels.

The TGS for City Agencies, Corporations, and Division-Owned Facilities is available here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/toronto-green-standard/toronto-green-standard-version-4/city-agency-corporation-division-owned-facilities-version-4/>

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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City staff have initiated a multi-channel process to inform and engage residents about this proposal. This included launching a project website, a Community Liaison available to receive inquiries Monday to Friday via phone line and email, hand-delivered project information and invitations to virtual and in-person community meetings, an electronic survey, and on-site signage. Over 220 project flyers were distributed to neighbours informing them of the project and inviting them to the community information sessions.

City Staff hosted a virtual Community Information Session on March 11, 2025, and an in-person Community Information Session on March 17, 2025, at the Thistletown Community Centre at 925 Albion Road. A total of approximately 145 people attended both events.

Through the Community Information Sessions, email, and telephone communication, City staff received a range of comments with some related to the proposed development and zoning by-law amendment, and others more broadly about the proposal for supportive housing, including:

- Concern that a residential apartment building is too dense and not an appropriate building type in a residential detached zone;
- Praise for the architectural and sustainable design elements of the project;
- Desire for larger, family-sized units, as well as accessible units in the building;

- Concern of potential traffic impacts on Wardlaw Crescent and that no parking is being provide onsite and that this will lead to people parking on the street;
- The need to mitigate any overlook and privacy concerns related to the adjacent property;
- Preference that this site become a park;
- Expression of need for and concern over the provision of social housing and shelters in the immediate and broader area;
- Existing safety concerns in the community, particularly associated with the adjacent shelter, such as loitering, and public drug/alcohol use;
- Complaints of inadequate community consultation and notification of the proposed development and a request that this proposal be deferred to allow for further consultation.

The issues raised through community engagement have been considered through the review of the proposal.

### **Statutory Public Meeting Comments**

In making their decision with regard to this proposal, Council members have been given an opportunity to view the oral submissions made at the statutory public meeting held by the Planning and Housing Committee for this proposal, as these submissions are broadcast live over the internet and recorded for review.

## **COMMENTS**

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This City-led proposal for a four-storey apartment building is an appropriate intensification of this Neighbourhoods designated site and will provide deeply affordable and supportive housing. Development Review staff are supportive of increased density in low-rise forms which expand the housing options in Neighbourhoods.

### **Provincial Planning Statement and Provincial Plans**

Staff's review of this application 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).

### **Housing**

The Official Plan directs that a full range of housing in terms of form, tenure and affordability be provided to meet the current and future needs of residents. This proposal would result in the creation of 51 new rent-geared-to-income homes with wrap-around support services. The proposed unit mix is responsive to the needs of the intended tenant group.

## **Built Form**

The proposed four-storey apartment building conforms with the applicable policies in the Official Plan with respect to built form and massing and meets the intent of the Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines.

The lot fabric along Wardlaw Crescent is eclectic and varied and does not present a consistent pattern of development. On the western side of the street, properties back onto the commercial residential corridor along Islington Avenue and on the eastern side, lots back onto the East Humber River and Albion Gardens Park. Lot depths span a wide range from 36 to over 220 metres, and lot frontages vary between 8 and 46 metres. Some houses are set back over 90 metres from the front lot line, so that they are barely visible from the street, while the more recent development to the south is set back inconsistently as it follows the eastern curve of the road.

The height, massing, and scale of the proposed development is respectful of what is permitted by the zoning by-law for nearby residential properties. The proposed building has a height of 12.7 metres, which is 3-metres taller than the permitted measured height for the properties to the south, and steps down from the permitted 19-metre maximum height of the adjacent shelter site to the west. Additional height impacts are mitigated by the fact that the proposed development is located at the northern end of the block with any shadow impacts being directed away from adjacent lots. Likewise, overlook and privacy impacts are minimal as no primary windows are proposed on the southern elevation of the building.

The proposed setbacks are proportionate to those of adjacent properties. The building is setback nearly 14 metres from curb-to-building-face along its eastern frontage and 15 metres from the rear property line. These setbacks are in line with the front and rear walls of the adjacent property to the south. Along the northern frontage, the proposed building has a 10-metre curb-to-building-face distance, generally in keeping with the setback of the adjacent shelter building to the west. To the south, the proposed setback varies from 2.7 metres along the eastern frontage to 2.3 metres at the rear of the building, which is just under the by-law requirement of 3 metres on this site and greater than the required side yard setbacks for the properties to the south of 1.2 metres. The proposed amenity area has also been located adjacent to the northern frontage to provide some separation and privacy to the property to the south.

## **Public Realm**

Staff are satisfied that the proposal conforms with the applicable public realm policies of the Official Plan and meets the intent of the Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines.

As the proposal is set back 10 to 14 metres from both property frontages, there is an opportunity for soft landscaping and 11 new large shade trees along the street. All screening fences, the entry canopy and the ancillary bicycle storage structure will be made from natural cedar wood and staff are exploring the possibility of reusing salvaged materials in some of the landscaping features on site.

## **Parking and Loading**

Transportation staff are satisfied with the proposal for no vehicular residential, visitor, accessible parking spaces, or loading spaces and 40 bicycle parking spaces.

While residents of this building are not anticipated to have vehicles, City staff are exploring options to include dedicated staff parking in the adjacent shelter parking lot to the west of the site, as well as within the existing GreenP lot at 14 Barkwin Drive in order to minimize any impacts on the street.

Future residents of the building will not be permitted to park overnight on Wardlaw Crescent.

## **Traffic Impacts**

As there is no proposed parking on the site, Transportation staff are satisfied that traffic impacts related to the site will be negligible. As the new rental apartments will operate as rent-geared-to-income homes, City staff do not anticipate that residents of the building will own personal vehicles, as is the case in other similar developments completed since 2020.

## **Archaeological Assessment**

The site is located within an area of archaeological potential, as identified by the City of Toronto's Archaeological Management Plan. As such, a Stage 1-2 Archaeological Assessment report was submitted in support of the application, which recommends that the subject property be considered free of further archaeological concerns. Heritage Planning Archaeology staff have reviewed the Archaeological Assessment report and concur with its recommendations that no further archaeological assessment is required.

## **Toronto Green Standard**

The project is expected to meet and likely exceed the targets in the Toronto Green Standard (TGS) version 4 for City Agency, Corporation and Division-owned Facilities. The project is proposed to be energy-efficient, achieving net zero operational carbon through the production of on-site carbon-free energy and offsetting, and having low embodied carbon due to the use of a mass timber structure. The current design includes a green roof and solar-readiness with a dedicated roof top area with the structural capability for future solar panels.

## **CONTACT**

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Corinna Prior, Senior Project Manager, Community Planning

## **SIGNATURE**

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Valesa Faria, Executive Director  
Development Review

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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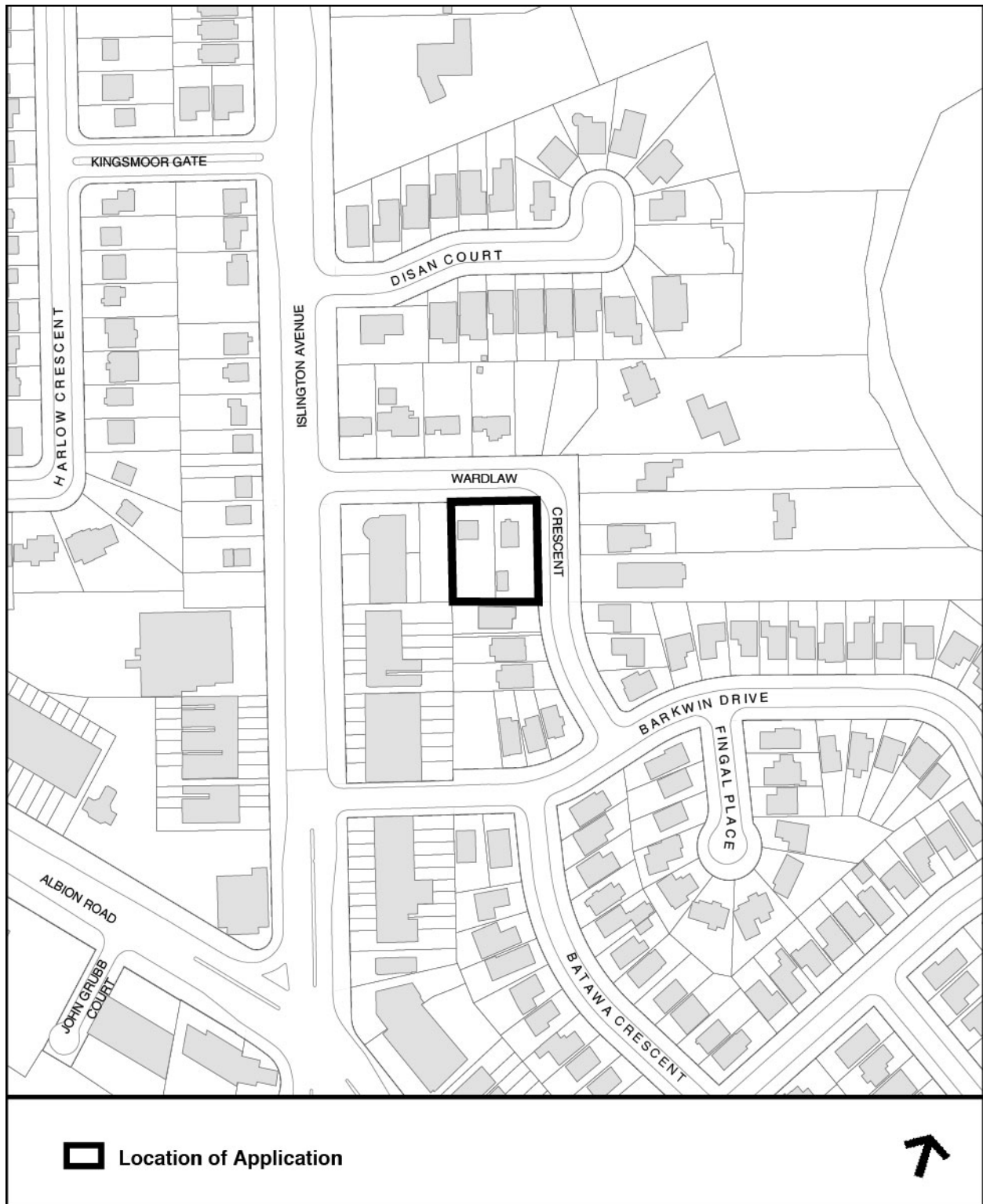
### **City of Toronto Information/Drawings**

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

### **Submitted Drawings**

Attachment 6: Site Plan  
Attachment 7: East Elevation  
Attachment 8: North Elevation  
Attachment 9: South Elevation  
Attachment 10: West Elevation

## Attachment 1: Location Map



## Attachment 2: Application Data Sheet

### APPLICATION DATA SHEET

**Municipal Address:** 7-9 Wardlaw Crescent      **Date Received:** January 16, 2025

**Application Number:** 25 105482 WET 01 OZ

**Application Type:** Rezoning

**Project Description:** City-initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to construct a 4-storey residential apartment building containing 51 new affordable dwelling units.

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Agent</b>	<b>Architect</b>	<b>Owner</b>
City Initiated	City Initiated	Montgomery Sisam Architects Inc.	City of Toronto

### EXISTING PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation: Neighbourhoods      Site Specific Provision: N/A

Zoning: RD (f13.5; a510; d0.45)      Heritage Designation: N

Height Limit (m): 9.5      Site Plan Control Area: Y

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq m): 1,868      Frontage (m): 41 (north) and 46 (east)      Depth (m): 41

<b>Building Data</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Retained</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Total</b>
Ground Floor Area (sq m):	0		0	0
Residential GFA (sq m):	0		2,742	2,742
Non-Residential GFA (sq m):				
<b>Total GFA (sq m):</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>2,742</b>	<b>2,742</b>
Height - Storeys:	0		4	4
Height - Metres:	0		12.7	12.7

Lot Coverage Ratio (%): 43%      Floor Space Index: 1.5

<b>Floor Area Breakdown</b>	<b>Above Grade (sq m)</b>	<b>Below Grade (sq m)</b>
Residential GFA:	2,742	0
Retail GFA:	0	
Office GFA:	0	
Industrial GFA:	0	
Institutional/Other GFA:	0	

<b>Residential Units by Tenure</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Retained</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Total</b>
Rental:	0		51	51
Freehold:				
Condominium:			0	0
Other:				
<b>Total Units:</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>

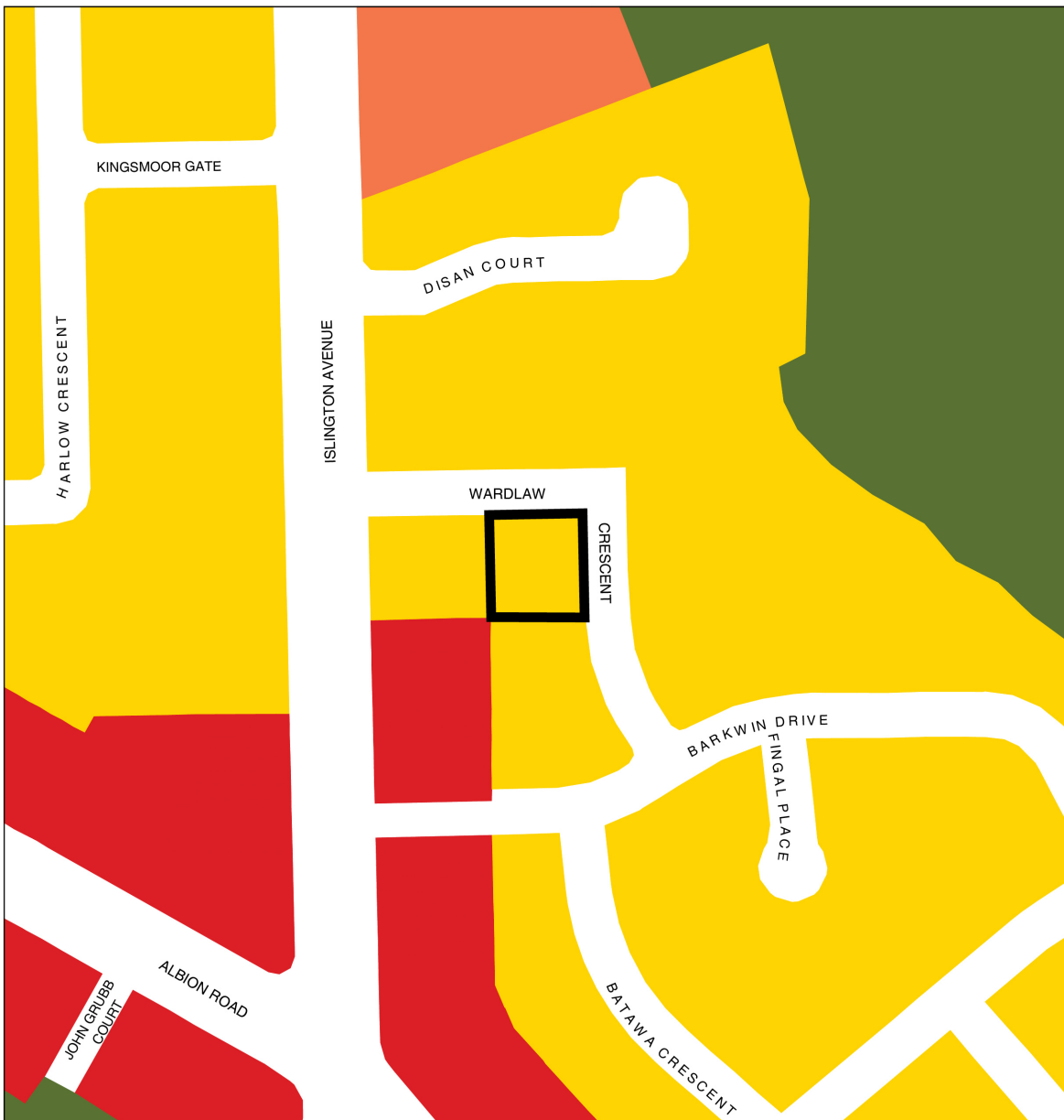
#### **Total Residential Units by Size**

	<b>Rooms</b>	<b>Bachelor</b>	<b>1 Bedroom</b>	<b>2 Bedroom</b>	<b>3+ Bedroom</b>
Retained:					
Proposed:	51	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Units:</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### **Parking and Loading**

Parking Spaces:	0	Bicycle Parking Spaces:	40	Loading Docks:	N/A
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### Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map



Official Plan Land Use Map #13

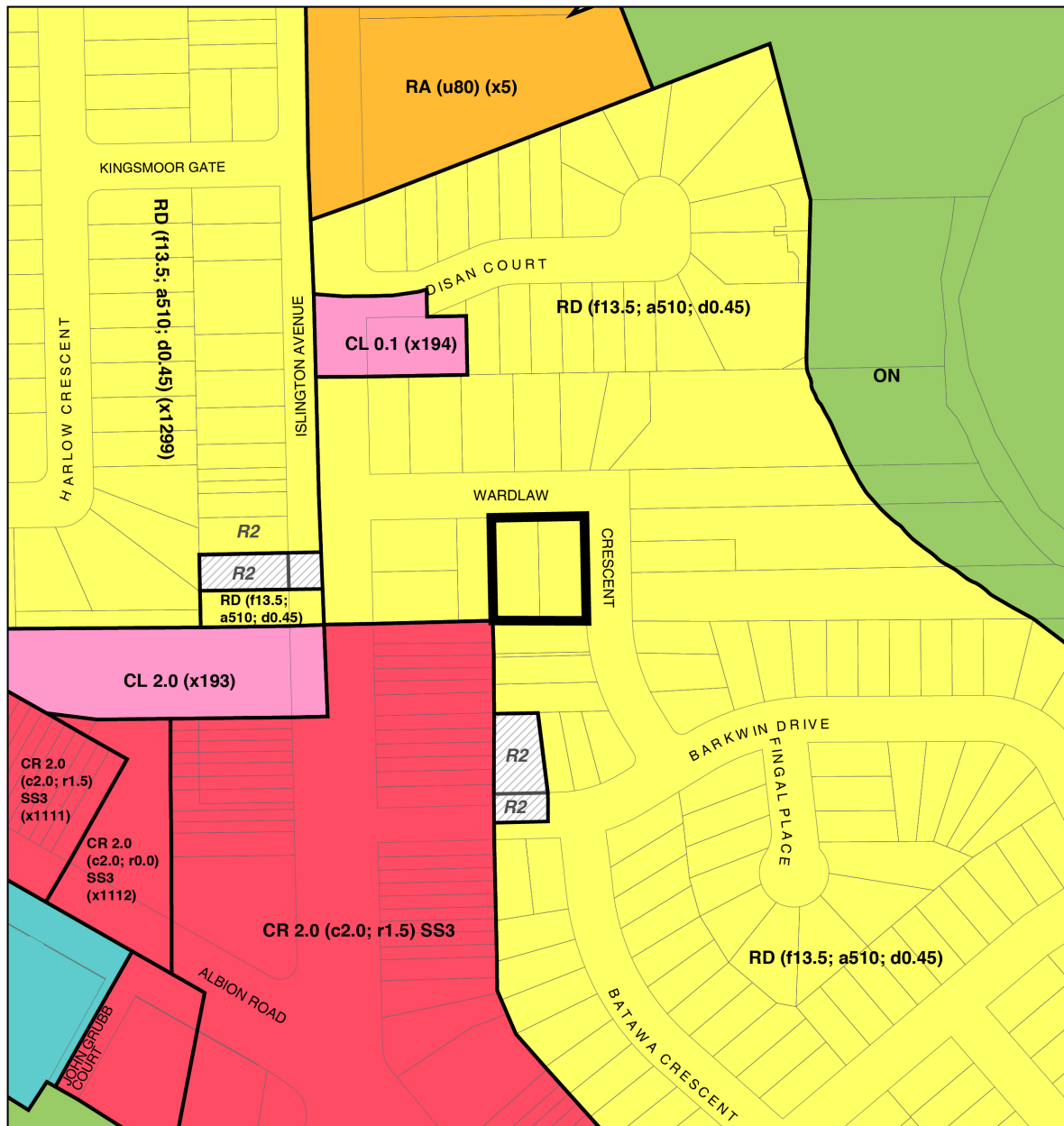
7-9 Wardlaw Crescent

File # 25 105482 WET 01 0Z



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## Attachment 4: Existing Zoning By-law Map



Zoning By-law 569-2013

7-9 Wardlaw Crescent

File # 25 105482 WET 01 0Z

Location of Application

RD Residential Detached  
 RA Residential Apartment  
 CL Commercial Local  
 CR Commercial Residential

I Institutional  
 ON Open Space Natural

See Former City of Etobicoke By-Law No. 11,737  
 R2 Second Density Residential Zone  
 POS Private Open Space Zone

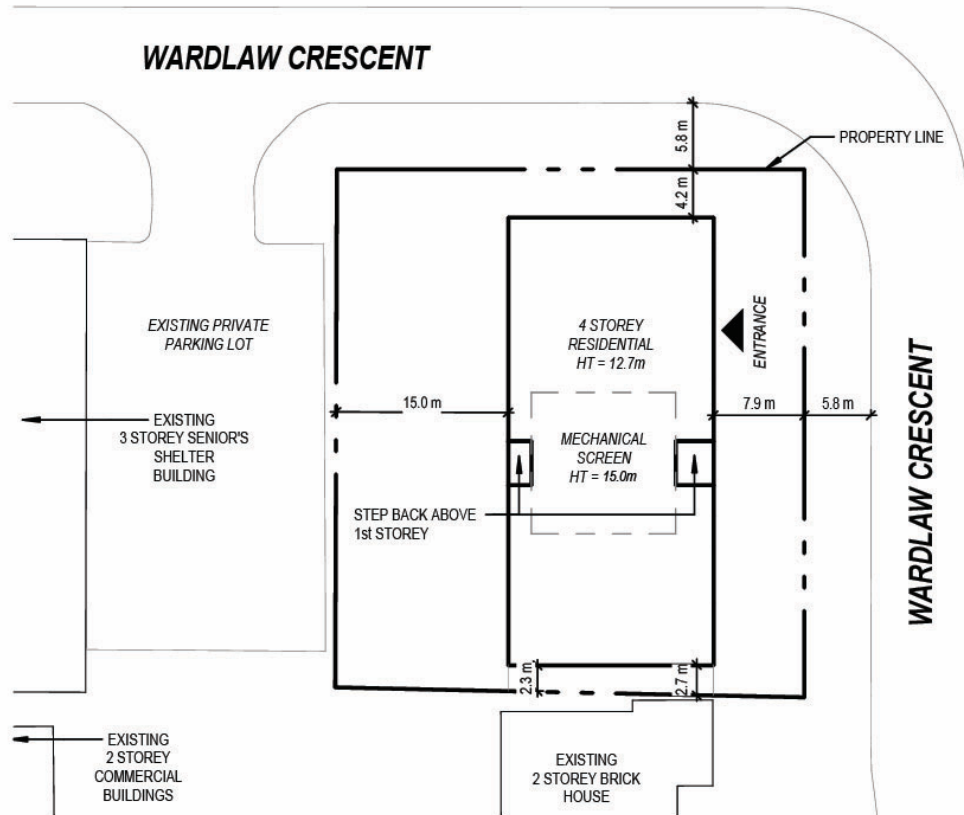


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## Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

The draft by-law amendment will be made available on or before the April 10, 2025, Planning and Housing Committee meeting.

## Attachment 6: Site Plan

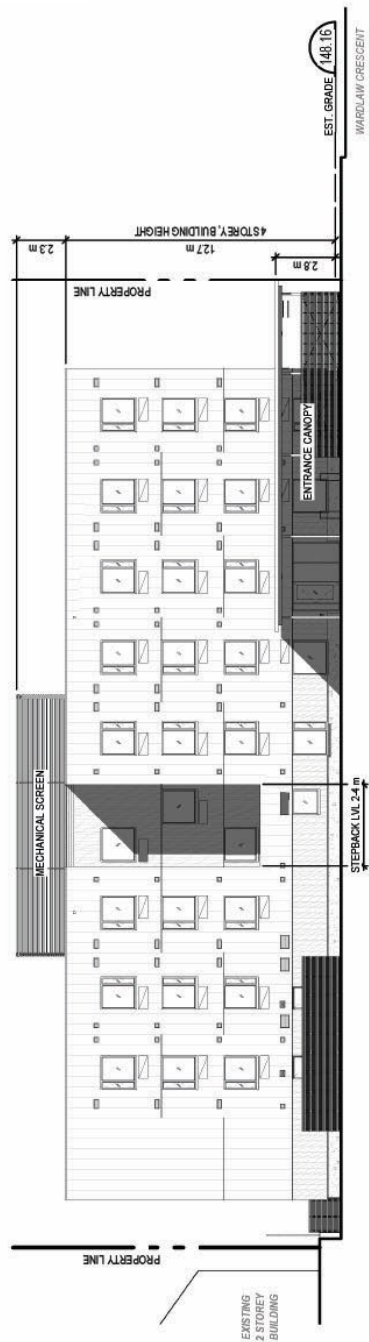


Site Plan



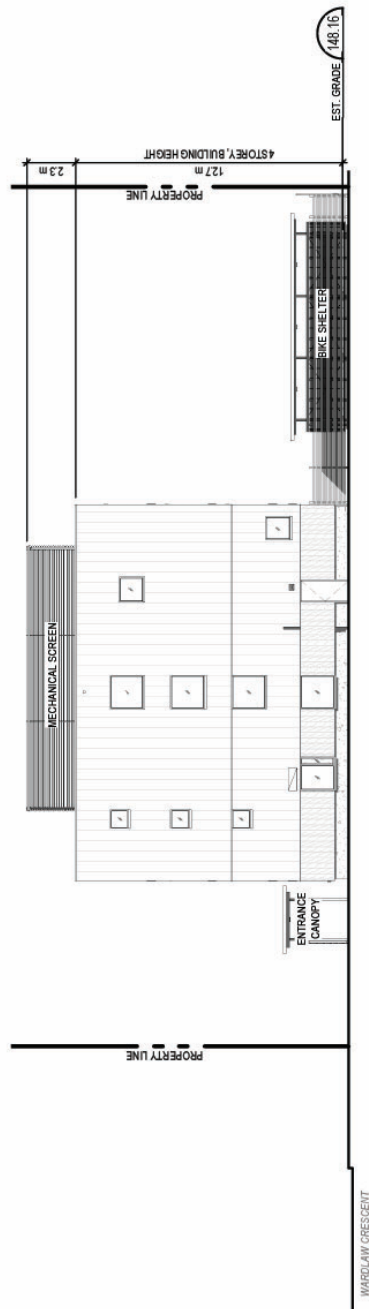


Attachment 7: East Elevation



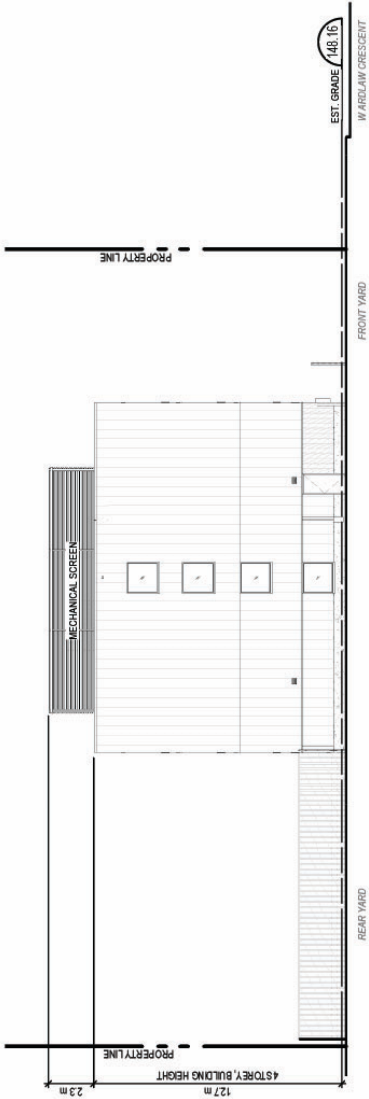
East Elevation

## Attachment 8: North Elevation



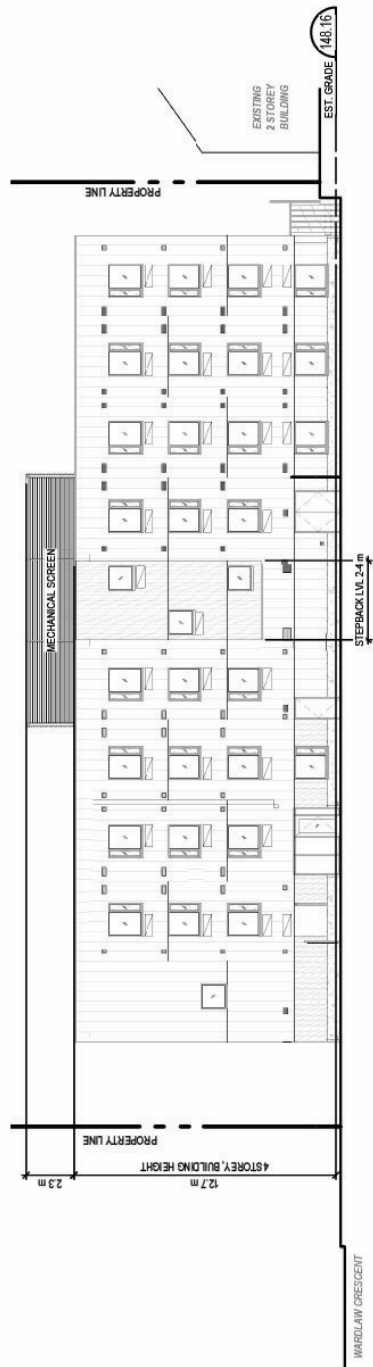
North Elevation

Attachment 9: South Elevation



South Elevation

Attachment 10: West Elevation



West Elevation