

## **958 Broadview Avenue – Alterations to a Heritage Property under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act and Authority to Amend a Heritage Easement Agreement**

**Date:** April 1, 2026

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto East York Community Council

**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

**Wards:** Ward 14 – Toronto-Danforth

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations to the former Chester Public School at 958 Broadview Avenue, designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, in connection with the development of the subject property and that Council grant authority for the City to amend an existing Heritage Easement Agreement with the owner.

The subject property contains the former Chester Public School, now known as Estonian House, which has cultural heritage value as a representative example of a late 19th century village school combining the American Richardsonian Romanesque and British Queen Anne styles. The original school building, completed in 1891, was a two-and-a-half storey, red-brick building with a bell tower on its south-east corner. The roof of the bell tower was removed prior to 1953. The school was altered in 1962-3, 1975 and 1995 with unsympathetic additions.

The property was designated under Part IV of the OHA on October 5, 2016 under City of Toronto By-law 719-2017. A Heritage Easement Agreement was registered on the property on July 28, 2022.

In 2022, City Council approved alterations to this property under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act in connection with an Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendment to allow for the construction of a 14-storey residential tower with retail use at grade that incorporated the former Chester Public School at the base. The proposal included the removal of the incompatible additions and the restoration and rehabilitation of the Chester Public School and a new landscaped forecourt along Broadview Avenue.

The current application proposes to re-develop the site and to construct a new residential building with retail use at grade. The Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Application are for a 26-storey mixed-use building. The proposal will include 310 residential units, including eight affordable ownership units and an on-site public park. All existing structures on the site are proposed to be demolished, except for the 1891 Chester Public School, which is to be restored and rehabilitated. The proposed conservation strategy includes the retention, rehabilitation and restoration of a significant portion of the original Chester Public School including the reconstruction and reinstatement of the bell tower and chimney on the east façade of the building.

Heritage Planning staff are satisfied that the proposed alterations continue to conserve the onsite and adjacent heritage properties and are consistent with the existing policy framework. The heritage impacts of the development proposal are appropriately mitigated through the overall conservation strategy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve the alterations to the designated heritage property at 958 Broadview Avenue with conditions, in accordance with Part IV, Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, to allow for the construction of a new 26-storey residential tower with such alterations to the designated property substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated February 12, 2026 prepared by G + C Architects and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and the Heritage Impact Assessment Addendum dated February 13, 2026, prepared by ERA Architects Inc., and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, all subject to and in accordance with the Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and subject to the conditions as set out below:

a. that the related site-specific Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment bringing about the proposed alterations have been enacted by City Council and have come into full force and effect in a form and with content acceptable to City Council, as determined by the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning;

b. the owner shall:

1. enter into an amended Heritage Easement Agreement with the City for the property at 958 Broadview Avenue, substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated February 12, 2026 prepared by G + C Architects and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by ERA Architects Inc., dated February 13, 2026, all on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, subject to and in accordance with the Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.b.2 below, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, including execution

and registration of such agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;  
and

2. provide a detailed Conservation Plan, prepared by a qualified heritage consultant that is substantially in accordance with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for the property at 958 Broadview Avenue to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning; and

c. prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 958 Broadview Avenue including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, the owner shall:

1. have entered into an amended Heritage Easement Agreement with the City required in Recommendation 1.b.1 above for the property at 958 Broadview Avenue including registration on title of such agreement, to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;

2. have obtained final approval for the necessary Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendments, and such Amendments to have come into full force and effect;

3. provide a Heritage Lighting Plan that describes how the exterior of the heritage property will be sensitively illuminated to enhance its heritage character to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such a plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager Heritage Planning;

4. provide an Interpretation Plan for the subject property, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning;

5. provide a detailed Landscape Plan for the subject property, satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning;

6. submit a Signage Plan for the proposed development to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning;

7. provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.b.2 above, including a description of materials and finishes, to be prepared by the project architect and a qualified heritage consultant to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning; and

8. provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing, in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan and Interpretation Plan; and

d. prior to the release of the Letter of Credit required in Recommendation 1.c.8 above, the owner shall:

1. provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the required conservation work and the required interpretive work has been completed in accordance with the Conservation and Interpretation Plans and that an appropriate standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning; and

2. provide replacement Heritage Easement Agreement photographs to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary Bill in Council authorizing the amendment of a Heritage Easement Agreement for the property at 958 Broadview Avenue.

3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor and City staff to take all necessary actions to implement City Council's decision.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of September 27, 2006, City Council adopted Clause 3 of the Planning and Transportation Committee Report 6 confirming the listed status of properties included on the Heritage Register which included inventories of former municipalities. The property at 958 Broadview Avenue had been included on the 1982 Inventory of Historic Buildings in East York.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/council/cc060925/plt6rpt/cl003.pdf>

At its meeting of February 18, 2015, the Toronto and East York Community Council requested the Director of Urban Design to report to the Toronto and East York Community Council on the potential designation of the property at 958 Broadview

Avenue under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE4.77>

At its meeting of June 7, 2016, City Council adopted Item TE16.5 Final Report – Broadview Avenue Planning Study – City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment, Urban Design Guidelines and Heritage Inventory adopting the following: "City Council amend the Official Plan, for lands fronting on Broadview Avenue between Danforth Avenue and O'Connor Drive substantially in accordance with the Draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment 7 to the report (April 22, 2016) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, with Attachment 7 amended by: Item 1.c "deleting and replacing Policy 5.3 under Site and Area Specific Policy No. 509, with the following: Conserve the integrity of the property's cultural heritage values and attributes, including the 19th century Chester Public School." Through this decision, Council adopted Site and Area Specific Policy 509 (SASP 509) relating to Broadview Avenue between Danforth Avenue and O'Connor Drive. SASP 509 was subsequently appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). On August 15, 2018, the OLT approved SASP 509 except for three site-specific appeals, including this site. Council's decision on SASP 509 can be found here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE16.5>

At its meeting of October 5, 2016, City Council designated the property at 958 Broadview Avenue under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The property contains the original Chester Public School (now known as Estonian House), a two-and-a-half storey, brick-clad building, built in 1891 and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the Ontario Heritage Act

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE18.15>

A preliminary report was adopted by Toronto and East York Community Council on April 24, 2019 authorizing staff to conduct a community consultation meeting with an expanded notification boundary.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.TE5.32>

An Update Report regarding the revised proposal from the new landowner was adopted by Toronto and East York Community Council on February 24, 2021 authorizing staff to conduct a community consultation meeting to present the revised application.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE23.55>

At its meeting of November 9, 2021, City Council adopted a request for direction report recommending that the City Solicitor and appropriate City staff to attend the Ontario Land Tribunal in opposition to the current Application regarding the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment appeal for the lands at 954, 956 and 958 Broadview Avenue and 72 Chester Hill Road and to continue discussions with the Applicant in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE28.8>

At its meeting of April 6 and 7, 2022, City Council adopted a request for direction report

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.CC42.10>

On April 6, 2022 City Council adopted Confidential recommendations requesting further instructions for the OLT hearing to commence on October 31, 2022. The City Council decision is available here: [Agenda Item History - 2022.CC42.10](#)

On July 22, 2022 City Council adopted the recommended Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA) Official Plan Amendments, including OPA 540, which would amend Chapter 8 of the Official Plan pursuant to Sections 16(15) and 26 of the Planning Act. The City Council decision is available at: [Agenda Item History - 2022.PH35.16](#)

In the decision dated August 9, 2022, the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) approved a settlement (OLT-21- 001178) between DK Broadview Inc. and the City of Toronto with respect to the 954, 956 and 958 Broadview Avenue and 72 Chester Hill Road application. The settlement allows permissions for a mixed-use 14 storey building which includes affordable housing. The settlement included a number of community benefits such as:

- Eight affordable ownership units;
- A cash contribution of \$150,000 to be allocated to certain community benefits in the vicinity of the site including towards the public design process of Wonscotonach park and public art to be located in the parkland dedication to commemorate the Chester Hill Public School heritage building at 958 Broadview Avenue;
- Conveyance of ravine lands to the TRCA;
- Heritage conservation of the former Chester Hill Public School at 958 Broadview Avenue;
- An on-site parkland dedication having an area of not less than 240 square metres;
- Enhanced bird friendly window treatment; and
- Planting of large shade trees along the south property line adjacent to the single detached houses along Chester Hill Road.

On August 15, 2025, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and housing approved six Official Plan Amendments bringing new policies for 25 MTSA's and 95 PMTSA's into force and effect, including OPA 540 regarding the Broadview PMTSA.

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Site and Context**

The property at 958 Broadview Avenue is located on the west side of Broadview Avenue, between Chester Hill Road and Pottery Road in the Broadview North neighbourhood. The former Chester Public School is the oldest surviving school of the

former municipality of East York and a community landmark on Broadview Avenue. It is associated with the historic villages of Chester and Todmorden, East York and the current Broadview-Danforth neighbourhood.

## **Heritage Property**

The subject site contains the former Chester Public School, now known as Estonian House. The former Chester Public School has cultural heritage value as a representative example of a late 19th century village school combining the American Richardsonian Romanesque and British Queen Anne styles. The original school building, completed in 1891, was a two-and-a-half storey, red-brick building with a bell tower on its south-east corner. The roof of the bell tower was removed prior to 1953. Following its purchase by Estonian House in 1960, a single storey addition including a new entrance and hall was constructed in 1962-3 to the rear, west elevation. A four-storey addition on the front, east elevation was completed in 1975 and an addition for barrier-free access was constructed on the north side elevation in 1995. The 1962-3, 1975 and 1995 additions are not included in the heritage attributes.

## **Adjacent Heritage Properties**

The site is adjacent to the following heritage properties:

### **927-931 Broadview Avenue**

The property at 927-931 Broadview Avenue is located across the street from the subject site at the intersection of Broadview and Fulton Avenues and is listed on the City's Heritage Register. The property contains a rare house-form building with three separate units that takes advantage of its corner location to have entrances on two adjacent streets. The building exhibits the complexity and picturesque elements of the Arts and Craft style.

## **Previously Approved Scheme**

In 2022 City Council granted approval under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act for a development proposal at the subject property to allow for the construction of a 14-storey residential tower with at-grade retail that would incorporate the former Chester Public School at its base. The proposal involved the removal of incompatible 1962-3, 1975 and 1995 additions and the restoration and rehabilitation of Chester Public School. A new landscaped forecourt was also approved to be located in front of the heritage building along Broadview Avenue.

## **New Development Proposal**

A Zoning By-law Amendment application was submitted for the subject site on September 3, 2025 and was deemed complete September 5, 2025 and a heritage permit application seeking approval of the proposed alterations under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act has been received.

The new proposal seeks to add 12 storeys to the previously approved 14-storey building to construct a 26-storey mixed-use building with retail use on the ground floor of the restored heritage building along Broadview Avenue. As approved in the 2022 scheme, all existing structures on the site are proposed to be demolished, except for the 1891 Chester Public School, which is to be restored and rehabilitated. The retained heritage building would be used for retail space, lobby and residential amenity at grade, with a double-height amenity space at the second floor of the heritage building. The new residential building would feature a glazed reveal to provide transition between the roof of the retained heritage building and the main tower element. Landscape enhancements are proposed across the site, including a park dedication along Broadview in front of the retained heritage building.

## **Heritage Planning Policy Framework**

Cultural heritage resources are protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the Provincial Planning Statement (2024). Heritage Conservation is enabled through the Ontario Heritage Act. The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime, the Planning Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and provides policies to guide decision making within the city.

## **The Planning Act**

The Planning Act guides development in the Province of Ontario. It states that municipalities must have regard for matters of provincial interest. Section 2(d) specifically refers to the “conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest” and 2 (r) “to a built form that is well designed and provides for a sense of place.”

## **The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS)**

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024) (the “PPS”) provides policy direction province-wide on land use planning and development to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. It includes policies on key issues that affect communities, such as:

- the efficient use and management of land and infrastructure
- ensuring the sufficient provision of housing to meet changing needs including affordable housing
- ensuring opportunities for job creation
- ensuring the appropriate transportation, water, sewer and other infrastructure is available to accommodate current and future needs
- protecting people, property and community resources by directing development away from natural or human-made hazards, and
- conservation of cultural heritage and archaeology

The provincial policy-led planning system recognizes and addresses the complex interrelationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning. The PPS supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning, and recognizes linkages among policy areas.

The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act and all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also be consistent with the PPS.

Policy 4.6.1 of the PPS directs that "Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved."  
"Conserved" is defined in the PPS as "the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

Provincial Plans are intended to be read in their entirety, and relevant policies are to be applied to each situation. All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS and shall conform with Provincial Plans. All comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also be consistent with the PPS and conform with Provincial Plans.

### **City of Toronto Official Plan**

This application has been reviewed against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan. The Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to the proposed development:

3.1.6.4 - Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and adopted by Council.

3.1.6.5 - Proposed alterations, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property's cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City.

3.1.6.6 - The adaptive re-use of properties on the Heritage Register is encouraged for new uses permitted in the applicable Official Plan land use designation, consistent with the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada."

3.1.6.26 - New construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and to mitigate visual and physical impact on it.

3.1.6.27: Where it is supported by the cultural heritage values and attributes of a property on the Heritage Register, the conservation of whole or substantial portions of buildings, structures and landscapes on those properties is desirable and encouraged. The retention of façades alone is discouraged.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here:

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

## **Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

The Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9) the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12), and the Standards for Restoration (13-14) apply to this project.

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes.aspx>

## **COMMENTS**

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Heritage Planning staff have reviewed the Heritage Impact Assessment Addendum submitted in support of the proposal prepared by ERA Architects Inc. for conformity with the Planning Act, the Provincial Planning Statement, and the City's Official Plan heritage policies.

### **Conservation Strategy**

The proposal involves the conservation of the former Chester Public School, which is to be restored and rehabilitated. Incompatible later additions are proposed to be removed, including the 1962-3 single-storey entrance and hall addition to the rear, the 1975 four-storey front addition, and the 1995 addition for barrier-free access at the north side wall. These additions are not listed as heritage attributes in the Statement of Significance (Attachment 3). The portions of the building that will be revealed through the removal of later additions will be restored based on archival and physical evidence.

Heritage Planning has compared the current conservation strategy to the conservation strategy of the previous development application on the site, which was approved by City Council in 2022. The most significant changes since the previous approval include the increase in building height from 14-storeys to 26-storeys and the 4-metre portion of the north façade would no longer be retained in situ but dismantled and reinstated along with part of the south elevations and west elevation.

The new proposal demonstrates an improvement of the conservation of the heritage resource through the retention of the original chimney on the east elevation, which was previously proposed to be demolished, and reconstruction of a larger portion of the roof structure. A three-storey glazed reveal above the heritage building will mitigate the impacts of the new construction. Balconies on the east elevation of the tower begin at the ninth storey to allow better articulation of the heritage building, and roof terraces are no longer proposed to be added to the historic roof (Attachment 5).

The original building will be retained in situ to a depth of approximately 10 metres of the heritage building, measured from the outermost part of the east elevation, including the existing roof form, including that portion of the existing roof form. The west elevation and portions of the south and north facades are proposed to be dismantled and reconstructed based on the original design. The roof will be removed and partially rebuilt to match the existing profile. The peaked roof bell tower element and the north-east chimney will be reinstated. The retention strategy will help maintain the three-

dimensional integrity of the heritage building and conserve the heritage attributes of the former Chester Public School. (Attachment 4)

As with the previous approval, the proposed alterations to the former Chester Public School will impact the heritage attributes of the property, but the impacts are relatively minor, clearly legible and appropriately mitigated.

### **Conservation Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, the owner should be required to submit a Conservation Plan for the work described in the Conservation Strategy in the Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared by a qualified heritage professional to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning. The Conservation Plan should detail all of the recommended interventions and conservation work including any recommended restoration work, a detailed plan describing how the heritage building will be protected during construction, a schedule of short and long-term maintenance requirements and estimated costs for all conservation work.

### **Heritage Interpretation Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to final Site Plan approval, the applicant should be required to submit an Interpretation Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning. The Interpretation Plan should be substantial and should communicate the cultural heritage value of the former Chester Public School as described in the Statement of Significance.

### **Heritage Lighting Plan**

The Heritage Lighting Plan should provide details of how the building will be lit so that its unique heritage character is highlighted.

### **Landscape Plan**

Staff is recommending that the applicant be required to provide a final Landscape Plan that enhances the heritage character of the property to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning as a condition of Site Plan approval.

### **Signage Plan**

The recommended Signage Plan should provide details of the signage strategy for the property at 958 Broadview Avenue.

## **Heritage Easement Agreement**

Staff is requesting an amendment to the current registered Heritage Easement Agreement at 958 Broadview Avenue to reflect the details of the new proposal.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Heritage Planning staff have reviewed the proposed development for the heritage property and are satisfied the proposal is consistent with the Planning Act, the Provincial Planning Statement, and the City of Toronto's Official Plan heritage policies in conjunction with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

Staff are supportive of the proposal to alter the Part IV designated heritage property at 958 Broadview Avenue, to allow for the construction of a 26-storey residential tower that incorporates the former Chester Public School. Staff support the proposed retention strategy and alterations in the context of the conservation and mitigation methods proposed for the site and are of the opinion that the proposal has been designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of the heritage property.

## **CONTACT**

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Jennifer Guerin, CAHP  
Heritage Planner, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning  
416-338-9458; [Jennifer.guerin@toronto.ca](mailto:Jennifer.guerin@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning

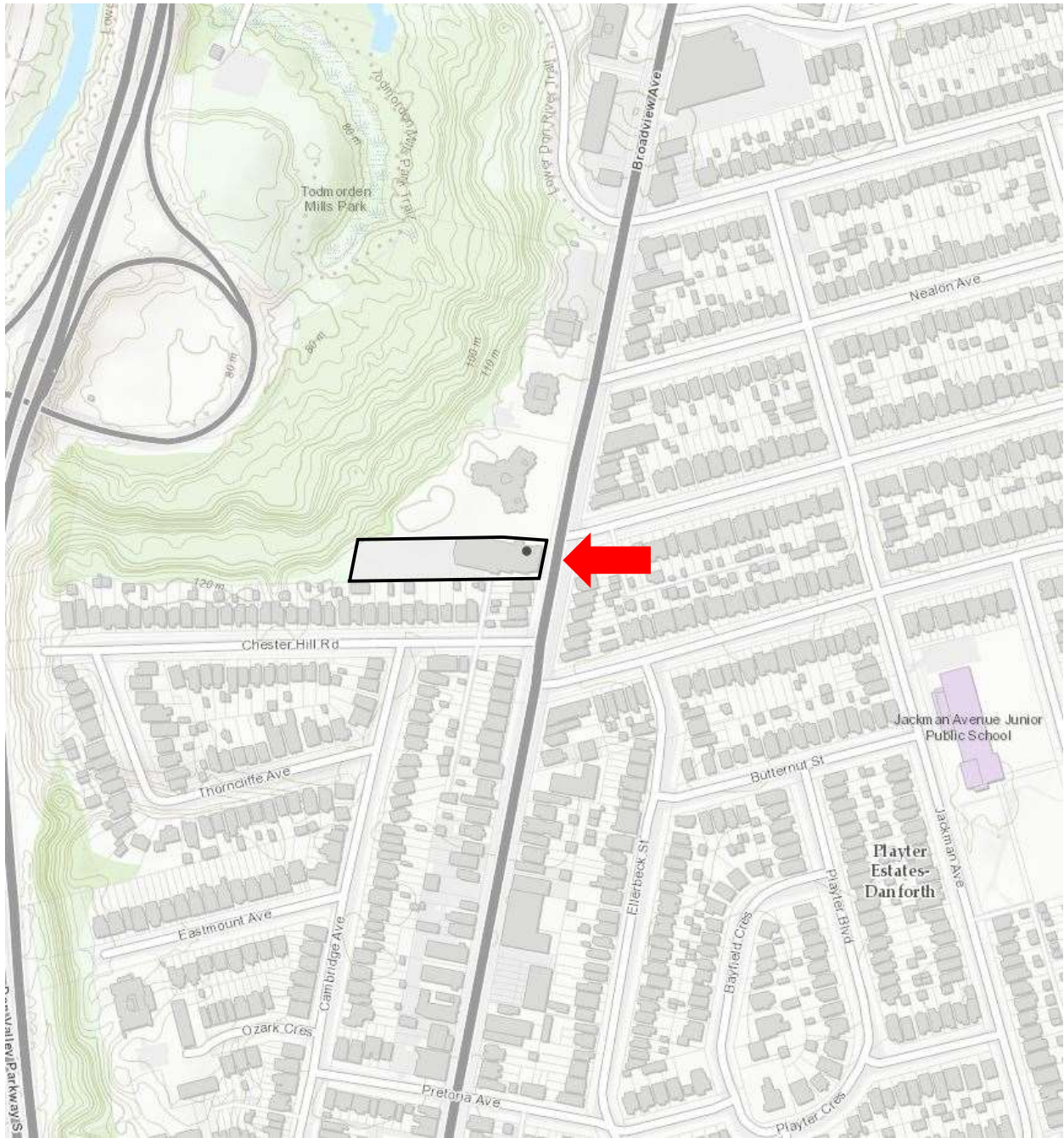
## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 - Location Map  
Attachment 2 - Photographs  
Attachment 3 - Statement of Significance  
Attachment 4 - Heritage Impact Assessment Excerpts (2021 & 2026)  
Attachment 5 – Selected Plans, Drawings and Renderings

**LOCATION MAP**  
**958 BROADVIEW AVENUE**

**ATTACHMENT 1**



Location Map, showing the property at 958 Broadview Avenue. The red arrow indicates the former Chester Public School. The property boundaries are approximate.

**PHOTOGRAPHS**  
**958 BROADVIEW AVENUE**

**ATTACHMENT 2**



Updated view looking northwest toward the site (ERA, 2025).



Updated view of south elevation (ERA, 2025).

**PHOTOGRAPHS**  
**958 BROADVIEW AVENUE**



Updated view of north elevation (ERA, 2025).



Updated view of west elevation (ERA, 2025).

**PHOTOGRAPHS**  
**958 BROADVIEW AVENUE**



Looking north-west towards the subject site, 1905 (Toronto Public Library).



Looking south-west at Chester Public School, circa 1953 (Toronto Archives).

Historic photographs of the east and south elevations and the east elevation of the former Chester Public School

## PHOTOGRAPHS

### 958 BROADVIEW AVENUE



Rear (west) elevation of 1891 schoolhouse in early 1960s. 1963 addition under construction in the foreground (Estonian House, year unknown).

Historic photograph of the west elevation of the former Chester Public School (ERA Architects)

The property at 958 Broadview Avenue is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

### **Description**

Located on the west side of Broadview Avenue, between Chester Hill Road and Pottery Road in the Broadview North neighbourhood, the property contains the former Chester Public School, now known as Estonian House. The original school building, completed in 1891, was a two-and-a-half storey, red-brick building with a bell tower on its south-east corner. The roof of the bell tower was removed prior to 1953. Following its purchase by Estonian House in 1960, a single storey addition including a new entrance and hall was constructed in 1962-3 to the rear, west elevation. A four-storey addition on the front, east elevation was completed in 1975 and an addition for accessibility was constructed on the north side elevation in 1995.

### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**

The former Chester School is a representative example of a late 19th century village school combining the American Richardsonian Romanesque and British Queen Anne styles. The elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque style are evident in the overall square massing with a complex silhouette created by a variety of roofs, projecting bays, a tower and two prominent chimneys, the use of red brick with rough-hewn red stone and with large arched openings. The Queen Anne style is present in the classicizing presence evident in the proportions of the pediments of the gable roofs, the regular symmetrical disposition of the windows, and in the rubbed and moulded brick elements seen in the tower. The school building displays a high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit in its massing and composition as well as in its combination of details and the originality expressed in the hybrid of the two popular late 19th century architectural styles.

Chester School/Estonian House is the oldest surviving school of the former municipality of East York and is valued for its 135 year association with the historic villages of Chester and Todmorden, East York and the current Broadview-Danforth neighbourhood. It is associated with the earliest development of the late 18th century mills on the Don River, the development of Broadview Avenue from an Aboriginal trail and the growth of the surrounding community. The historic school is also valued for its association with the Helliwell family who gave Todmorden its name, farmed the land on which the school was built and whose descendent Grant Helliwell, one of the two architects of the school, was born in Todmorden. Since 1960, under the ownership of Estonian House (in Toronto) the property has been associated with the Estonian community, housing the Estonian Consul, the Estonian Credit Union and providing for a variety of cultural, institutional and local community functions.

Chester Public School/Estonian house has contextual value as it is a community landmark on Broadview Avenue and is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. It provides a transition between the divergent scales of the single family houses to its south and the towers in the park to the north. Situated on the top edge of the ravine on a narrow wedge of property determined by the course of the Don River, it is part of the unique historical relationship between the 220 year old community and the Don River and Valley.

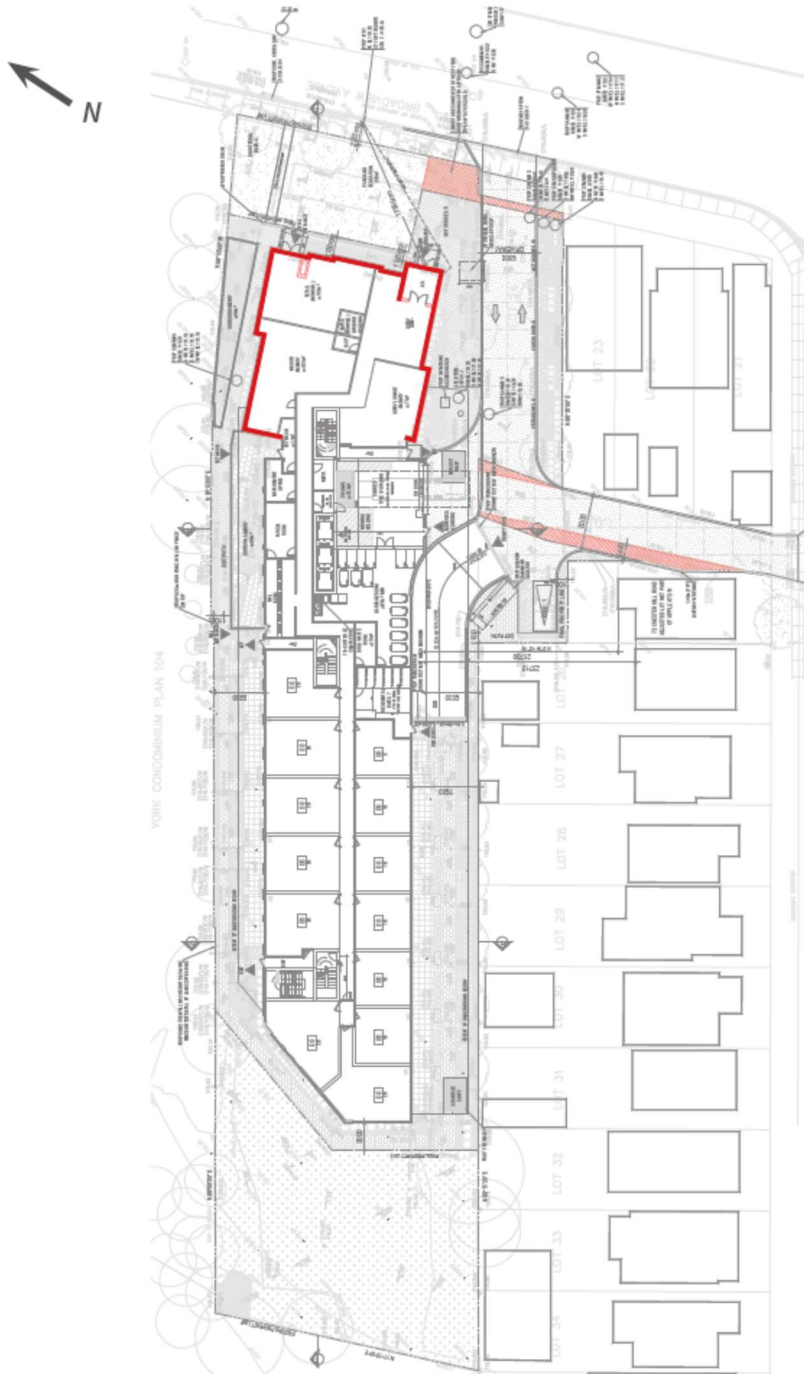
## **Heritage Attributes**

The heritage attributes of the former Chester Public School, now known as Estonian House, completed in 1891 on the property at 958 Broadview Avenue are:

- The placement, set back and orientation of the building, as it is located on the west side of Broadview Avenue.
- The massing and composition of the building on a square plan with a central hipped roof, projecting bays on the north, west and south elevations, with gable roofs on the north and south bays, a tower at the south-east corner, and two prominent chimneys
- The original north, west, and south elevations
- The original east elevation with a projecting bay and gable roof now partially concealed within the 1975 extension
- The window openings on the south elevation with the flat-headed first floor and basement window openings, the flat-headed and semi-circular arched window openings on the second floor level, the trio of semi-circular arched openings in the pediment of the gable roofs on the south elevation and east elevations
- The window openings on the west elevation with the semi-circular arched window openings on the second floor level
- The window openings on the north elevation with the flat-headed first floor and basement window openings, and semi-circular arched window openings on the second floor level
- The semi-circular arched openings in the tower on the south and east faces (the east opening is partially concealed by the 1975 addition)
- The materials including the red brick, and sandstone
- The decorative brick details of the building comprising the brick string courses at the basement level, at the second story around the window heads, at the eaves and around the trio of windows in the pediment of the east gable roof as well as the upper tower openings. There is also decorative brick string coursing at the first floor level window adjacent to the tower on the south elevation. The brick details also comprise the rectangular panels in red brick beneath the second floor windows on the south elevation, and on the south face of the tower, the decorative moulded brick scrolls beneath the arched opening and the engaged moulded brick columns to either side of the arched tower openings. The brick details also comprise the decorative string course of checkerboard pattern bricks just below the tower roof eaves.

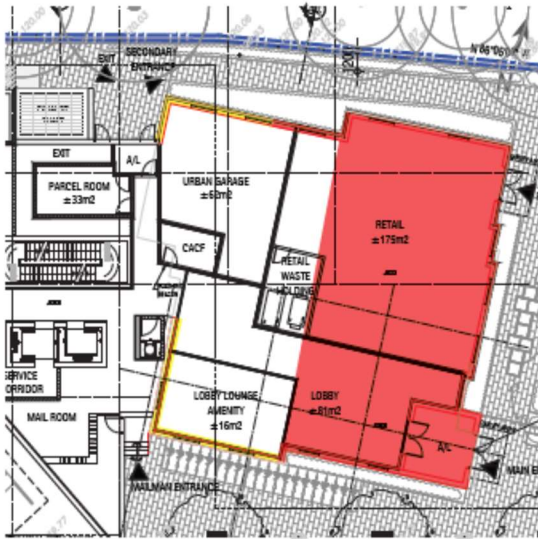
- The stone details comprise the rough-hewn stone foundation, and string courses at the lintel level of the flat-headed windows at first and second floor levels windows and sill level of the second floor windows and also at the sill level of the arched opening in the tower.

The 1962-3, 1975 and 1995 additions are not included in the heritage attributes

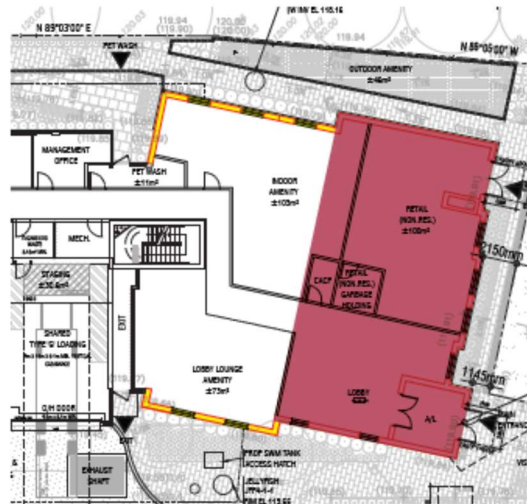


Proposed ground floor plan with heritage building footprint highlighted in red (G + C, 2026; annotation by ERA).

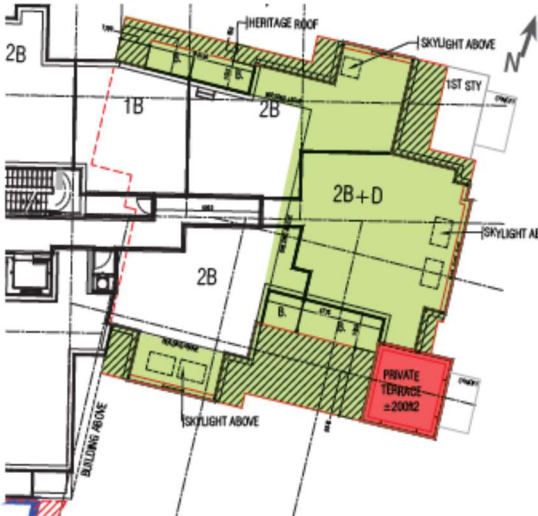
# HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT EXCERPTS 958 BROADVIEW AVENUE



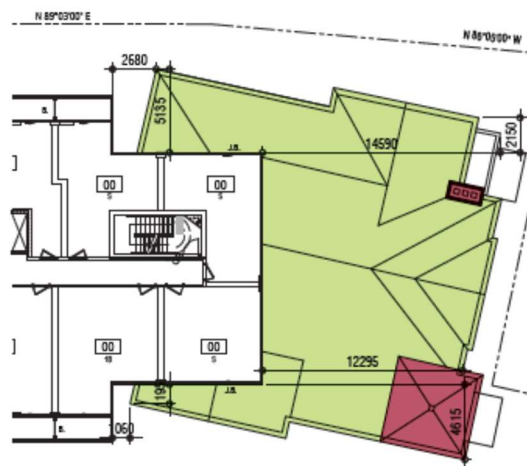
Ground floor plan detail (G+C, 2021; annotation by ERA)



Ground floor plan detail (G+C, 2026; annotation by ERA)



Fourth floor plan detail (G+C, 2021; annotation by ERA)



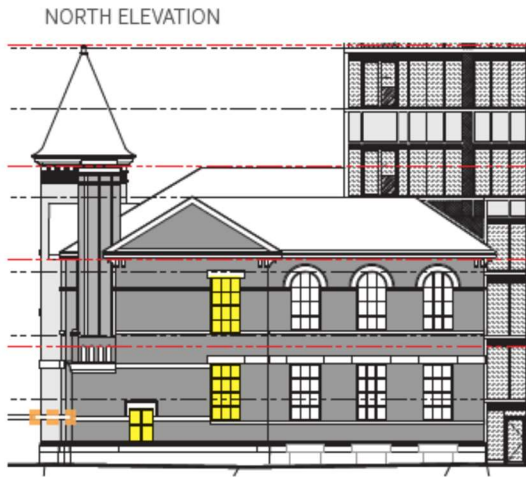
Fifth and sixth floor plan detail (G+C, 2026; annotation by ERA)

- Depth of heritage building retained in situ (approximate extent)
- Heritage facade dismantled and reconstructed (approximate extent)
- Roof rebuilt to match existing profile

HIA excerpts showing comparison between 2022 & 2026 proposed retention/reconstruction

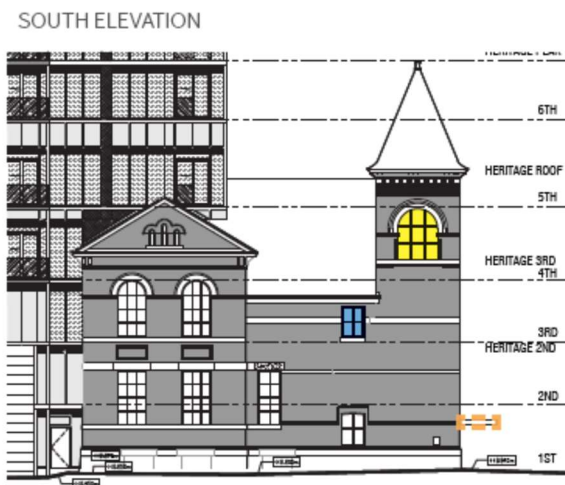
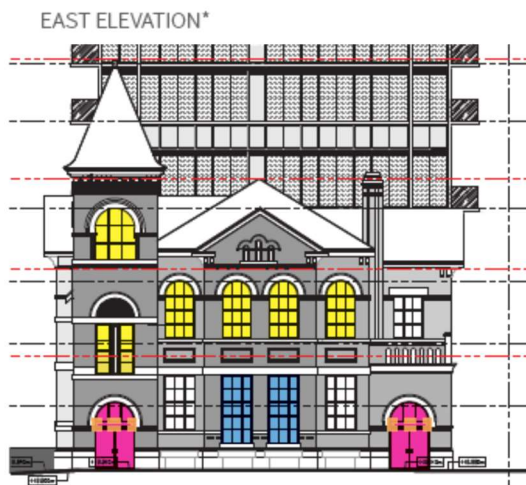
# HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT EXCERPTS

## 958 BROADVIEW AVENUE



### LEGEND

- Existing opening altered
- Reinstate opening with modifications for barrier-free entrance
- Reinstate original opening
- Canopy zone

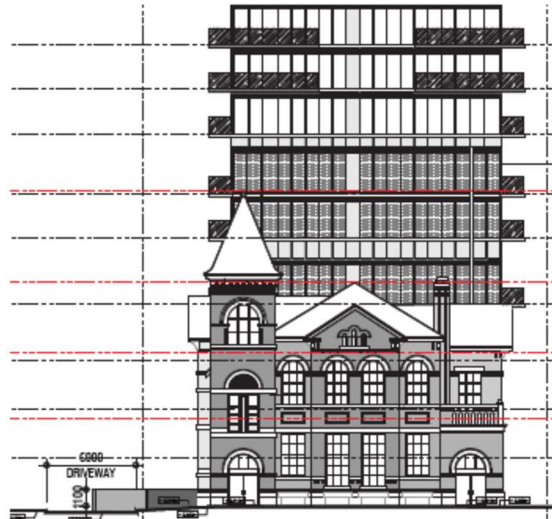


\*It is assumed that the window openings that have not been investigated remain and are concealed. If the openings are not as illustrated, the openings will be reinstated consistent with archival images of the building

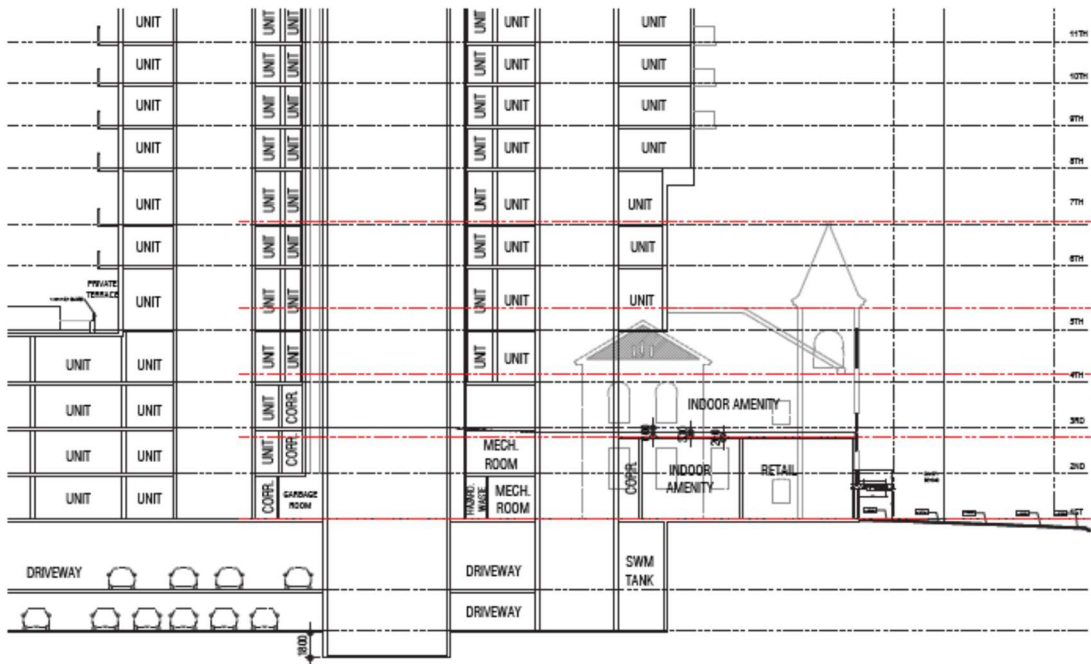
(All elevations G+C, 2026; annotations by ERA).

**SELECTED DRAWINGS, RENDERINGS AND ELEVATIONS  
958 BROADVIEW AVENUE**

**ATTACHMENT 5**



East elevation of proposed development (G + C, 2026)



Section of proposed development (G + C, 2026)

**SELECTED DRAWINGS, RENDERINGS AND ELEVATIONS  
958 BROADVIEW AVENUE**



Rendering of proposed development looking southwest from Broadview Avenue (G + C, 2026).



Rendering of proposed development looking northwest from Broadview Avenue (G + C, 2026).