

## A Shared Vision to Create More Affordable and Supportive Homes and Sustain Community Networks in South Parkdale

**Date:** February 10, 2026

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Executive Director, Development Review and Executive Director, Housing Secretariat

**Wards:** Parkdale-High Park

### SUMMARY

---

Addressing Toronto's housing and homelessness crisis requires a whole of government and whole of community approach that leverages land, funding, service delivery and partnerships. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) executed in 2019, the City of Toronto, University Health Network (UHN) and United Way Greater Toronto (UGWT) are working together to advance the Social Medicine Initiative, aimed at integrating housing, health and social service systems to improve health outcomes for vulnerable and marginalized populations.

As part of advancing this partnership, City Council directed staff in 2020 to undertake a community visioning exercise with the unincorporated South Parkdale UHN Tenants Association (SPUHNTA), who represent the tenants of the UHN-owned residential properties in South Parkdale. SPUHNTA's history in South Parkdale spans several decades and their contributions have supported the successful integration of Dunn House (opened in 2024) and its residents into the community. Building on SPUHNTA's existing principles of community care and support, and the objectives outlined in the MOU, this report recommends for City Council approval a vision and design principles shared among SPUHNTA, UHN, and the City for the future redevelopment of UHN-owned lands that will leverage public land to deliver affordable and supportive housing within complete communities.

The vision and principles in this report were co-developed through an engagement process between SPUHNTA, UHN, City staff and the Ward Councillor, and led by an engagement consultant and an architectural services consultant procured by the City. Subject to City Council's adoption of this report, the shared vision and design principles will inform City staff's review of any future development proposals for these lands, in addition to relevant planning policies, guidelines, and development review processes.

The shared vision and guiding principles reflect a strong commitment among partners to create a range of new supportive and affordable homes that advance the Social Medicine Initiative, while also building on a strong foundation of community collaboration and care that has characterized SPUHNTA and residents of the lands for decades. The vision also articulates important priorities for SPUHNTA members with regard to engagement, relationship building, and providing support for tenants throughout and after any redevelopment. City staff would like to acknowledge and thank SPUHNTA members for their openness and commitment to working with the City and other partners through the visioning process. The City is committed to continuing to engage with community members to support realizing the vision.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

The Executive Director, Development Review and Executive Director, Housing Secretariat recommend that:

1. City Council adopt the shared vision and design principles as outlined in this report for the redevelopment of the University Health Network (UHN) owned lands in South Parkdale.
2. City Council direct the Executive Director, Development Review and other City staff as appropriate, to review any future development applications for the UHN-owned lands in South Parkdale in the context of the shared vision, design principles, and development concepts as outlined in this report.
3. City Council direct the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to work with United Way Greater Toronto on opportunities to involve the broader Parkdale community in advancing the shared vision outlined in this report, including mobilizing local community service providers to support residents throughout any future redevelopment.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

---

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with information included in the Financial Impact section.

## **EQUITY IMPACT**

---

The City is committed to partnerships with all orders of government and sectors to leverage public assets as a catalyst to further housing outcomes. The Social Medicine Initiative and HousingTO Plan are dedicated to increasing the supply of affordable and supportive housing, and assisting low-income individuals and families including

individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and with complex health needs to secure and maintain affordable housing.

The Social Medicine Initiative and the HousingTO Plan are committed to ensuring Toronto's vulnerable and marginalized residents, including Indigenous Peoples, Black and other racialized people, seniors, women, 2SLGBTQIA+ persons, and those from other equity-deserving groups, live in dignified homes with appropriate supports. Centred on a human rights based approach to housing that recognizes that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of a person, advancing the development of mixed income communities inclusive of supportive housing models like the Dunn House is integral to building healthy, sustainable, and livable neighbourhoods.

The adoption of the shared vision and design principles outlined in this report preserves the legacy of a mutually supportive community exemplified by the South Parkdale University Health Network Tenant Association (SPUHNTA) who have supported the successful integration of residents residing at 90 Dunn Ave. and demonstrate the social impact of sharing resources and supporting neighbours. Advancing this vision includes a commitment to ongoing engagement with the local community and resident population, in collaboration with the Ward Councillor and the University Health Network, to ensure that the future redevelopment of these lands supports the social, environmental and economic health of the neighbourhood, the city, region, and country as a whole.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

---

At its meeting on July 19, 20, 21 and 22, 2022, City Council adopted Item TE34.78 “Residential Demolition Applications – 1 and 3 Close Avenue” which approved the applications to demolish the existing residential buildings at 1 and 3 Close Avenue subject to the conditions including rental replacement requirements for the four existing rental dwelling units.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.TE34.78>

At its meeting of July 19, 20, 21 and 22, 2022, City Council adopted Item PH35.21 “Advancing Affordable and Supportive Housing Projects, Programs and Initiatives”. This report authorized staff to enter into a long-term nominal lease with University Health Network for the house-form properties identified as 74 and 82 Dunn Avenue, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17 Close Avenue, and 74 and 78 Springhurst Avenue and issue a competitive Request for Proposals and select a non-profit housing provider to enter into a sub-lease with the City to operate and maintain the house-form properties.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.PH35.21>

At its meeting of October 27, 28 and 30, 2020, City Council adopted Item PH17.4 “Creating New Supportive Housing Opportunities in Partnership with the University Health Network and United Way of Greater Toronto” which directed staff to begin a visioning and master planning exercise for the future redevelopment of the lands, including the potential for modular housing.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.PH17.4>

At its meeting on December 17 and 18, 2019, City Council adopted, with amendments, Item PH11.5, “HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan” and its recommended actions as a strategic framework to guide the City's efforts on housing and homelessness over the next 10 years.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.PH11.5>.

## **COMMENTS**

---

### **Background on the Social Medicine Initiative and Council Direction**

Adopted in 2019, the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan (“HousingTO Plan”) commits the City to advancing innovative solutions across the housing continuum, including through partnerships across sectors. In 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ([Item PH17.4](#)) was executed between the City, the University Health Network (UHN) and the United Way of Greater Toronto (UGWT) to implement the Social Medicine Initiative, which integrates health, housing and social services for marginalized individuals, particularly those experiencing homelessness. The City, UHN, and UGWT have recognized the unique opportunity to leverage publicly-owned land in South Parkdale to build new mixed-income communities inclusive of affordable and supportive homes that implement a social medicine approach.

This partnership has demonstrated results with the completion of 90 Dunn Ave. (“Dunn House”), Canada’s first social medicine initiative supportive housing development. Opened in 2024, Dunn House provides 51 rent-g geared-to-income, supportive homes operated by Fred Victor provide housing and health services for people experiencing homelessness who are also UHN patients with high volumes of emergency department visits and in-patient admissions. The success of Dunn House exemplifies the importance of leveraging intersectoral partnerships and the City’s capacity as a public developer to address existing housing and health system pressures. Its success is also a result of the welcoming community in South Parkdale and existing networks of community-oriented care.

In 2020, City Council directed staff to engage the existing tenant community, represented by South Parkdale University Health Network Tenants Association (SPUHNTA) in establishing a long-term vision for the residential lands owned by the UHN in South Parkdale. These lands are outlined in a site plan graphic included in Attachment 2. These residential properties are currently tenanted by over 30 individuals, most of whom have called South Parkdale home for decades and have contributed extensively to their tenants association and the broader neighbourhood.

### **Community Engagement Process**

The purpose of the community engagement process was to ensure the tenants of the lands that could be subject to future redevelopment had an opportunity to engage with the City and UHN and inform the future redevelopment of their homes.

SPUHNTA convened a community-led process from April 2022 to February 2023 to outline a community vision. In mid-2025, City staff began a consultation process to build

on this community-led vision. The City procured an engagement consultant, Olga Semenovych, and an architectural services consultant, DTAH, who worked collaboratively with City staff from the Housing Secretariat and Development Review, the Ward Councillor, and UHN to co-develop a shared vision and key design principles to guide the future development of the UHN owned house-form properties in South Parkdale.

Scheduled between September and December 2025, an orientation session and four workshops were held in person in South Parkdale. Workshops included a review of existing community principles, a site context analysis of existing conditions and constraints, discussion of massing concepts demonstrating a range of densities and precedents from other developments, and exercises to work towards consensus on a vision and set of design principles. In the final workshop, SPUHNTA residents voted to indicate their agreement with the draft vision, design principles, and massing concepts which are outlined in this report. An engagement summary report with more details on this process is provided as Attachment 1.

## **Overview of the Shared Vision and Design Principles**

The outcomes of the community engagement process is a shared community vision and set of design principles which are described below. Subject to adoption by City Council, the vision, design principles, and massing concepts will be considered when reviewing any future development application of the UHN-owned lands in South Parkdale. They incorporate the legacy and vision of the SPUHNTA residents, objectives of UHN and the City to advance the Social Medicine Initiative, and an analysis of development realities to achieve common outcomes on public land.

### *Shared Vision*

The vision for the University Health Network (UHN)-owned lands in South Parkdale is to foster a thriving community grounded in the values of housing as a human right, dignity, wellbeing, and belonging. It will create inclusive, high-quality and resilient homes and community spaces where residents live with comfort, exercise agency and autonomy, and feel connected and valued.

This will be a place that supports individuals, diverse households, communities and the local ecosystem to flourish for generations. Residents will play an ongoing role in shaping their community through meaningful participation in decision-making.

### *Design Principles*

The five design principles below articulate shared goals that can guide decisions pertaining to future redevelopment. While presented as an interconnected framework, the principles can also act as standalone goals adaptable to multiple approaches (as opposed to one specific solution). For example, the design principle of “Building on Community and Connection” can be realized through a variety of built form and programming approaches such as integrating shared community spaces and ensuring that resident agency is bolstered through community engagement initiatives.

## Growing from the Past and Planning for the Future

- a. New developments will be responsive to the existing context, and where possible, maintain familiar qualities of the existing streetscapes and structures.
- b. Apply an intergenerational mindset to design that honours the history of the community while building for the future.
- c. Creating dignified housing that demonstrates design excellence.
- d. Integrate innovative sustainability and climate resilience approaches to minimize environmental impact and prepare for future climate variability.

## Providing Stable Affordable and Supportive Homes while Supporting Residents Through Transition

- a. Leverage public land to create new affordable and supportive homes within developments that are cost-effective and can attract intergovernmental investment.
- b. Provide diverse affordable housing options to support mixed-income communities, while prioritizing the housing needs of the most vulnerable, including UHN patients.
- c. Preserve livability for future generations through long-term housing affordability and social medicine supports.
- d. Provide existing SPUHNTA residents the opportunity to return to a replacement home in any future redevelopment and support opportunities for the SPUHNTA community to continue living together during and after redevelopment.

## Building on Community and Connection

- a. New design that encourages connection across the community by inviting micro-interactions and gathering, shared use of common spaces, leveraging existing and new community networks, and being mindful of the human scale.
- b. Support integration with the broader neighbourhood by creating spaces for informal interaction inside and outside and activating public and semi-public realm.
- c. Provide a diversity of shared spaces that enable community building and connections for mutual aid.
- d. Explore opportunities for providing Community Benefits, including reference to the Parkdale Community Benefits Framework.

## Generational Approach to Design and Inclusion

- a. New design that responds to needs of diverse households and cultural expressions.
- b. Flexible and adaptable design that can respond to how needs change over the lifetime, such as changing family size, abilities, or support needs by providing diverse unit sizes and typologies, accessibility, universal design, and adaptable spaces.
- c. Create outdoor and nature-oriented spaces, both private and shared, that promote a diverse, resilient and healthy ecosystem for future generations.

## Centering the Voice and Agency of Residents throughout Redevelopment

- a. Support resident autonomy to make decisions regarding the form and function of their private spaces and shared spaces.
- b. Facilitate trust-building between residents, landlord, and community, with listening as a key element in trust-building.
- c. Support existing SPUHNTA residents during all phases of the redevelopment process to promote comfort and stability through an ongoing commitment to listening, responsiveness, transparency and shared accountability as conditions and needs evolve.
- d. Incorporate resident participation in decision-making on an ongoing basis.
- e. Support new models of shared living that foster tenant leadership and decision-making, such as shared governance and/or housing co-operatives.

## **Development Concepts**

Concurrent with the development of the vision and design principles, workshop participants considered a range of massing concepts that reflected potential redevelopment of the UHN-owned lands. The options ranged from low-density and infill focused development that preserved the existing house-form properties to mid and high-density developments that generated a range of net new rental homes, along with amenity spaces.

Through the workshop process, SPUHNTA residents and project partners reviewed several massing concepts with the architectural services consultant, DTAH, and discussed the opportunities and constraints presented by each, reaching consensus by the final workshop on conceptual massing that could inform future development of the lands (see Attachment 2 to this report). The intent behind this exercise was not to define exact building heights or develop amendments to site specific planning policies, but to explore a range of options at a conceptual level that demonstrate how the design principles could be realized through a future redevelopment.

Participants supported a phased development concept with a smaller development on the southern portion of the site and a larger mid-density development at the northern portion of the site. A phased development approach was viewed as being easier to implement more gradually, as well as supportive of realizing future phases of the Social Medicine Initiative. Any development application on the lands will be subject to the City's development review process.

In alignment with the Official Plan, the vision, design principles, and massing concepts recognize the importance of establishing complete communities that provide community services, amenities and facilities to foster healthy, safe, livable, and accessible communities. Community services and facilities are foundational to creating connections between community members and were highlighted throughout the co-development of the shared vision and design principles as critical to the future success of the redevelopment. The City and its project partners recognize that providing for a full range of community services and facilities in neighbourhoods that are undergoing redevelopment and experiencing growth is a shared responsibility.

## **Rental Housing Replacement**

A key priority for SPUHNTA residents throughout the engagement process was ensuring any tenants whose homes may be demolished and replaced as part of a future redevelopment were provided with adequate supports to relocate to another home during construction, and the security to return a replacement home once redevelopment is complete. Given the strong history of mutual aid among SPUHNTA members, special emphasis was placed on supporting residents to remain together throughout any relocation process, so existing ties of community support are not lost.

The City's Official Plan contains policies regulating the demolition and replacement of existing rental housing with affordable and mid-range rents, including the replacement of demolished rental housing units, tenant relocation and assistance, the right to return to a replacement unit, and alternative accommodations. Chapter 667 of the Toronto Municipal Code implements the Official Plan policy by requiring that sites proposing the demolition of residential rental units in buildings containing six or more residential units, of which at least one is rental, obtain a permit from the City.

The City's rental replacement policies apply to the UHN-owned residential properties in South Parkdale. At its meeting on July 19-22, 2022, City Council approved the demolition of 1 & 3 Close Avenue through item [TE34.78](#). As part of that approval, Council required that the rental units in 1 & 3 Close Avenue be replaced in future development on the lands. Should any future redevelopment require the demolition of additional UHN-owned properties, a Rental Housing Demolition application will be required for consideration by the City, and would need to address the Official Plan rental replacement and tenant assistance requirements.

SPUHNTA residents raised several considerations for the project partners regarding the impact of a potential redevelopment on their existing community relations and tenancies. Residents noted concerns about how the redevelopment could impact their community's existing co-operative living model and how the City's rental replacement requirements would apply to the structure of their current tenancies. City Planning staff will hold an information session with tenants and continue to engage with them to respond to their questions and concerns.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

In Wards across Toronto, the City has a history of collaborating with community partners to undertake complex revitalizations and redevelopments. The vision and design principles outlined in this report will support future development of the UHN-owned lands in advancing shared community priorities and in recognizing the contributions and legacy of the tenant community in South Parkdale. City Council's adoption of this vision and design principles will assist City staff in assessing future development proposals for these UHN-owned lands through the development review process in the context of the shared vision.

City staff will work with UHN, UWGT, SPUHNTA, and other local community partners on advancing the shared vision. The City will also work with UWGT on opportunities to broaden engagement in South Parkdale and identify opportunities to support SPUHNTA

residents and other community members in South Parkdale through any redevelopment process.

Concurrently, the City is proceeding with long-term lease negotiations with the UHN for the house-form properties. Upon execution of this lease, the City will sub-lease the tenanted homes to a new non-profit housing provider, to be selected by the City, who will operate and maintain these properties and support SPUHNTA tenants. Under this lease, the City and UHN will ensure these public lands are retained in public ownership and are leveraged to advance shared priorities outlined in this report.

## **CONTACT**

---

Dan Nicholson, Manager, Community Planning  
416-397-4077, [Dan.Nicholson@toronto.ca](mailto:Dan.Nicholson@toronto.ca)

Matt Hilder, Director (A), Housing Policy & Strategy, Housing Secretariat  
416-392-6249, [Matt.Hilder@toronto.ca](mailto:Matt.Hilder@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Oren Tamir, Executive Director (A), Development Review  
416-392-7349, [Oren.Tamir@toronto.ca](mailto:Oren.Tamir@toronto.ca)

Doug Rollins, Executive Director, Housing Secretariat  
416-392-0054, [Doug.Rollins@toronto.ca](mailto:Doug.Rollins@toronto.ca)

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Attachment 1 – Engagement Summary of the Shared Community Vision and Design Principles for UHN-Owned Lands in South Parkdale

Attachment 2 – Site Plan Graphic and Massing Concept

## Attachment 2 – Site Plan Graphic and Massing Concepts

Figure 1 – Site Plan Graphic of Properties Owned by UHN and Properties of Focus for the Shared Community Vision and Design Principles



-  Properties Owned by UHN
-  Properties of Focus

  
Not to Scale  
Extracted: 01/12/26

Figure 2A – Massing Concept (North-East Street View)



Figure 2B – Massing Concept (North-East Aerial View)



Figure 2C – Massing Concept (South-West Aerial View)

