

## **601, 625, and 673 Lake Shore Boulevard East, 185 Villiers Street, and 300 Commissioners Street - City-initiated "Meanwhile Use" enabling Policy and Zoning, and Update on McCleary District Planning Work**

**Date:** March 30, 2026

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Interim Executive Director, Development Review and Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

**Ward:** 14 - Toronto-Danforth

**Planning Application Number:** 24 211659 STE 14 OZ

### **SUMMARY**

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This report reviews and recommends approval of the City-initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments for "Meanwhile Uses" in the McCleary District. Meanwhile Uses, are temporary non-residential uses and activities to occupy land or buildings that are vacant, underused, or awaiting permanent, long-term development. These uses include film, creative industries, sports, cultural, entertainment and retail uses.

The proposed amendments are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and conform to the City's Official Plan and the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan. The proposed amendments advance good planning and City-building as the Port Lands build out incrementally.

This report also provides an update of planning work to date in the McCleary District. The McCleary District is unlike any other in Toronto. Located in the Port Lands, the District is envisioned to be a mixed-use community and a nexus of creative industry. Given that approximately two-thirds of the lands are in public ownership, the McCleary District represents an opportunity to advance city priorities related to affordable housing, Reconciliation Action Plan implementation, and economic development approaches that strengthen the cluster of creative industries in the area.

This report describes the next stages of analysis, infrastructure planning and coordination required to finalize the Precinct Plan and the final implementing zoning and policies. Staff are expecting to complete the next phases of work to complete the Precinct Plan in 2028 and provide Council with recommended implementation tools in early 2029.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Interim Executive Director, Development Review and Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, recommend that:

1. City Council amend the Official Plan for 601, 625, and 673 Lake Shore Boulevard East, 185 Villiers Street and 300 Commissioners Street substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment included as Attachment 6 to this report.
2. City Council amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013 for 601, 625, and 673 Lake Shore Boulevard East, 185 Villiers Street and 300 Commissioners Street substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment included as Attachment 7 of this report.
3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment and draft Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.
4. Prior to the enactment of Bills, City Council direct the Executive Director, Development Review to obtain the joint approval, if required, of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry pursuant to the Natural Hazards policies of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, and the Protocol for the Lower Don Special Policy Area as it applies to Priority Projects; and that the requirements of the public authorities referred to in the Protocol Regarding the Lower Don Special Policy Area have been satisfied, which may include terms of indemnification and the development of an emergency management plan have been satisfied.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

Funding to support current work, including studies and consultation, is available within approved divisional budgets. Any additional funding will be included for consideration along with other priorities in future budget processes.

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

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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Through the City's HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan, Toronto is envisioned as a city where all residents have equal opportunity to reach their full potential. This plan adopts a human rights-based approach to housing, recognizing that housing is essential to a

person's well-being, and crucial for building healthy, equitable, inclusive and sustainable communities.

Ensuring collaboration and engagement with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities in developing the McCleary District, as well as the broader Port Lands development, aligns with the City's Reconciliation Action Plan. Increasing affordable housing in this proposed development will positively impact Indigenous peoples, who are overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness in Toronto. Through the development of the McCleary District, a range of new homes will also be created which may benefit people from equity-deserving groups including Black and other racialized peoples, women, 2SLGBTQIA+, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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### **McCleary District Precinct Plan Study Update**

At its meeting on October 30, 2024, the Planning and Housing Committee received an update report for information. The report provided an update on ongoing precinct planning efforts as they related to review of the private sites and the Ontario Land Tribunal process. Additional updates were provided on advancing city building objectives related to production, interactive and creative uses, affordable housing, and infrastructure due diligence. Council's Decision can be found at the following link: [Agenda Item History - 2024.PH16.8](#)

### **Affordable Housing and Sector Housing**

On February 4, 2026, City Council moved in response to the 280 Commissioners Street - Official Plan Amendment - Appeal Report that the direction for affordable housing units secured in the developments at 280 Commissioners Street and the entire McCleary District be devoted to sector housing from the film and creative industries. Council's Decision can be found at the following link: [Agenda Item History - 2026.TE28.15](#)

On November 13, 2024, City Council adopted staff recommendations to accept the without prejudice offer for a settlement at the Ontario Land Tribunal for the application at 685 Lake Shore Boulevard East - Zoning By-law Amendment and Official Plan Amendment. Council's Decision can be found at the following link: [Agenda Item History - 2024.CC23.12](#)

On October 8th, 2025, City Council adopted staff recommendations to accept the without prejudice offer for a settlement at the Ontario Land Tribunal for the application at 120 Bouchette Street - Zoning By-law Amendment and Official Plan Amendment. Council's Decision can be found at the following link: [Agenda Item History - 2025.CC33.19](#)

At its meeting on March 25, 2026, City Council adopted staff recommendations to approve the 115 Saulter Street Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment. Council's Decision can be found at the following link: [Agenda Item History - 2026.TE29.11](#)

Please see Attachment 1 for additional Decision History.

## **CITY-INITIATED POLICY AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENTS**

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The concept of early activation was introduced in the 2017 Port Lands Planning Framework as a 'starting point' for the 50-year build-out of Council's vision. Early activation in this context means a series of near-term creative programming and activities that will draw people to the Port Lands. This concept took a step forward with the 2024 Ookwemin Minising Precinct Plan update, when Council approved enabling policy and zoning to permit (amongst other uses) entertainment and assembly uses on future development blocks throughout the island. The Ookwemin Minising approach has provided the template for the meanwhile use permissions now proposed for McCleary.

The introduction of "Meanwhile Uses" Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments for McCleary District enables appropriate non-residential uses to occupy a site prior to full build-out of the planned land uses.

The suite of uses is already permitted in policy. The majority of the uses are also permitted in the in-force zoning. Land use permissions are generally aligned with those in the [Commercial Residential Employment](#) zone, with the exception that there are no permissions for residential uses.

Amendments to the Official Plan are required to provide relief from policy requirements from ultimate policy built form objectives, which require multistorey buildings in compact urban form. The full suite of performance standards for buildings set out in policy will apply once the final zoning permissions are advanced. See Attachment 6 for the draft Official Plan Amendment.

The proposed Zoning By-law in Attachment 7 provides clarity around how the uses are deployed in the interim period. The attached By-law includes requirements that ensure servicing capacity is reviewed and considered for uses that require it. Like the By-Laws for Meanwhile Uses that were advanced at Downsview and Ookwemin Minising, the expectation is that these early activation uses will come forward on a case-by-case basis with a diversity of operational requirements.

The City-initiated "Meanwhile Uses" Policy and Zoning By-law for public lands as proposed is consistent with Provincial Planning Statement (2024), The proposal conforms with the Official Plan, particularly as it relates to PLASP policy 3.12 that provides direction to proceed with early activation projects to "kick start" the transformation of the area and to enhance public access. CreateTO and its partners have additional control via leasing agreements to ensure that these strategies complement the existing and emerging context for the area.

## **POLICY AND 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 (PPS) (2024), and shall conform to provincial plans.

### **Toronto Official Plan**

Although the Official Plan is not in force for the Port Lands due to outstanding resolution of appeals to the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, which was adopted under the former City of Toronto Official Plan, it represents City Council's strategic direction for the development of the City. Map 2: Urban Structure shows the McCleary Precinct is within the Downtown and Central Waterfront Area and includes part of the Green Space System. The McCleary Precinct is designated Regeneration Areas and Parks and Natural Areas on Map 18: Land Use Plan.

The Official Plan, including any specific Secondary Plans, should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making.

### **Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA)**

The McCleary District is within a delineated Protected Major Transit Station Area. Specifically, the District is within 200 metres of the delineated East Harbour PMTSA associated with SASP 688 in Chapter 8 of the Official Plan. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has withheld issuing a Decision on the East Harbour PMTSA.

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

The former City of Toronto Official Plan is the in-force Official Plan for the Precinct. The former City of Toronto Official Plan supports a waterfront Precinct Planning approach and sets out a policy framework, including goals and objectives for the waterfront, in Chapter 14. The primary goal for the waterfront, as set out in Policy 14.2., is to promote increased and sustainable public enjoyment and use of the area by ensuring that future developments and actions by both the public and private sectors help to achieve objectives such as improving public access to the waterfront, increasing the amount of public parkland, and enhancing the quality of the waterfront as a place.

### **Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (2003)**

The Central Waterfront Secondary Plan ('CWSP') has four core principles to guide waterfront renewal:

- (A) Removing barriers/making connections
- (B) Building a network of spectacular waterfront parks and public spaces
- (C) Promoting a clean and green environment
- (D) Creating dynamic and diverse new communities

The McCleary District is designated Regeneration Areas in the CWSP. These lands permit a wide variety of uses ranging from industries to residential to community services and parks, offices, stores, hotels and restaurants. McCleary Park and 400 Commissioners Street are designated Parks and Open Space Areas.

These land use designations support the establishment of new mixed-use residential communities, innovation districts, and cultural and recreational amenities, ensuring the Port Lands' ongoing economic contribution to the city.

The CWSP has an overall goal that affordable rental housing and low-end-of-market housing will make up (25%) of all housing units within the Central Waterfront, of which 20% will be affordable rental housing. The CWSP also states that at least one-quarter (25%) of the affordable rental units will be two-bedroom units or larger.

### **Port Lands Area Specific Policy (2017)**

The Port Lands Planning Framework ('Framework') guides the revitalization of the Port Lands. The Framework outlines a detailed long-term vision for the Port Lands and provides the planning rationale for the Port Lands Area Specific Policy ('PLASP').

The Framework envisions transforming the Port Lands into new, vibrant districts with unique and memorable local identities that promote social interaction, cultural enrichment, ecological health, a low-carbon future and a prosperous local economy. It establishes a resilient urban structure, connecting the Port Lands to the city and providing a robust legacy of fine-grained streets and blocks to allow the area to evolve and transform over time. The Framework also recognizes that portions of the Port Lands will continue to prioritize port and industrial uses.

The PLASP provides policy direction on:

- Early activation and temporary uses in the Port Lands, acknowledging that districts will advance in phases over time;
- Land use typology for McCleary District, which is Productions, Interactive and Creative Mixed Use, which include a broad range of uses in a compact urban form, including residential uses, commercial uses (office, retail, service, and hotels), and media uses;
- Land use compatibility, environmental performance, heritage, public realm and provides numerous built form performance standards, including those for tower height, floorplates and separation;
- Key performance standards related to the delivery of PIC Core uses and affordable housing;
- Inclusive communities direction for public lands to accommodate 20 per cent of the residential gross floor area for affordable rental housing; and

- Rental housing that caters specifically to creative sector employees/entrepreneurs to attract creative practitioners to live in the new communities.

## **Zoning**

McCleary District is zoned I3 D2 by By-law 438-86, as amended by By-law 1305-2019. The I3-D2 zoning category permits a wide range of non-residential uses with a density equal to two times the lot area. There is no height limit in the zoning applicable to the precinct area. The site is not currently subject to City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013. Generally, any Zoning By-law amendments in the geography will bring lands into the harmonized City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013.

Interim Control By-law 979-2017 also applies to McCleary, which is in place until By-law 1305-2019 appeals at the Ontario Land Tribunal ('OLT') are resolved or a new zoning by-law amendment is approved by City Council.

Site Specific Zoning By-law amendments for the two of the private sites at 685 Lake Shore Boulevard East and 120 Bouchette Street have been approved by the OLT. These applications advance residential development, secure PIC use minimums, and provide for floorplate and tower separations that are in alignment with the planning work to date in McCleary District. These permissions are subject to Holding Provisions.

## **Reconciliation Action Plan**

In April 2022, City Council adopted the Reconciliation Action Plan to guide future discussions and Council recommendations that advance truth, justice, and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, inspired by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, and the City's Commitments to Indigenous Peoples. The Reconciliation Action Plan includes 28 actions and 141 sub-actions to guide City staff.

## **Design Guidelines**

The following [design guidelines](#) have informed the precinct planning process:

- Tall Building Design Guidelines
- Growing Up Guidelines for Children in Vertical Communities
- Design Guidelines for Privately Owned Publicly- Accessible Spaces ('POPS')
- Pet Friendly Design Guidelines for High Density Communities
- Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines
- Production, Interactive and Creative ('PIC') Core Urban Design Guidelines (Draft)

## **Toronto Green Standard**

The Toronto Green Standard ('TGS') is a set of performance measures for green development. Applications for Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision and Site Plan Control are required to meet and demonstrate compliance with Tier 1 of the TGS. Tiers 2 and above are voluntary, higher levels of performance with financial incentives (partial development charges refund). Tier 1 performance measures are City-initiated Policy and Zoning for "Meanwhile Uses" and McCleary District Planning Update

secured in provisions of the zoning by-law, on site plan drawings and through a Site Plan Agreement or the approval of a Plan of Subdivision.

CWSP polices in effect for the Port Lands provide sustainability direction around net zero, passive design and renewable energy generation that guide innovation in sustainable development.

### **Airspace Considerations**

The federal government has sole jurisdiction over airspace regulation around Canada's airports, encompassing height restrictions on buildings and structures, and standards governing airport operations. Airport Zoning Regulations, established under the federal Aeronautics Act restrict building heights near airports based on airport's obstacle limitation surfaces defined in federal Aerodromes Standards and Recommended Practices (TP312).

McCleary District falls outside of the existing Airport Zoning Regulations (SOR/85- 515) established for Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, though several flight instrument procedures do overlay McCleary District.

Beyond regulated surfaces, airports rely on instrument flight procedures to guide aircraft under conditions, such as bad weather. Published or approved by NAV Canada in accordance with TP308, these procedures ensure safe separation between aircraft and potential obstacles, including construction cranes. Unlike TP312 surfaces, not all TP308 procedure segments are protected by Airport Zoning Regulations. Where a proposed structure penetrates these surfaces, the proponent can work with the airport and NAV CANADA and agree to keep their structures below the affected surfaces, avoiding any impact to procedures or operations. In consultation with NAV CANADA and the Port Authority, the Instrument flight procedures can also be redesigned to accommodate new obstacles. Revised procedures may raise approach minimums restrict certain aircraft categories, or otherwise significantly reduce the operational utility of the airport.

City staff have made an application to NAV CANADA through its Land Use Program and received a formal assessment for conceptual plans for McCleary District. City staff also continue to engage directly with the Toronto Port Authority to provide input on conceptual plans for McCleary District so that they are assessed for safe airspace operations, and encourage private landowners in the District to do the same.

In June 2024, the Toronto Port Authority advised the City it had made a request to Transport Canada to amend the Airport Zoning Regulation under Section 5.4 of the Aeronautics Act, to ensure that lands in the vicinity of Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport are used and developed in a manner compatible with safe airport and aircraft operations. The City has not received an update on Transport Canada's response to that request. Given the District's multi-decade build-out horizon, continuous coordination among the City, NAV CANADA, and the Toronto Port Authority will remain an ongoing requirement.

## **Land Use Compatibility**

The Port Lands Noise and Air Quality Feasibility Study (2016) was completed in support of the Port Lands Planning Framework Precinct Plan. It evaluated potential land compatibility challenges and recommended mitigation strategies to permit new mixed-use residential communities to coexist with existing employment, industrial, and port uses. Industries identified as potential sources of noise and air quality challenges for the Precinct and surrounding areas include the 400 Commissioners Street Waste Transfer Station, the Lafarge Cement Terminal (outside of the District) and Portlands Energy Centre (outside of the District). In 2020, the study was refined through a Port Lands Noise and Air Quality Study Update, presented to the Ontario Land Tribunal in 2021 as evidence at the Port Lands Official Plan Modification settlement hearing.

A McCleary District specific Noise and Air Quality study is being led by the City and will consider the public sites. This work is conducted by AECOM and expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2026. Modelling utilizes available information based on City outreach to industrial operators in the area. Data collection is complete and modelling is currently underway. Outcomes of the study will inform the massing study in the next phase of work.

In February 2026, Atura Power on behalf of the Port Lands Energy Centre provided letters and technical briefs on the four private applications in the District. This correspondence indicated that buildings over 64.5 metres within the Portlands Energy Centre ('PEC') area of influence exceed the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks ('MECP') Point of Impingement ('POI') limits and requires mitigation for potential air quality impacts. Discussions with Atura power will occur in the context of the Government of Ontario announcing a \$1.5 billion investment in a new underwater electrical transmission line delivering energy from Darlington or Pickering to the PEC. This investment could result in a change of operations at the PEC that could reduce emissions. The Request for Proposal for this work has been issued and is targeting 2037 for completion.

The Official Plan identifies the need for Compatibility/Mitigation studies to be submitted in support of complete development applications when they are proposed in the vicinity of major facilities. These studies are subject to peer-review by a third-party consultant obtained by the City to assess the methodologies used and to provide advice on study findings and recommendations.

## **Production, Interactive and Creative Core Urban Design Guidelines**

The PIC Core districts will increasingly become the focus of creative industries in the Waterfront, with planned expansions to Pinewood Toronto Studios planned and additional opportunities for new film studios and supporting uses. The Guidelines will focus on the design of new, modern creative clusters, with an emphasis on a very unique form of development - the integrated modern multimedia creative campus.

To support the intensification, expansion and emergence of creative industries in the PIC Core districts, which may become home to over 10,000 employees, the Guidelines promote a more urban creative cluster, provide guidance on building height and

placement, site organization, urban fabric and public realm and Indigenous place-keeping. The Guidelines also suggest lively commercial animation nodes and frontages which create opportunities for employees and visitors to linger and spend time experiencing the spectacular views of the new Don River Valley and Ship Channel.

The PIC Core Guidelines were developed with extensive input from creative industries, the Film, Television and Digital Media Board, stakeholders, owners and users and Indigenous communities and experts.

The Urban Design Guidelines will be available on the [City's Port Lands website](#).

## **Natural Hazards**

The McCleary District is within an identified floodplain associated with the Don River and is subject to the Protocol for the Lower Don Special Policy Area, a joint agreement between the City of Toronto, and the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Natural Resources and Forestry, to enable development on lands in the vicinity of the Lower Don River.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

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Over nearly two decades, community engagement and advocacy has shaped the Environmental Assessments related to Port Lands Flood Protection and has set the stage for planning in the Port Lands. From 2005 to 2014, through extensive community consultation, a preferred approach was established for the naturalization of the Don River and Port Lands Flood Protection.

Between 2013 and 2016, an extensive consultation process supported the Port Lands Planning Framework, including six Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings, five Land Owner and User Advisory Committee meetings, industry-specific meetings, and outreach to First Nations. There were also five broad community consultation meetings, a two-day Vision Workshop, and multiple presentations to Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel.

On September 18, 2024, Create TO and the City held a public open house held at Ralph Thornton Community Centre to review progress on the McCleary District Precinct Plan. This open house also included consideration of planned development on four private properties. Approximately 60 people participated. Key points raised included:

- A desire for as much residential density as possible to meet housing needs;
- Interest in the role of housing providers and how the range of housing affordability needs could be met;
- Concerns around air and noise impacts and land use compatibility related to the Portlands Energy Centre;

- Support for the approach to parks with a desire to see more innovation in the public realm;
- Questions around the implementation of higher order transit and major road extensions to serve the area; and
- General interest in the transformative potential of the District for the Eastern Waterfront.

On March 10, 2026, the City, together with Waterfront Toronto and CreateTO, held a public open house at the Jimmie Simpson Recreation Centre to discuss the transformation of the Port Lands and discuss work to come. This open house included information on the McCleary District, "Meanwhile Uses" and early activation in the area. Approximately 700 people came to the open house. Key points raised included:

- The need for balance between the natural elements and the proposed built environment;
- General interest in the idea of early activation and the opportunities presented by the incremental buildout of the Port Lands;
- Questions around impacts to building heights and housing yields by operations at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport;
- The need for studio and workshop space to be available for small and medium sized businesses;
- Concerns around air and noise challenges, land use compatibility and availability of information related to the Portlands Energy Centre; and
- Interest in alternative approaches and models to address housing need, including larger family size units, co-housing, co-operatives and intergenerational housing.

The issues raised through the community consultation process will continue to be considered through the planning process.

### **Indigenous Community Engagement**

The re-naturalization and restoration of the mouth of the Don River returns water, habitat and natural processes to the industrialized landscape of the Port Lands. Leading with landscape and reconnecting with land and water, the redevelopment of the Port Lands offers a unique moment to support Indigenous cultural revitalization on the waterfront. This means highlighting and celebrating the Indigenous values, cultures, history, stewardship and significance of this place as a former marshland and gathering place for local Indigenous communities, and embedding this into the ongoing design, economic opportunities and housing plans for the area. These opportunities will be further assessed and explored at the Business Implementation Plan stage.

Engagement with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities about the Port Lands continues to guide us on opportunities for Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, protocols, and connections to the land to shape the processes of waterfront revitalization.

Reconciliation Action Plan Actions raised in the McCleary District include:

- Actions 5 and 6 - Improve Relationships with Treaty & Territorial Partners and Indigenous Organizations and Collectives
- Action 14 - Increase Access to Affordable Housing
- Action 20 - Improve Indigenous Economic Development
- Action 15 - Supporting Indigenous Placekeeping
- Action 16 - Celebrate Indigenous Arts and Culture

Recent engagements including the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization Planning on the PIC Core districts led by Minokamik and LURA also hold transferrable teachings for McCleary District. Engagement on strategies set out in the Reconciliation Action Plan are ongoing.

There is ongoing work to incorporate these opportunities across the Port Lands. Planning work to date has explored the following in the McCleary District:

- Facilitating economic development related to key creative industries in the area;
- Exploring opportunities for Indigenous-led affordable housing;
- Celebrating water and the connection to the river valley; and
- Embedding Indigenous cultures and worldviews in the landscape and public spaces through materials, plantings, public art and use of Indigenous languages.

Two Indigenous community sharing circles specific to the McCleary Precinct were led by Minokamik Collective in 2025. Key themes emerging from these sessions included:

- Water and connection to nature are central to the story of the area;
- Use landmarks as beacons to attract people to the area and tell Indigenous narratives;
- Shared interactive gathering spaces and cultural spaces should support and showcase Indigenous contributions to creative industries; and
- Foreground the natural heritage of the area.

As a part of the Indigenous Conceptual Design work, one workshop was held with Urban Indigenous communities, artists and designers, and two meetings were held with Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation with additional ongoing outreach to First Nations and local Indigenous organizations. Key themes coming out of these discussions included:

- Preferred natural, curvilinear forms in street network and the design of buildings and public spaces;
- Interested in spirit symbols and references related to the strength and power of water, such as the thunderbird as an inspiration for future design work;

- Housing, economic development opportunities and stewardship seen as the most important elements of reconciliation;
- Encouraged deeper connections with the natural world (Don River, historical marsh); and
- Community gathering spaces with views of the water.

## **Advisory Committees**

### *Port Lands Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and Landowners and Users Advisory Committee (LUAC)*

In July 2024, the project team meet with both the Port Lands Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and Landowners and Users Advisory Committee (LUAC) to discuss planning for McCleary District. Participants emphasized the importance of planning for multimodal uses by managing conflicts between different road users and ensuring streets are comfortable to use for everyone. Affordable housing, community services, and the importance of Indigenous placemaking were highlighted as priorities for SAC participants. LUAC participants emphasized the need to ensure infrastructure delivery, especially electrical infrastructure and the road network, are carefully coordinated with development plans.

### *Film, Television and Digital Media Advisory Board*

The project team provided an update to the Board on February 3, 2026. Staff presented responses to previous board feedback, including maintaining a height peak at Lake Shore Boulevard as well as integrating direction for film friendly elements in future designs such as power drops, removable furniture and laybys. The project team also clarified the policy direction for warning clauses for Offers of Purchase and Sale as they relate to backlot film operations.

This board requested the Economic and Community Development Committee to “provide support for film workers by being eligible as preferred residents for new affordable housing in the McCleary area”. Related to this request, the Housing Secretariat intends on advancing a Council report to Planning and Housing Committee this cycle recommending an approach to the allocation of affordable housing for specific target groups, which could include housing for Film Sector workers. Affordable Rental Housing units must be filled using the City’s Centralized Affordable Rental Housing Access System (CARHAS), with consideration for referral partners through an approved Access Plan. No City financial incentives are currently being provided for the affordable units, beyond what is required by provincial legislation.

### *Port Lands Industry Liaison Committee*

In February 2025, a presentation was delivered to the Port Lands Industry Liaison Committee emphasizing the importance of land use compatibility and the due diligence underway to understand local air quality and noise conditions. The committee identified the importance of managing industrial traffic to ensure efficient movement of goods from port industries to customers.

## **Statutory Public Meeting Comments**

In making their decision with regard to this proposal, Council members have an opportunity to hear the oral submissions made at the statutory public meeting held by City-initiated Policy and Zoning for "Meanwhile Uses" and McCleary District Planning Update

the Planning and Housing Committee for this proposal, as these submissions are broadcast live over the internet and recorded for review.

## **APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS**

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Approximately one-third of the developable lands (approximately 3.5 hectares or 8.6 acres) in the McCleary District are privately owned, comprising four privately held sites. See Attachment 4 for a map of land ownership in the McCleary Precinct.

The City has received applications for all of the four private sites. The Planning Act permits an applicant to submit a development application for consideration and permits the applicant to appeal a Decision of City Council, or a non-decision of City Council within Planning Act timelines, to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Precinct planning work is advancing in tandem with these applications for the private sites to ensure the city-building objectives for the Precinct and surrounding area are sufficiently integrated.

### **685 Lake Shore Boulevard East (subject to an appeal at the Ontario Land Tribunal) - Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment:**

- Request for Directions Report adopted by City Council in November 2024 as item [CC23.12](#).
- OLT Decision was issued in June 2025.
- Final Order and planning instruments are pending final approval by the OLT until the conditions within the Decision have been satisfied.
- 1,581 housing units and 5,000 square metres of Productions, Interactive and Creative space.
- 6.5% of the residential gross floor area as affordable rental housing for 99 years.

### **120 Bouchette Street (subject to an appeal at the OLT) - Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment:**

- Request for Directions Report adopted by City Council in October 2025 as item [CC33.19](#).
- OLT Decision issued in February 2026.
- Final order and planning instruments are pending final approval by the OLT until the conditions of the Decision have been satisfied.
- 1,626 housing units and 5,000 square metres of Productions, Interactive and Creative space.
- 6.5% of the gross floor area as affordable rental housing for 99 years, or 10% for 25 years.

### **280 Commissioners Street (subject to an appeal at the OLT) - Official Plan Amendment:**

- Appeal report adopted by City Council In February 2026 as item [TE28.15](#).

- Issues to be resolved through the OLT process include the relationship to Commissioners Street and surrounding area, tower setbacks, floorplates and other performance standards.

### **115 Saulter Street - Official Plan Amendment:**

- Decision report recommending approval of the application adopted at the March 25-27, 2026 City Council meeting as item [TE29.11](#).
- 1,300 housing units and 5,000 square metres of Productions, Interactive and Creative space.
- 6.5% of the residential gross floor area as affordable rental housing for 99 years.

All of the above applications were reviewed in the context of the ongoing planning work and broader discussions around land use compatibility and infrastructure coordination. The Central Waterfront Secondary Plan sets out that the review of private development applications may happen concurrently with the Precinct Planning process.

## **MCCLEARY DISTRICT PLANNING WORK UPDATE**

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### **Vision and Guiding Principles**

The McCleary District abuts the renaturalized mouth of the Don River and presents an opportunity to reconnect with nature, water and the importance of the area as a historical meeting place for Indigenous peoples. The film cluster to the south is also a defining element as the McCleary District will incorporate uses that grow, support and showcase creative industries and advance economic development objectives.

The following principles will continue to guide the work through the next stages to complete precinct planning:

- Inclusive and diverse housing
- Fostering a diverse and innovative economy
- Innovative and sustainable built form
- Creating a vibrant and walkable public realm
- Celebrate natural and Indigenous cultural heritage
- Working with nature to deliver sustainability and resilience

In addition to the above, complementary design themes came forward from Indigenous engagement, including two sharing circles led by Minokamik Collective and LURA in 2025. These themes help bring an Indigenous lens to the design work by considering how this area was historically used by Indigenous communities and how to consider the past, present and future in an ongoing relationship to place as the design of McCleary District progresses. These historical and ongoing relationships to place include:

- Gathering and Sheltering
- Moving
- Making and Sustaining
- Stewarding, Healing and Teaching

## **Indigenous Conceptual Design Work**

Indigenous community engagement and relationship-building is an ongoing process. There are many ways to advance truth, justice and reconciliation as expressed in the City's Reconciliation Action Plan. Community partners and the Waterfront Toronto Design Review Panel requested that the project team express Indigenous feedback through design in order to more clearly illustrate how an Indigenous lens could apply to McCleary District. Sprucelab was retained to advance high level vision, principles and conceptual input to guide future design phases including placemaking and placekeeping. This work included one workshop with urban Indigenous communities, artists and designers and two meetings with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

A central theme of the design work is connections to land and water. Ideas around cultural connections included grandparent stones and reconnecting with the historical Ashbridges Bay Marsh, public realm components that reference or feature water motifs were brought forward as a means to creating inclusive and culturally rooted places. Spirit references and symbols such as the Animikii (Thunderbird), Mishiibizhii (Water Lynx) and Misko-namegoz (Salmon) were put forward as ideas that will inform future building design, programming and public realm elements.

The idea of Dodems (clans) was suggested as a way of expressing potential character areas within the district, using Indigenous ways of knowing to highlight the characteristics that set McCleary District apart (e.g. the Bear that lives in symbiosis with rivers, or the Beaver symbolizing the industriousness of the creative sector).

This work, together with the planning work underway, will be foundational inputs into the future Public Realm and Massing Study which will be the next phase of work. Key reconciliation action priorities informing Indigenous community engagement through future phases of work include economic development objectives, affordable housing, stewardship and community spaces.

Summary documents of this work will be posted on the City's [Port Lands website](#).

## **Density**

Analysis to date indicates that an increase in density of up to 60% beyond the initial 2017 planning projections may be accommodated in the Precinct. As a result, the project team is exploring a shift to a taller and more dense character for the Precinct, while ensuring a comfortable and inviting public realm. This is a departure from the 2017 Port Lands Planning Framework which anticipated a primarily mid-rise district. This shift implements Council direction related to maximize residential density in mixed-use districts in the Port Lands and also responds to the objective to fully realize affordable housing development potential on public lands set out in the Housing Action Plan. More detail on housing types is set out below.

Heights and densities, and the deployment of height and density, will be subject to further study, following an approach similar to what has been recently undertaken for the Ookwemin Minising public realm and massing study. The Meanwhile Use policy and zoning amendments recommended through this report do not adjust tall buildings or

residential permissions; these will be reflected in the future final precinct plan recommendations.

## **Housing**

Building affordable housing is a crucial objective of the City's Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, in support of the long-term vision for a mixed income, inclusive waterfront. The in-force policies of the CWSP apply in the McCleary Precinct, including policy direction to achieve 20% affordable rental housing, and continue to apply.

The PLASP established the target for affordable rental housing on public lands to be set aside to accommodate a minimum of 20% of the total residential gross floor area as affordable rental housing. Additional contributions above 20% are being actively explored, reflective of the Toronto Builds policy framework direction that 30% of residential units must be affordable rental housing. At its meeting on September 18, 2024, the Economic and Community Development Committee requested that support for film workers be provided through their being eligible as preferred residents for new affordable housing in the McCleary District.

The intent of the updated planning framework is to establish optimal development envelopes to facilitate affordable rental housing development. This is subject to funding and financial contributions from all levels of government, as well as partnerships with non-profit stakeholders. All affordable rental homes on public land will remain affordable in perpetuity (i.e. 99 years minimum). Housing objectives will focus on delivering a range of purpose-built rental homes for a range of incomes and populations, including rent-geared-to-income, affordable rental and market rent controlled homes.

Affordable housing for private sites prioritizes Council's direction for deeper affordability and longer-term affordable housing. The City has, more recently, accepted contributions that have better reflected these current priorities and direction, such as securing a lower percentage of affordable rental units provided the units are secured in perpetuity (i.e. for a 99-year affordability period) and at affordability levels that meet the City's Official Plan definition of affordable housing, while still addressing the overall policy direction of the CWSP. Generally, a 6.5% of residential gross floor area has been secured on the private sites for 99 years.

## **PIC Uses and Screen Based Industries**

PIC uses include a wide range of creative industries, including screen based and productions uses, broadcasting, technology, software processing, studios and workshops, life sciences and laboratories, green technology and other uses that support the cluster. Planning work to date found that efficiencies can be realized when PIC uses with specific space requirements are located in stand-alone buildings or complexes (e.g. studios, life science buildings, light manufacturing). Other PIC uses have less specific operational requirements and can be easily co-located in mixed use buildings.

Further study around the relationship between PIC and residential permissions will be advanced through a PIC Use Typology Study as a part of the forthcoming Public Realm and Massing Study. In addition, Tate Economic Research was retained to conduct a

City-initiated Policy and Zoning for "Meanwhile Uses" and McCleary District Planning Update

market study of PIC uses in the area. The study supports minimum gross floor area requirements for PIC uses for McCleary District. This approach allows for an allocation of PIC uses that is supportable while enabling the future growth of creative industries in McCleary. Minimums for PIC will be advanced through future Zoning By-laws to accompany the final Precinct Plan.

### **Parks and Public Realm**

Policy in the PLASP requires a District Park to be a minimum of 0.75 hectares in size for the McCleary District. The emerging proposal for the District Park location has shifted from its prior location in the centre of the Precinct to be along the Don Roadway frontage on the western edge of the Precinct. This revised location offers opportunity for enhanced integration with the naturalized mouth of the Don Valley (e.g. trail networks, potential for views) and connectivity to the new Don River trail system.

While programming decisions will be determined through a future detailed design process and community and Indigenous engagement program, this space is envisioned to accommodate a mix of active recreation uses (e.g. fields, courts, playgrounds, and/or skate parks) and passive uses. The future detailed design of this park will also explore opportunities for the interpretation of natural and cultural history, including themes of water as aligned with the Reconciliation Action Plan.

### **Community Services and Facilities**

In-force policies in the PLASP set out direction for a Community Recreation Centre, a human services space, a TDSB elementary school and two non-profit child care facilities in the McCleary District.

Preliminary discussions with stakeholders has resulted in an increase in the projected size and capacity of the elementary school and reconfirmed the need for two child care facilities. A further update is currently underway based on the increase in residential densities across the Port Lands and Central Waterfront. Project team outreach to sector partners will inform the area-wide Community Services and Facilities study for the Port Lands and part of the Keating Channel Precincts and any updated space requirements for facilities such as child care centres and schools.

### **Street Network**

The street network will be further developed as part of the future Public Realm and Massing Study, prior to being incorporated into the recommended Precinct Plan.

Certain streets, like Villiers Street and the new East-West Street, are expected to incorporate pedestrian-priority elements, passive stormwater management infrastructure and cycling functions. Other streets, such as Saulter Street, are expected to provide servicing functionality and additional opportunities for film friendly features like lay-bys for on-location shoots.

Some elements of the network require further study to finalize functionality and final alignments. Broadview Avenue and the New East-West Street are being identified for

further study and will be protected for. The segment of Bouchette Street adjacent to the private application has been established in its current alignment along that frontage; additional study is required to determine the remainder of the alignment of Bouchette Street south of the 120 Bouchette site and consider the implications for the broader network. All streets will be subject to future detailed design, technical analysis, and infrastructure coordination, including consideration of utilities, servicing, and integration with existing and planned transit that will serve McCleary District. As such, further refinements to the road network are anticipated through subsequent phases of work.

Summary documents of the planning work described in this section will be available on the City's [Port Lands website](#).

## **NEXT PHASES OF PRECINCT PLANNING WORK**

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The works described below will inform the report to Council with a finalized Precinct Plan and accompanying Zoning By-law and Official Plan Amendment, targeted for early 2029. The next phases of work will include:

### **Public Realm and Massing Study and PIC Typology Study**

Following a similar approach to what has recently been undertaken for Ookwemin Minising, the next phase of work for the McCleary District is to undertake a detailed analysis of building massing and public realm to inform the final Precinct Plan and the implementing policy and zoning standards. This work will include an exploration of building typologies for the PIC area that would allow for a range of creative industries to come forward, sometimes co-located with residential uses. The public realm component of the study will refine the work to date, with a specific focus on the northwest blocks that are under public ownership. Other elements to be addressed include design responses to the naturalized Don River and relationships to water, pedestrianized segments, programming, street functionality, connections to trail networks and multi-modal connectivity across McCleary District.

This work will carry forward perspectives from the ongoing Indigenous engagement and design work and recommend ways that these narratives can be implemented. It will also identify strategies to highlight the PIC uses that define the precinct and identify innovative ways to showcase creative industries in public spaces.

Refinement of the street network will happen in tandem with the Public Realm and Massing Study, including elements of the street network that require further due diligence, study and technical review to finalize alignments, including Broadview and the New East West Street.

### **Infrastructure Coordination**

The McCleary District serves as an essential hub within the Lower Don cluster, connecting to major transportation corridors, hydro infrastructure, flood protection systems, and adjoining precincts. Infrastructure decisions made in McCleary District are

likely to affect areas beyond its boundaries, underscoring the necessity for coordinated planning among City divisions, CreateTO, Waterfront Toronto, and relevant external agencies.

Infrastructure coordination will continue during upcoming planning phases as new information emerges.

Planning for the third electrical transmission line, modernization of hydro corridors, and related district impacts will be discussed and negotiated further. Existing SCCO-led coordination forums provide an opportunity to continue this alignment at a cluster level.

The McCleary District is currently within the eastern portion of the Lower Don floodplain and as such requires the construction of two flood protection landforms to remove the area from the floodplain and allow the district to develop in accordance with Councils' vision. The first landform, extending from Eastern Avenue south along the east side of the Don Valley Parkway and Don River to the Metrolinx Lake Shore East rail embankment, is currently under construction by Waterfront Toronto and is expected to be complete by mid/late 2028. The second, extending from the south side of the rail embankment to the Lake Shore Boulevard East and Don Roadway intersection, is to be delivered as part of the redevelopment of East Harbour by Cadillac Fairview. Active planning and discussions between Cadillac Fairview and the Province of Ontario regarding the construction of the flood protection landform are advancing with the objective being to align completion of the required flood protection landform in a timely manner to support the redevelopment of lands east of the Don River.

## **CONTACTS**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Decision History Additional Context  
Attachment 2: Location Map  
Attachment 3: Official Plan and Land Use Map  
Attachment 4: Ownership  
Attachment 5: In-Force Zoning By-law Map  
Attachment 6: Draft Official Plan Amendment  
Attachment 7: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

## **Attachment 1: Decision History Additional Context**

### **Port Lands Planning Initiatives Final Report and Ontario Land Tribunal Appeals**

At its meeting on December 8, 2017, City Council adopted the staff report from the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, entitled "Port Lands Planning Initiatives – Final Report". This comprehensive effort is the result of analysis and consultation beginning in 2013 and culminating in the Port Lands Planning Framework (PLPF) and the Port Lands Official Plan Modification (OPM). The report recommended a work program to implement Council direction that included a Zoning Review for Port and Industrial Districts, a Precinct Plan for McCleary District, and Urban Design Guidelines for the Production, Interactive and Creative (PIC) Core District. This report can be found at the following link:

The Port Lands OPM was appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal and the City worked with the various appellants to resolve land use, compatibility and transportation issues. Following two phases of settlement hearings commencing on April 16, 2021, an OLT Decision was issued on July 11, 2022 bringing the OPM into effect as the Port Lands Areas Specific Policies (PLASP), with the exception of a few site-specific issues. This OLT Decision can be found at the following link:

The consolidated version of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan and Port Lands Area Specific Policy (Sept 4, 2025) is available here:

[19.46 Central Waterfront Secondary Plan](#)

### **Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization**

In November 2021 and July 2022, City Council endorsed priorities for the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization, focusing on equity, inclusion, and access, and Indigenous engagement. This initiative includes further collaboration with federal and provincial counterparts.

The Council decisions and staff reports are available here: [Agenda Item History - 2022.EX34.10](#)

### **Housing Action Plan**

In December 2022, City Council directed City staff to develop a Housing Action Plan for 2022-2026 supporting the City in achieving the provincial housing targets. As part of this Plan, Council directed Staff to optimize housing densities in the Port Lands through the lens of complete communities and infrastructure.

The Council decision is available here: [Agenda Item History - 2023.CC2.1](#)

### **Housing System Transformation**

On December 13, 2023, Council adopted report 2023.EX10.2, "Advancing Generational Transformation of Toronto's Housing System - Aligning Housing Mandates and Strategic Efforts." The report directed CreateTO to leverage City lands and partnerships

to facilitate the creation of complete communities as well as prioritize the delivery on affordable housing units.

The Council decision is available here: [Agenda Item History - 2023.EX10.2](#)

### **Furthering Reconciliation and an Indigenous Cultural Framework for the Port Lands**

In April 2024, City Council directed City staff to report back to the October 2024 meeting of the Executive Committee with a permanent name for Villiers Island and a framework for reconciliation projects that support Indigenous cultural revitalization on Ookwemin Minising (formerly Villiers Island) and the Port Lands.

The Council decision is available here: [Agenda Item History - 2024.EX13.5](#)

### **Transportation and Servicing Plans**

The City of Toronto's Waterfront Sanitary Servicing Master Plan (WSSMP), updated in 2017, outlined a deep, gravity-fed sewer along Commissioners Street, connecting to an upgraded Carlaw Avenue sewer at Eastern Avenue. An interim pumping station at Don Roadway and Commissioners Street is being delivered as a part of the Port Lands Flood Protection project, with a permanent station at 545 Commissioners Street currently undergoing detailed design. In 2017, City Council adopted the Transportation and Servicing Master Plan (TSMP) for the Port Lands and South of Eastern areas, detailing key improvements like enhancements to Commissioners Street, the Broadview Avenue Extension, a new east-west street, and potential changes to McCleary Park. The TSMP also emphasizes coordinating with Hydro One and Toronto Hydro for infrastructure integration. As a "living document," the TSMP allows ongoing adjustments as the Port Lands evolves.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agendaitem.do?item=2017.PG24.6>

### **Economic Development**

On April 4, 2022, the Film, Television and Digital Media Board considered a presentation from City staff on the Productions, Interactive, Creative (PIC) Core Urban Design Guidelines for information purposes. The presentation outlined progress on planning work on the districts south of Commissioners Street which inform and complement the Precinct Planning work in the McCleary Precinct as these projects are being completed in tandem. Direction for ongoing Indigenous engagement is also outlined.

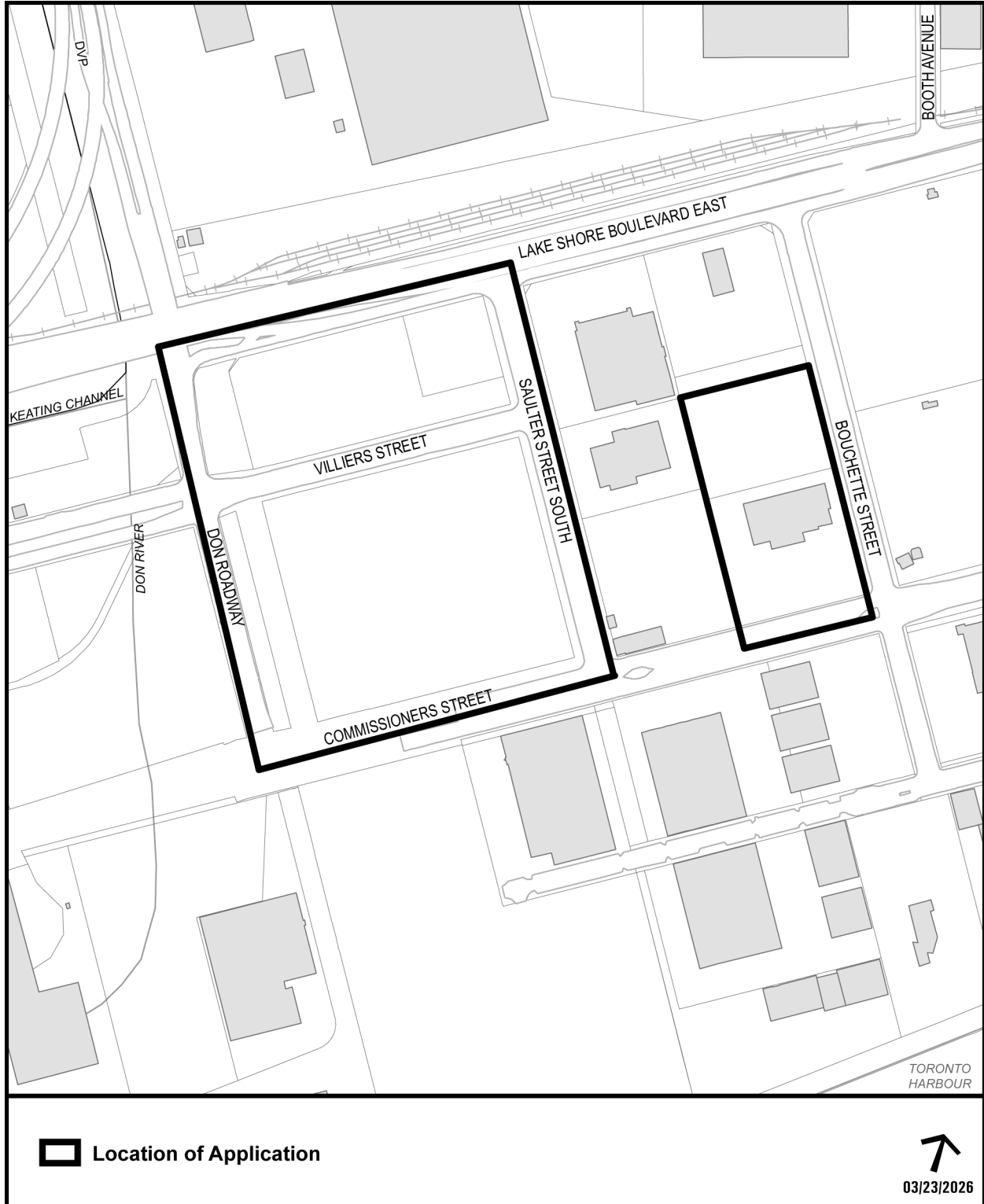
The presentation to the Committee is available here: Agenda Item History - 2022.FB11.3 (toronto.ca)

On September 18, 2024 the Economic and Community Development Committee adopted the McCleary District Precinct Plan and the Business and Implementation Plan - Requests from the Film, Television, and Digital Media Advisory Board. This item outlined a request that the Film, Television, and Digital Media Board continue to be City-initiated Policy and Zoning for "Meanwhile Uses" and McCleary District Planning Update

engaged throughout the planning phases of the McCleary District Precinct Plan. Directions in the report also relate to specific considerations for built form, sector housing, film friendly features and public art.

The Committee decision is available here: [Agenda Item History - 2024.EC15.7 \(toronto.ca\)](#)

## Attachment 2: Location Map



# Attachment 3: Official Plan and Land Use Map



Official Plan Land Use Map # 18

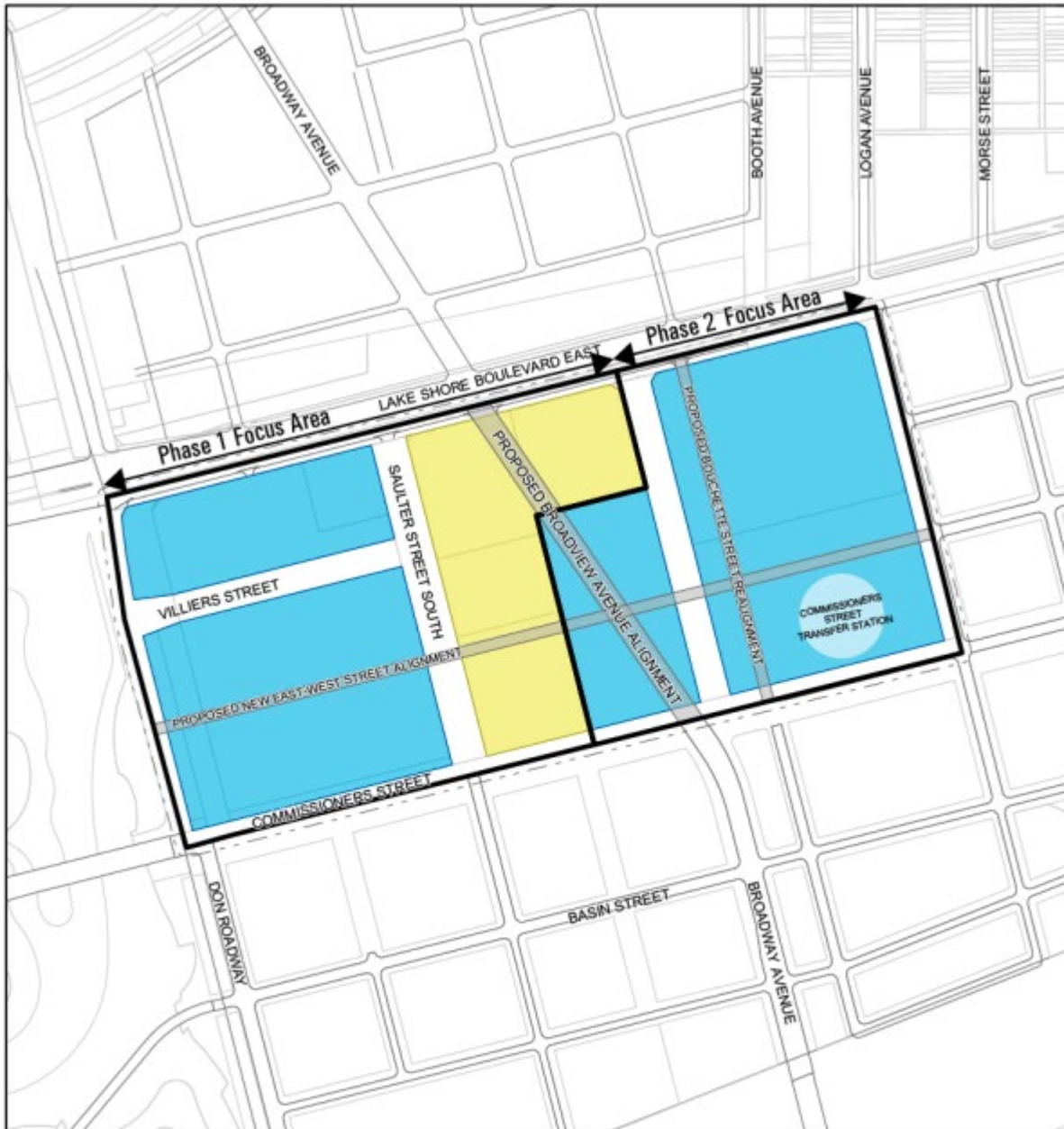
McCleary District

File # 24 211659 STE 14 0Z

- Location of Application
- Natural Areas
- Other Open Space Areas
- General Employment Areas
- Utility Corridors
- Parks
- Regeneration Areas
- Core Employment Areas

Not to Scale  
 Extracted: 03/23/2026

# Attachment 4: Ownership



## McCleary District Current Land Ownership

McCleary District

File # 24 211659 STE 14 0Z

- Location of District
- Publicly-Owned Land
- Privately-Owned Land
- Phasing



Not to Scale  
Extracted: 10/1/2024

# Attachment 5: In-Force Zoning By-law Map



**TORONTO**  
In-Force Zoning

**McCleary District**

File # 24 211659 STE 14 0Z

- Policy Area
- R Residential
- EL Employment Light Industrial
- E Employment Industrial
- EO Employment Industrial Office
- O Open Space
- ON Open Space Natural
- OR Open Space Recreation
- UT Utility and Transportation

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

- R2 Residential District
- I1 Industrial District
- I2 Industrial District
- I3 Industrial District
- I4 Industrial District
- T Industrial District
- G Parks District
- EMPTY EMPTY



Not to Scale  
Extracted: 03/23/2026

**Attachment 6: Draft Official Plan Amendment**  
(Attached separately as a PDF)

## **Attachment 7: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment**

(Attached separately as a PDF)