

Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative - Final Report

Date: June 18, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

Wards: 10 - Spadina Fort-York and 11 - University-Rosedale

Planning Application Number: 23 190155 SPS 00 TM

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council adopt the West Chinatown Planning Framework and associated Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments to guide growth, development and community investment in the West Chinatown area.

The West Chinatown Planning Framework is an outcome of the Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative, an interdivisional project that began in 2019. The initiative was informed by extensive public consultation and input of staff across City divisions as well as key stakeholder organizations. The West Chinatown Planning Framework provides direction on enhancing the public realm, supporting small businesses, improving and expanding housing and livability, preserving cultural heritage, and guiding built form. Its objectives will be implemented through future capital investment and development within the area.

The report also recommends amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The Official Plan Amendment would redesignate the Spadina-Dundas intersection in the Downtown Plan from Mixed-Use Areas 3 - Main Street to Mixed Use Areas 2 - Intermediate and removes Site and Area Specific Policies that are no longer applicable to the area. The Mixed-Use Areas 2 designation more accurately reflects the higher densities anticipated at this key intersection, and through future development, supports the provision of community benefits, affordable housing and public realm improvements.

The Zoning By-law Amendment permits a range of small-scale retail, service and office uses on interior lots within residentially zoned properties along Baldwin Street. These changes would encourage small-scale retailers and entrepreneurs to locate within the neighbourhood while supporting the area's character.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council adopt the West Chinatown Planning Framework, included as Attachment 7 to this report, and direct the Executive Director, Development Review and Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to use the West Chinatown Planning Framework as guidance in the evaluation of current and future development applications.
2. City Council amend the Official Plan for the lands municipally known as 1-149 Baldwin Street, 1-99 Cameron Street, 60 and 81 Cecil Street, 261-279 College Street, 2-8 and 137-143 D'Arcy Street, 308-519 Dundas Street West, 73 and 77 Grange Avenue, 176 Huron Street, 126-256 McCaul Street, 2 Nassau Street, 3, 5 and 8 Oxford Street, 34 Ross Street, 160-474 Spadina Avenue, 76 and 78 Sullivan Street, 2, 6 and 8 St Andrew Street, 378 and 380 Queen Street West, and 1, 10 and 11 Willison Square substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment included as Attachment 8 to this report.
3. City Council amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013 for the lands municipally known as 40, 42, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100, 102, 104, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 65, 67, 69, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, and 121 Baldwin Street and 112 Huron Street substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment included as Attachment 9 to this report.
4. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendments and Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.

EQUITY STATEMENT

Toronto's growth brings many opportunities but there are persistent concerns that Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving communities are not being equitably included or benefiting from changes happening at the neighbourhood level. These communities have been among the hardest hit by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the local retail and culture sectors, as noted in the Building Back Stronger report prepared by the City of Toronto Economic and Culture Recovery Advisory Group in 2020.

The West Chinatown community is complex, heterogeneous, and intersectional, where a single person may have multiple overlapping identities such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status. From the feedback received, individuals identified as: Resident, Newcomer/Immigrant, Canadian-born East Asian diaspora, Chinatown Patron, Chinatown Champion, Community Leader/Organizer/Activist, Native/Indigenous,

Landlord, Business Owner, Business Worker, 2SLGBTQIA+ and/or Marginalized. West Chinatown is a multicultural immigrant community.

People working and living in communities such as West Chinatown are struggling to safeguard the ongoing sustainability of their cultural heritage that is at the foundation of creating safe spaces and promoting a sense of belonging. In particular Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving communities such as 2SLGBTQ+ and racialized communities have historically faced economic barriers to accessing capital due to systemic racism and discrimination that has had intergenerational impacts. The area that comprises West Chinatown has played an important role in bringing together different cultures to create a vibrant and inclusive community. The Chinese community have a strong cultural imprint in the area and surrounding neighbourhoods through businesses and self-organized institutions that provide culturally responsive food, music, services, arts and culture. These neighbourhoods have evolved, welcoming residents from around the world, further enriching their diversity while preserving their cultural roots. Through consultations for the Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative, residents and businesses expressed a shared goal: that the City should create more tools to safeguard the cultural identity and cultural heritage of these areas, and offer tools to support business retention, community resilience, and culturally responsive placemaking.

The West Chinatown Planning Framework, associated Official Plan Amendment, and Zoning By-law Amendment are a continuation of the interdivisional work between Economic Development and Culture, City Planning, Social Development, and Development Review to support the cultural vibrancy of West Chinatown. The intent is to provide a holistic approach to managing growth and change in the area, while considering potential impacts on equity-deserving groups, Indigenous and vulnerable residents of Toronto. This will result in a foundation for establishing a complete community that supports quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, cultural background and incomes.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

On December 3, 2019, City Council directed the Director, Community Planning to conduct a review of the Chinatown area, and to work with the Director, Transportation Services to review potential streetscape improvements, public realm opportunities and complete streets initiatives on Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West. City Council also directed the Director, Community Planning to work with the Director, Urban Design, and Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, to assess the applicable policy framework in the area and consider augmenting existing policies and developing additional urban design and built form guidelines, including an assessment of heritage

resources. City Council also directed the Director, Community Planning to work with the Housing Secretariat and Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to protect existing and create new affordable housing and community services in the area. Council's decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2019.TE11.74>

On April 22 and 23, 2026, City Council requested that the Director, Community Planning use the draft West Chinatown Planning Framework, proposed Official Plan Amendments, and proposed Zoning By-law Amendment as the basis for upcoming public and stakeholder consultation.

City Council also directed the Executive Director, Development Review to collaborate with other City divisions, the Housing Secretariat, City Planning and Economic Development and Culture to inform the completion of the West Chinatown Planning Framework, including:

- considering opportunities to support the stability and growth of community, cooperative, and non-market housing, including land trusts and Chinatown's existing stock of community- and nonprofit-owned housing;
- ensure the Framework supports the proposed West Chinatown Cultural District designation;
- explore the feasibility of a Community Improvement Plan, Heritage Conservation District Plan, and Urban Design Guidelines for West Chinatown;
- conduct jurisdictional scan of Secondary Plans across Ontario to review enforceable anti-displacement measures and report back; and
- report back on the potential pedestrianization of Huron Street as a cultural plaza.

Council's decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.TE31.20>

THE STUDY AREA

The study area is bounded by College Street to the north, McCaul Street to the east, Queen Street West to the south and Bathurst Street to the west. See Attachment 1: West Chinatown Study Area.

BACKGROUND

West Chinatown is in Anishinabewaki, Haudenosaunee and Wendake traditional territory. It is within Treaty 13 territory, hosted by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Spadina Avenue, a key corridor and connection through the area, derives its name from "Ishpadinaa", an Anishnaabe word for "rise in the land". The area that the Chinatown neighbourhood inhabits today is a place where many nations gathered for millennia.

The earliest recorded Chinese settlers to Canada came in 1788, with the ambition to build a trading post between the Pacific Northwest and Guangzhou, China. Chinese workers also played a significant role in building the Canadian Pacific Railway. Throughout the years, the Chinatown community experienced systemic discrimination and institutional racism, such as the Chinatown Head Tax (1885-1923) and Chinese Exclusion Act (1923-1947).

In Toronto, the earliest Chinese businesses and establishments were located near King Street and York Street, in proximity to the Canadian Pacific Railway headquarters and Union Station. After the Great Fire of 1904 and the plans for a new Beaux-Art Union Station, the Chinese community was displaced north towards Queen Street West and York Street, and expanded along Elizabeth Street to Dundas Street West throughout the 1910's. This area was widely regarded as Toronto's original Chinatown, within the area known as "The Ward".

In preparation for a new City Hall and plans for urban renewal across the downtown, the City expropriated and bulldozed a vast majority of Chinatown in the late 1950's. Majority of existing Chinese businesses and associations migrated west towards Dundas Street West and Spadina Avenue and some migrated east towards Broadview and Gerrard.

Spadina derives its name from "Ishpadinaa", an Anishnaabe word for "rise in the land". The area that covers the Chinatown neighbourhood today was a place where many nations gathered for millennia. Shifting to universal immigration policy in the late 1960s, this welcomed new waves of Chinese immigration to the city. While many settled in West Chinatown, new Chinese enclaves began to be established in surrounding suburban areas. Despite this, West Chinatown continues to be a working-class immigrant neighbourhood with a rich history and a significant connection point for Asian immigrants.

The Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative began in 2019 as a response to community concerns about gentrification and displacement of residents and legacy businesses in the West Chinatown area. The intent of the initiative was to understand what makes the neighbourhood distinctive, identify how to maintain the elements that contribute to its uniqueness and plan for new developments that will complement its unique character.

POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Land-Use Policies

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

Official Plan

The Toronto Official Plan manages the city's physical, social and economic growth. Chapter One of the Official Plan sets out four main goals: a city of complete communities, a sustainable and resilient city, the most inclusive city in the world, and a

city that contributes to a just future for Indigenous Peoples. Through these goals, the Official Plan seeks to address the city's key priorities including advancing reconciliation, taking action on climate change and its impacts, addressing housing demand and removing barriers.

Toronto's tangible and intangible cultural heritage tell the stories of the City and should be preserved, as outlined in Section 3.1.6. of the Official Plan. The City's cultural heritage reflects the unique identity and diversity of our communities. West Chinatown is unique because of the community's rich history, resilience, and culture, which together shape its distinct identity and character.

West Chinatown is located in the Downtown and Central Waterfront Area in the Official Plan, Urban Structure, Map 2. Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West are primarily designated as Mixed Use Areas. A portion of the south side of Dundas Street West, between Alexandra Park to the west and Denison Avenue to the east, is designated Neighbourhoods. The expanded study area beyond the Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West frontages is primarily designated as Neighbourhoods, including properties along Cecil Street, Baldwin Street, D'Arcy Street, Grange Avenue, and Sullivan Street. Some properties are also designated Apartment Neighbourhoods, Parks and Mixed Use Areas. See Attachment 2: Current Official Plan Designation Land Use Map.

Protected Major Transit Station Areas

Lands within the study area are situated within six delineated Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs): St. Andrew (SASP 608), Osgoode (SASP 609), St. Patrick (SASP 610), Queens Park (SASP 611), King-Bathurst (SASP 761), and Queen-Spadina (SASP 762) in Chapter 8 of the Official Plan. The northwest portion of the study area, Kensington Market, is not within a PMTSA.

The area is planned for a minimum population and employment target of between 400 and 1700 residents and jobs combined per hectare. The planned targets for population and jobs per hectare were established using a Council-approved development framework, taking into account in-effect Official Plan land use designations, as-of-right zoning by-law permissions, density permissions included in Secondary Plans, and approved developments that have not yet been built. Minimum population and employment targets are intended to apply across the entire delineated area for each P/MTSA. Population and employment targets are intended to be achieved through the build out of the area over time.

Chapter 8 states that lands designated Mixed Use Areas and Apartment Neighbourhoods located within 200 metres of an existing or planned transit station will have City-initiated zoning that permits an FSI of 8 or more, and within 200 to 500 metres City-initiated zoning that permits an FSI of 6 or more. The permitted FSI is not a minimum requirement. Appropriate density for the site will be determined in the context of the site and by reading the Official Plan as a whole.

Multiplexes and apartment buildings with heights up to six storeys are permitted on sites designated Neighbourhoods with frontage on a major street shown on Map 3 or when located within 200 metres of an existing or planned transit station. Multiplexes and

apartment buildings with heights up to four storeys are permitted on sites designated Neighbourhoods not fronting on a major street or when located greater than 200 metres of an existing or planned transit station.

City Planning is undertaking required zoning updates for PMTSAs and MTSA's and a report with recommendations will be brought to the Planning and Housing Committee when the work is finalized.

Downtown Plan

The Downtown Secondary Plan identifies Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West as primarily Mixed Use Areas 3 – Main Street. This designation includes areas that have a main street character and a diversity of uses such as retail, services and restaurants. Modest intensification will generally occur in mid-rise scale development, with some low-rise and tall buildings permitted based on compatibility.

Properties fronting on the eastern portion of Baldwin Street, west of McCaul Street, are designated as Mixed Use Areas 4 – Local. This designation includes areas that generally contain low-rise and/or house form buildings. Lands within Mixed Use Areas 4 will continue to include non-residential uses generally serving the needs of the local community.

Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West are identified as Priority Retail Streets, and Spadina Avenue is also identified as a Great Street in the Downtown Plan. These streets contribute to the vibrancy and walkability of the area through generous sidewalk space and public realm improvements. See Attachment 3: Downtown Secondary Plan.

Site and Area Specific Policies (SASPs # 199, 200 and 202)

West Chinatown and the immediate surrounding area is within ten SASP areas in the Official Plan, where more specific policies apply to certain areas or sites. The SASPs within West Chinatown that impact the built form of the area include:

- SASP 199: 2-26 and 1-51 Baldwin Street and 164-170 McCaul Street. Development will take the form of street-related retail and service uses, and residential uses, in house-form buildings. Any changes, additions or new construction will respect the architectural and design character of existing buildings and be compatible with the scale of adjacent neighbourhoods.
- SASP 200: 283 and 285 Spadina Avenue, and 393-479 and 396-484 Dundas Street West. Development will be compatible in form and character including decorative elements, with the three and four-storey buildings generally built to the street line often with closely spaced split level entrances to the sidewalk.
- SASP 202: Lands Bounded by College Street, Simcoe Street, Queen Street West and Spadina Avenue. Commercial parking garages may be permitted in Mixed Use Areas at a density of up to 3.0 times the lot area, and on lots fronting on Spadina Avenue between Dundas Street West and Queen Street West at a density of up to 5.0 times the lot area through a zoning by-law amendment.

See Attachment 4: SASPs in West Chinatown area.

Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District

The northwest portion of the study area falls within the boundary of the Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District Plan designated by Council under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. This Plan is currently the subject of appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT).

The Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District Plan establishes a framework that will conserve Kensington Market's cultural heritage value through the protection and conservation of its heritage attributes.

Zoning

Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West are primarily zoned as Commercial Residential. Permitted uses include arts studios, dwelling units, retail stores, offices, medical offices, and community centres. The adjacent Neighbourhoods are primarily zoned as Residential. See Attachment 5: Existing Zoning By-law Map.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Community Consultation

Throughout 2023 and 2024, City staff, in collaboration with the consultant team composed of ThinkFresh Group, Urban Minds, and ERA Architects, undertook an extensive series of consultation activities in the West Chinatown community. A list of consultation activities and a summary of feedback is included as Attachment 6 to this report.

Beginning in 2025 and continuing through 2026, City staff have engaged with the West Chinatown community through a Community Working Group, consisting of approximately 15 members representing local landowners, business owners, stakeholders and community residents. In addition, a significant number of deputations and written comments were received in relation to the Proposals Report considered by Toronto and East York Community Council on April 1, 2026. Comments at Toronto East York Community Council included:

- Designate West Chinatown as a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) with public funding for legacy businesses, tenants, community infrastructure, and collectively-stewarded space.
- Launch a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) study and/or implement a rigorous Cultural Districts program that protects Chinatown's full cultural fabric, including clan associations, community institutions, locally-serving businesses, and built and intangible heritage.
- Adopt a Secondary Plan with enforceable anti-displacement measures.

- Deliver meaningful cultural redress, alongside permanent public investment in housing and community infrastructure that reflects Chinatown's needs.

A community working group meeting was held in-person at Cecil Community Centre on May 12, 2026, after adoption of the Proposals Report. Feedback received during the meeting included the following key themes and considerations:

- The need for the City to explore a more comprehensive anti-displacement strategy, including implementable and enforceable measures.
- Concerns regarding historical displacement and systematic impacts experienced by the community as a result of actions by various levels of government, including intergenerational impacts.
- The need for additional affordable housing units (subsidized rent or rent-geared-to-income) within new developments, as well as improvements to the existing conditions of multi-tenant home (rooming house) units.
- The need for increased visibility/exposure to and awareness of existing City programs, grants and funding opportunities to support community infrastructure, reinvestment in existing properties and the Chinatown Community Land Trust.
- The City should consider more creative deliverables to address community feedback beyond the development of a Planning Framework.

City staff hosted an in-person open house at Scadding Court Community Centre on May 23, 2026. Feedback received included:

- The need for investment from all levels of government to support the community, including updates to existing community centres and improvements to deteriorating building facades.
- Concern regarding the use of the name "West Chinatown". Toronto has only one Chinatown and the term may imply the existence of multiple Chinatowns in the city, so it does not adequately recognize the historic experiences and contributions of generations of Chinese immigrants, including hardships such as the Chinese Head Tax.
- The area has great transit connectivity and it is important to maintain and enhance this network.
- The neighbourhood is highly walkable and maintaining and enhancing the public realm is essential to ensuring it remains so.
- Support for greater flexibility in built form permissions within Kensington Market to enable more affordable housing options, including mid-rise buildings in the range of six to eight storeys.
- Existing commercial properties, including Dragon Centre and Chinatown Centre, were identified as underutilized spaces that present opportunities for enhanced community use.
- Interest in a cultural centre that could support the sharing of community knowledge and history.
- Redesign Huron Street (Intergenerational Walk) with a more meandering layout to help calm traffic and make it more pedestrian friendly.
- General support for the introduction of gateway features to strengthen the sense of arrival, including support for several key gateway locations and opportunities.

One participant suggested that the eastern gateway should be located at Beverley Street instead of McCaul Street.

Statutory Public Meeting Comments

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

COMMENTS

This section summarizes refinements to the West Chinatown Planning Framework resulting from additional community consultation and provides the rationale for the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment being recommended to Council. It also outlines related strategies and future initiatives that will guide ongoing planning and community development efforts. The section is organized as follows:

- 1) Overview of the West Chinatown Planning Framework
- 2) Overview of the Official Plan Amendment
- 3) Overview of the Zoning By-law Amendment
- 4) Aligned initiatives

Overview of the West Chinatown Planning Framework

The West Chinatown Planning Framework is organized around key themes:

- 1) Improving the Public Realm
- 2) Supporting Small Businesses and Services
- 3) Housing and Livability
- 4) Preserving West Chinatown's Identity and Culture
- 5) Built Form

Feedback from the City's interdivisional team and community members helped shape and refine the West Chinatown Planning Framework. See Attachment 7 for a copy of the West Chinatown Planning Framework.

1) Improving the Public Realm

The draft West Chinatown Planning Framework adopted by City Council in April 2026 included direction related to the public realm, including laneway improvements and opportunities to expand and animate sidewalk zones when and where feasible. In response to Council's direction requesting appropriate revisions to address the public realm, open space, and public art, as well as the development of a strategy for laneway improvement and animation, additional policy direction has been incorporated into the West Chinatown Planning Framework to strengthen the role of these spaces as areas for community use and cultural expression.

The updated West Chinatown Planning Framework encourages public and private art installations, murals, and other creative interventions that animate the public realm and reinforce community identity. It also identifies opportunities to expand and enhance the public realm along Spadina Avenue, particularly in front of Chinatown Centre at 222 Spadina Avenue, to build on the community's work, including the Anti-Displacement Garden. In addition, new language recognizes the importance of signage as a defining characteristic of West Chinatown. Signage is supported as an integral component of the area's cultural identity, heritage character, and vibrant streetscape.

City Planning staff have assessed the feasibility of developing urban design guidelines for West Chinatown and determined that key urban design principles are appropriately captured in the public realm section of the West Chinatown Planning Framework. This includes the appropriate sidewalk widths, the function of streets such as Spadina Avenue, Dundas Street West, Huron Street, and Baldwin Street, the network of a variety of open spaces that ranges in sizes and intended program, and special markers such as cultural plazas and gateways. This supports the objective of preserving the existing vibrancy and pedestrian-friendly environment that reflects the character of West Chinatown.

2) Supporting Small Businesses and Services

The draft West Chinatown Planning Framework included direction to support small businesses and services, recognizing that retaining legacy businesses and culturally relevant services is a key community priority. This direction includes reinforcing the existing fine-grain and small-scale commercial character of Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West through recommended storefront widths, encouraging new developments to provide existing businesses with the first right of refusal to return to new commercial space in new development that is of a similar rent, size and functionality, and encouraging property owners to lease to local independent businesses, and culturally relevant and responsive businesses and services.

To continue to support small businesses and activate street frontages, additional language has been added to the West Chinatown Planning Framework to encourage new developments to incorporate additional building setbacks along street frontages. These setbacks would help accommodate generous sidewalk zones and create opportunities for outdoor activities such as patios, local markets, and merchandise display areas. Community members noted that street vendors are an important part of West Chinatown's character and vibrancy.

Community feedback also highlighted the need for more enforceable measures and funding to assist with supporting small businesses and services. In response, the West Chinatown Planning Framework includes policies intended to support the viability of small businesses and services, complemented by initiatives delivered through the Cultural Districts Program.

3) Housing and Livability

In response to community members' concerns regarding the displacement of existing residents and dwelling units, language has been added to the West Chinatown

Planning Framework to reflect relevant policies in the City's Official Plan. This includes supporting the retention and intensification of affordable housing while ensuring no net loss of existing rental units and adherence to the City's rental replacement policies for new development. Intergenerational and multigenerational housing is also a vital component of West Chinatown's housing needs. The West Chinatown Planning Framework also supports improving access to affordable housing information and resources, including making information about the City's affordable housing programs and affordable rental housing opportunities readily available and, where appropriate, translated into Simplified and Traditional Chinese.

To preserve existing affordable homes and prevent displacement across the city, including West Chinatown, the City continues work through several actions and initiatives. The MURA program supports the acquisition, renovation and refinancing of rental homes by non-profit housing providers, including Indigenous housing providers, co-operatives and Community Land Trusts. The City provides regulatory oversight of multi-tenant homes (MTH) through its new city-wide framework, as well as support for costs related to improving safety and building conditions for tenants and bringing properties into compliance with the MTH framework through the MTH Renovation & Repair Program. Finally, the City helps to fund various programs and initiatives to support tenants, prevent eviction and displacement, and improve housing outcomes across the city, including the Toronto Tenant Support Program, Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) and the Rent Bank.

The City's [Affordable Rental Housing Map](#) tracks rent-controlled market homes, affordable rental homes, and approved Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) homes. The City has made considerable progress on its housing targets including in and around the West Chinatown area.

The City has led or supported five affordable housing projects that have completed construction since 2020, resulting in over 300 net new affordable and RGI replacement homes within the West Chinatown area. This includes the City-led project at 224 Spadina, acquired and renovated in 2023 to provide 84 supportive homes, and 25 Augusta Avenue, led by St Felix Centre and completed in 2025 to create 31 new permanent RGI homes for women experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In addition, the City continues to support a growing pipeline of new affordable and rent-controlled homes in the West Chinatown area, which will create over 1,400 rental homes, including approximately 800 net new affordable rental and RGI homes, as well as over 300 RGI replacement homes. This includes projects in partnership with local non-profit organizations such as the YMCA and Kensington Market Community Land Trust, and the significant revitalization underway of Alexandra Park led by Toronto Community Housing Corporation.

Through the MURA program and Section 37 contributions, the buildings at 302 Spadina Avenue, 380 Spadina Avenue and 54-56 Kensington Avenue were acquired to preserve a total of 40 affordable units. To support the growth of land trusts and the important role they play in preserving affordability, the City is establishing a community of practice for community land trusts across the City, which will help to build capacity and support stability and growth in this sector.

The City encourages private development applicants to incorporate affordable housing into redevelopment proposals. Developers are encouraged to partner with public, private and not-for-profit organizations such as the City's Housing Secretariat and Housing Development Office, Community Land Trusts, Toronto Community Housing, and Ontario Health at Home providers.

While the City currently cannot require affordable housing in new developments, the City's Housing Secretariat and Housing Development Office will continue to identify and evaluate affordable housing opportunities on publicly owned lands. The City also provides capital funding and incentives to support the creation of new affordable rental homes through programs such as the Rental Housing Supply Program.

The development of new affordable housing in the West Chinatown area will be further supported by Inclusionary Zoning requirements, which are anticipated to come into force and effect in July 2027. In addition, the City is establishing a community of practice for Community Land Trusts across the City, which will help to build capacity and support stability and growth in this sector.

4) Preserving West Chinatown's Identity and Culture

Chinese-Canadians have faced long-standing systemic racism, including the exploitation of Chinese labourers during the construction of the transcontinental railway, the Chinese Head Tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act. In Toronto, in preparation for the construction of the new City Hall and broader urban renewal initiatives, the City expropriated a significant portion of the original Chinatown in the late 1950's resulting in the displacement of many Chinese residents and businesses. The legacy of institutional and systemic racism created barriers to economic opportunity, education, land ownership and business operations within the Chinese community. More recently, the Chinese community also experienced heightened anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite generations of discrimination, the Chinese community has demonstrated resilience and made enduring contributions. Community members identified the importance of acknowledging and addressing the impacts of colonial histories in West Chinatown.

The West Chinatown Planning Framework acknowledges the history of West Chinatown and includes directions and guidelines that support the strengthening of its cultural identity through public spaces, assessment of heritage assets through a Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment and supporting culturally significant businesses and uses together with the complementary initiative of the Cultural Districts Program.

The updated West Chinatown Planning Framework includes additional direction related to signage, recognizing it as a key character-defining element of West Chinatown. Signage contributes to the area's cultural identity and streetscape vibrancy and reflects the neighbourhood's established visual character through its use of colour and multiple languages.

5) Built Form

The updated West Chinatown Planning Framework includes enhanced policy direction encouraging the integration of gateway markers into the design of new developments located at key gateway intersections, including Bathurst Street and Dundas Street West, Spadina Avenue and College Street, Beverley Street and Dundas Street West and Spadina Avenue and Queen Street West. For example, as part of the Transit Oriented Communities and future Chinatown Station, gateway elements would help reinforce the intersection of Spadina Avenue and Queen Street West as a prominent entrance to West Chinatown, strengthening the area's identity and cultural presence. Community members continue to support the concept of gateways that create a sense of arrival into West Chinatown. During the May Open House, feedback was received regarding the location of the gateways, specifically the east gateway. In response to this feedback, staff have shifted the location of the gateway from McCaul Street to Beverley Street to better reflect a more meaningful entrance into the West Chinatown community.

Overview of the Official Plan Amendment

An Official Plan Amendment (OPA) is recommended to redesignate the Spadina Dundas intersection in the Downtown Plan from Mixed Use Area 3 – Main Street to Mixed Use Area 2 - Intermediate. The proposed redesignation more accurately reflects the higher densities that are anticipated at this key intersection, as the properties are within 500 metres of the Queen-Spadina PMTSA, where implementing zoning will permit a density of 6 FSI. This intersection is well positioned to accommodate taller buildings, serving as an appropriate location for intensification while providing a transition in scale to the surrounding areas along Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West. Facilitating additional density at this location would enable the provision of community benefits, community spaces, affordable housing and public realm improvements, which are key community priorities.

The OPA also recommends removal of SASP 200 and 202. SASP 200 permits three and four-storey buildings generally built to the street line often with closely spaced split level entrances to the sidewalk. Staff recommend removal of SASP 200 as it does not meet accessibility standards, and to encourage grade-related entrances and allow for appropriate levels of intensification along Dundas Street West. SASP 202 permits above-grade parking garages at a density of up to 3 to 5 times the lot area within the Mixed Use Areas designations along key streets within the study area including Spadina Avenue, Dundas Street West, College Street, Queen Street West and McCaul Street. Staff recommend removal of SASP 202 from streets within the study area as mixed-use developments along these streets, with a variety of uses including retail, office, community space and/or housing, are more appropriate to support complete communities.

See Attachment 8: Draft Official Plan Amendment.

Overview of the Zoning By-law Amendment

A Zoning By-law Amendment is recommended to permit a range of small-scale retail, service and office uses on interior lots within residentially zoned properties along

Baldwin Street. These changes would encourage small-scale retailers and entrepreneurs to locate within the neighbourhood while supporting the area's character.

See Attachment 9: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment.

Aligned Initiatives

Council directed Development Review staff to review and collaborate with other City divisions to refine the West Chinatown Planning Framework and explore other initiatives. An overview of staff's review is outlined below.

Cultural Districts Program

Cultural Districts are defined as culturally distinct mixed-use areas that feature a significant concentration of cultural spaces and institutions, culturally significant businesses, and community spaces. Cultural Districts are widely recognized as areas of shared history and identity that offer a sense of belonging. They not only serve the local area but also draw people from across the city and beyond.

A report establishing the City's Cultural Districts Program was adopted with amendments by the Economic and Community Development Committee on June 9, 2026 and will be considered by City Council on June 24, 2026. This report recommended that West Chinatown be recognized as one of the City's initial Cultural Districts, celebrating its significance as a centre of cultural, economic, and community life.

The report outlined a phased approach to implementing the Cultural Districts Program that includes various local capacity-building supports alongside formal recognition. The report also describes additional targeted supports that could be considered for Cultural Districts that are experiencing displacement and loss of culturally significant businesses, including West Chinatown.

Economic and Community Development Committee's decision is here:
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.EC29.4>

Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment

A Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (CHRA) will be conducted to enhance an understanding of the area's historical development and to identify cultural heritage resources, including properties that have potential cultural heritage value and may merit inclusion on the City's Heritage Register. The CHRA will build upon the work completed for the West Chinatown Planning Framework, and make recommendations for the interpretation, conservation, or further study of the area's identified cultural heritage resources, including for potential Heritage Conservation Districts.

Huron Square as a Cultural Plaza

Huron Square is the block of Huron Street running north from Dundas Street to the laneway approximately 50 metres north of Dundas. In 2017, Huron Square was

improved through the City's Economic Development and Culture Division's Cost Share Program for Streetscape Enhancements in collaboration with the Chinatown Business Improvement Area (BIA). The project redesigned the space with wider sidewalks, signature paving, feature lighting and statues to make the space feel more open and inviting for community events and casual use.

Community events are routinely held in Huron Square. In the three years between April 2023 and April 2026, the City also issued three event permits to the Chinatown BIA authorizing that the space be closed to vehicles for the duration of the event. These events have served as a proof-of-concept for closing the space to vehicles on a short-term basis. Transportation Services staff suggest that an appropriate next step in assessing potential permanent pedestrianization would be for a seasonal closure (approximately 4 to 12 weeks), facilitated by the Chinatown BIA using a customized street event permit. This would be similar to the experimental summer pedestrian streets on Bellair Street in Yorkville and on Market Street in the Old Town.

The City is currently developing policies to guide decision-making and operations of seasonal closures and permanently pedestrianized streets. More information is expected in 2027. The anticipated policies will guide whether and how streets in Toronto, including this block of Huron Street, can be pedestrianized in the future.

Conclusion

The West Chinatown Planning Framework, together with the associated Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment, represents the appropriate outcome of the Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative, informed by comprehensive analysis and extensive community consultation. The West Chinatown Planning Framework and policy amendments establish the foundation to guide future growth and change while supporting a complete community with a broad mix of uses, strengthening cultural continuity and community stability, and conserving the built form, cultural heritage, and distinct identity of West Chinatown.

CONTACT

Patricia Cho, Community Planner, Community Planning, Tel. No. 416-338-6697, E-mail: Patricia.Cho2@toronto.ca

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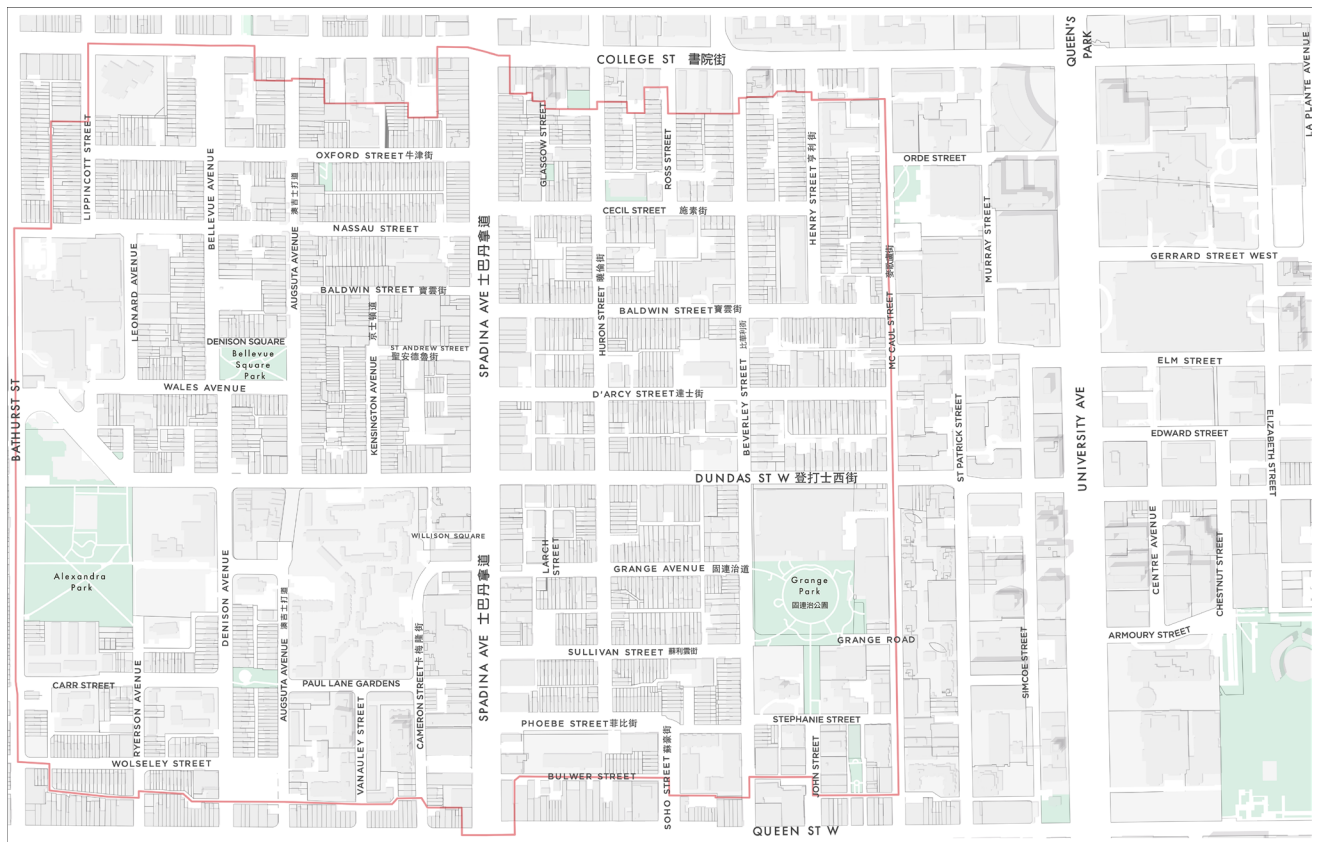
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carly R', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carly Bowman, M.Sc.Pl., MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning
Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: West Chinatown Study Area
- Attachment 2: Current Official Plan Land Use Designation Map
- Attachment 3: Downtown Secondary Plan
- Attachment 4: Site and Area Specific Policies
- Attachment 5: Existing Zoning By-law Map
- Attachment 6: Community Consultation Final Report – Part 1: English, Part 2: Chinese – Simplified and Part 3: Chinese - Traditional
- Attachment 7: Draft West Chinatown Planning Framework
- Attachment 8: Draft Official Plan Amendment
- Attachment 9: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Attachment 1: West Chinatown Study Area



Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative

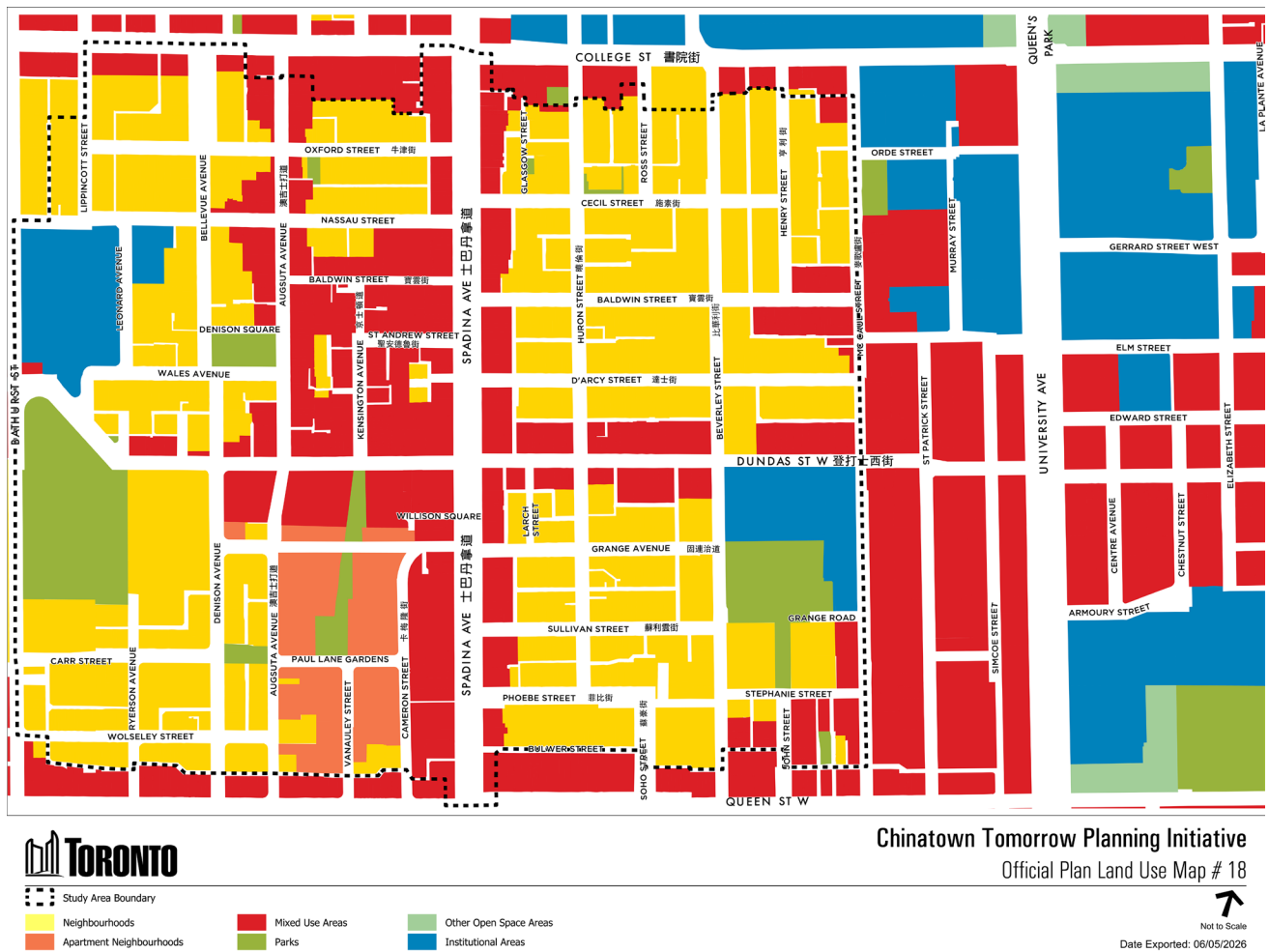
 Study Area



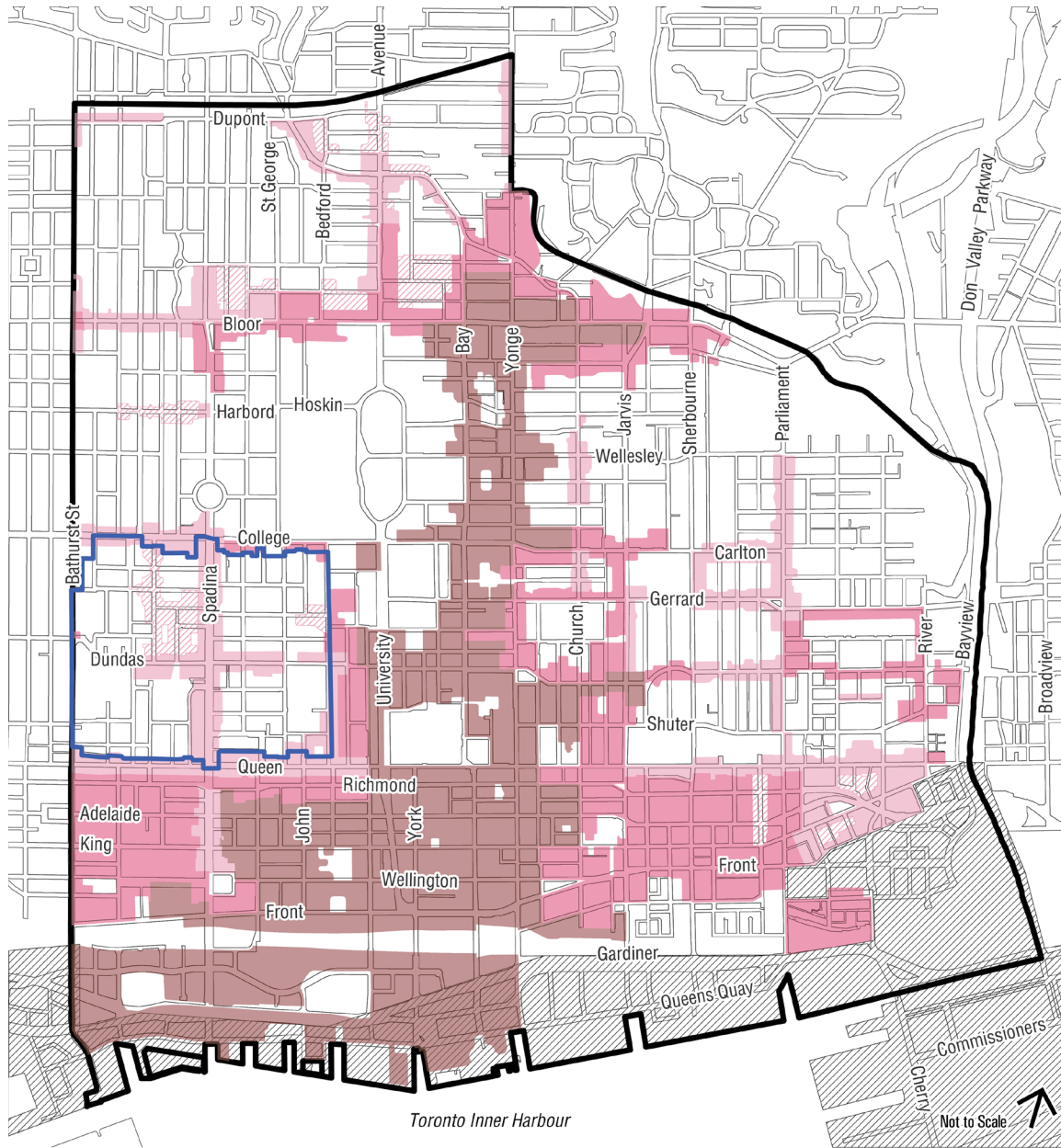
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Attachment 2: Current Official Plan Land Use Designation Map



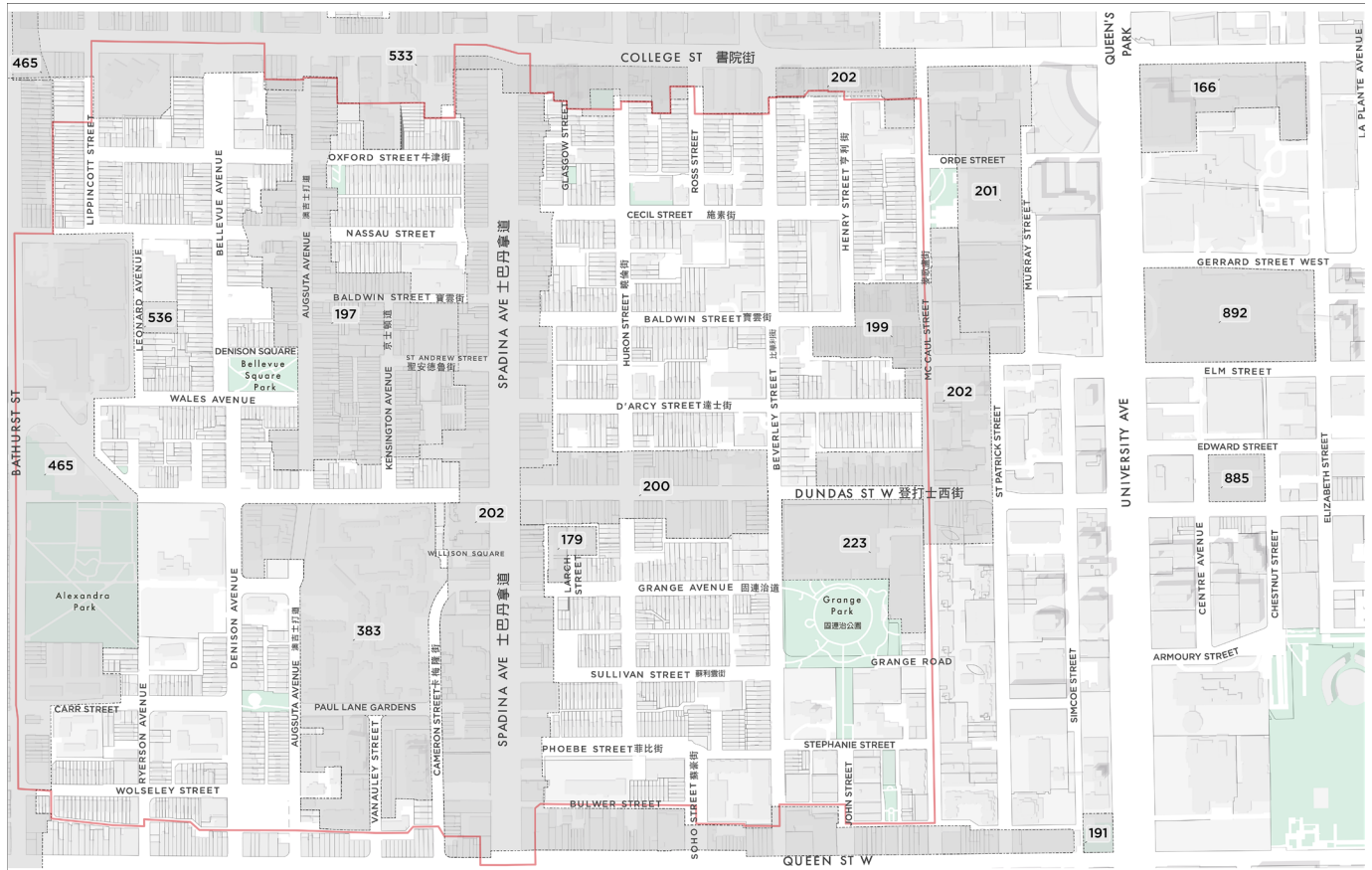
Attachment 3: Downtown Secondary Plan



Downtown Plan MAP 41-3 Mixed Use Areas



Attachment 4: Site and Area Specific Policies



Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative
Excerpt from Official Plan Map 29 – Site and Area Specific Policies

Study Area

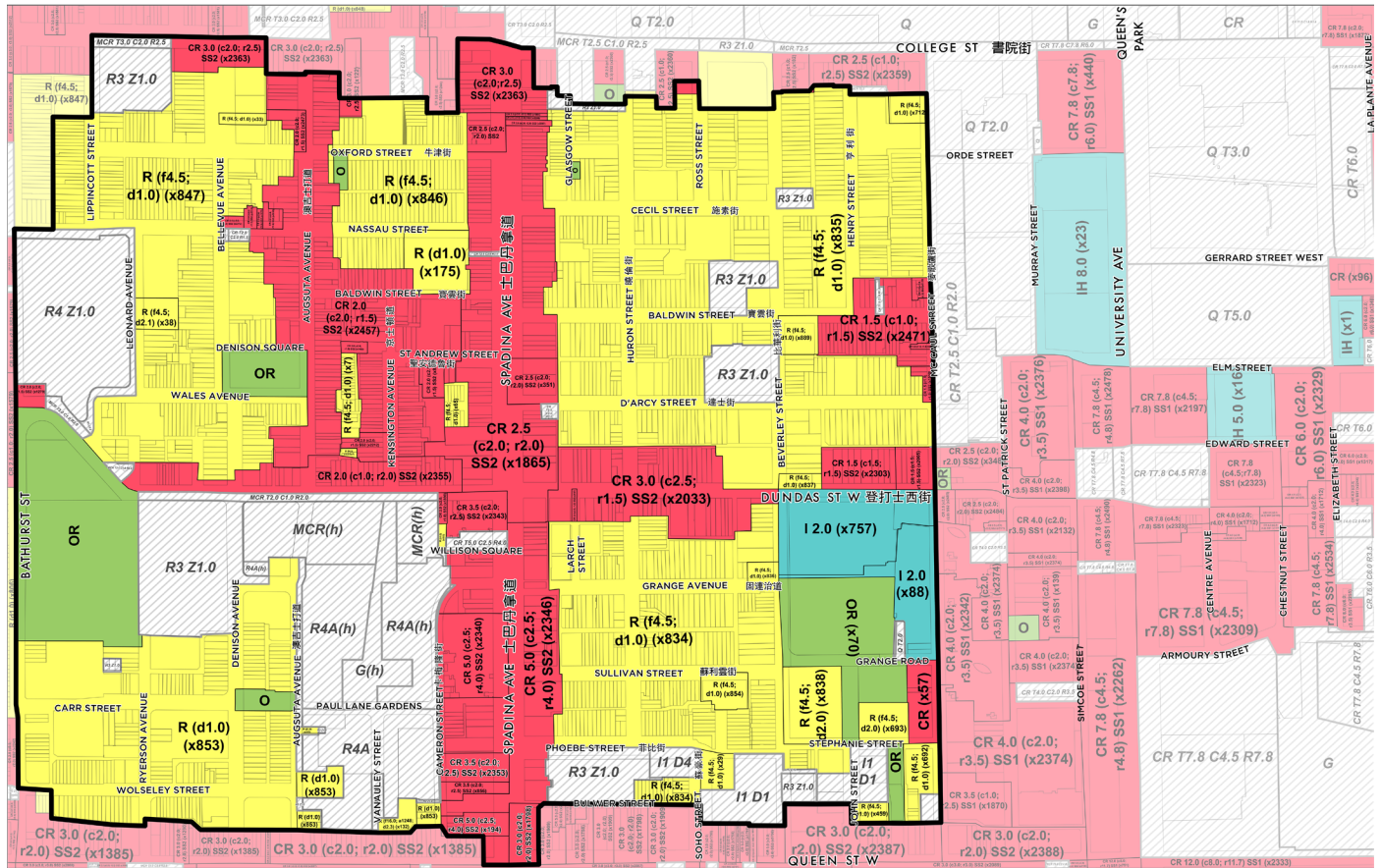
Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP)



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Date Exported: 06/05/2026

Attachment 5: Existing Zoning By-law Map



Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative Zoning By-law 569-2013

Study Area Boundary

R	Residential	IH	Institutional Hospital	O	Open Space
CR	Commercial Residential	I	Institutional	OR	Open Space Recreation

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

R3	Residential District	CR	Mixed-Use District
R4	Residential District	MCR	Mixed-Use District
R4A	Residential District	Q	Mixed-Use District

I1	Industrial District
G	Parks District



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Date Exported: 06/05/2026

Attachment 6: Community Consultation Final Report – Part 1: English, Part 2: Chinese – Simplified and Part 3: Chinese - Traditional

Attached separately to this report.

Attachment 7: Draft West Chinatown Planning Framework

This attachment will be provided prior to the July 8, 2026 Toronto and East York Community Council Meeting.

Attachment 8: Draft Official Plan Amendment

Authority: Toronto and East York Community Council Item ~ as adopted by City of Toronto Council on ~, 20~

Enacted by Council: ~, 20~

CITY OF TORONTO
Bill XXX
BY-LAW XXX-2026

To adopt Official Plan Amendment 961 to the Official Plan for the City of Toronto respecting the lands known municipally in the year 2025 as 1-149 Baldwin Street, 1-99 Cameron Street, 60 and 81 Cecil Street, 261-279 College Street, 2-8 and 137-143 D'Arcy Street, 308-519 Dundas Street West, 73 and 77 Grange Avenue, 176 Huron Street, 126-256 McCaul Street, 2 Nassau Street, 3, 5 and 8 Oxford Street, 34 Ross Street, 160-474 Spadina Avenue, 76 and 78 Sullivan Street, 2, 6 and 8 St Andrew Street, 378 and 380 Queen Street West, and 1, 10 and 11 Willison Square

Whereas authority is given to Council under the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended, to pass this By-law; and

Whereas Council of the City of Toronto has provided adequate information to the public and has held at least one public meeting in accordance with the Planning Act;

The Council of the City of Toronto enacts:

The attached Amendment 961 to the Official Plan is adopted pursuant to the Planning Act, as amended.

Enacted and passed on [Date].

Frances Nunziata,
Speaker
(Seal of the City)

Jon D. Elvidge
City Clerk

AMENDMENT NO. 961 TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN

LANDS MUNICIPALLY KNOWN IN THE YEAR 2025 AS 1-149 BALDWIN STREET, 1-99 CAMERON STREET, 60 AND 81 CECIL STREET, 261-279 COLLEGE STREET, 2-8 AND 137-143 D'ARCY STREET, 308-519 DUNDAS STREET WEST, 73 AND 77 GRANGE AVENUE, 176 HURON STREET, 126-256 MCCAUL STREET, 2 NASSAU STREET, 3, 5 AND 8 OXFORD STREET, 34 ROSS STREET, 160-474 SPADINA AVENUE, 76 AND 78 SULLIVAN STREET, 2, 6 AND 8 ST ANDREW STREET, 378 AND 380 QUEEN STREET WEST, AND 1, 10 AND 11 WILLISON SQUARE

The Official Plan of the City of Toronto is amended as follows:

Chapter 6, Section 41, Downtown Plan, Map 41-3, Mixed Use Areas, is amended by redesignating the lands known municipally in 2025 as 270, 272, 274, 277, 279, 280, 281, 283, 285, 285A, 287, 287A, 289, 292, 294-296, 298, 298A, 300 and 300A Spadina Avenue, 490, 491, 492, 493, 493A, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500 and 519 Dundas Street West and 10 Willison Square from Mixed Use Areas 3 – Main Street to Mixed Use Areas 2 – Intermediate, as shown in attached Appendix 1.

Chapter 6, Section 41, Downtown Plan, Map 41-3-B, Mixed Use Areas 2 – Intermediate, is amended by adding the lands known municipally in 2025 as 270, 272, 274, 277, 279, 280, 281, 283, 285, 285A, 287, 287A, 289, 292, 294-296, 298, 298A, 300 and 300A Spadina Avenue, 490, 491, 492, 493, 493A, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500 and 519 Dundas Street West and 10 Willison Square, as shown in attached Appendix 2.

Chapter 6, Section 41, Downtown Plan, Map 41-3-C, Mixed Use Areas 3 – Main Street, is amended by removing the lands known municipally in 2025 as 270, 272, 274, 277, 279, 280, 281, 283, 285, 285A, 287, 287A, 289, 292, 294-296, 298, 298A, 300 and 300A Spadina Avenue, 490, 491, 492, 493, 493A, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500 and 519 Dundas Street West and 10 Willison Square, as shown in attached Appendix 3.

Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policies, Site and Area Specific Policy No. 200 is deleted.

Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policies, Site and Area Specific Policy No. 202 is amended by:

Deleting and replacing the title of the Site and Area Specific Policy to read “Commercial Parking Garages along certain lands fronting College Street, Queen Street West, McCaul Street, and Dundas Street West”; and

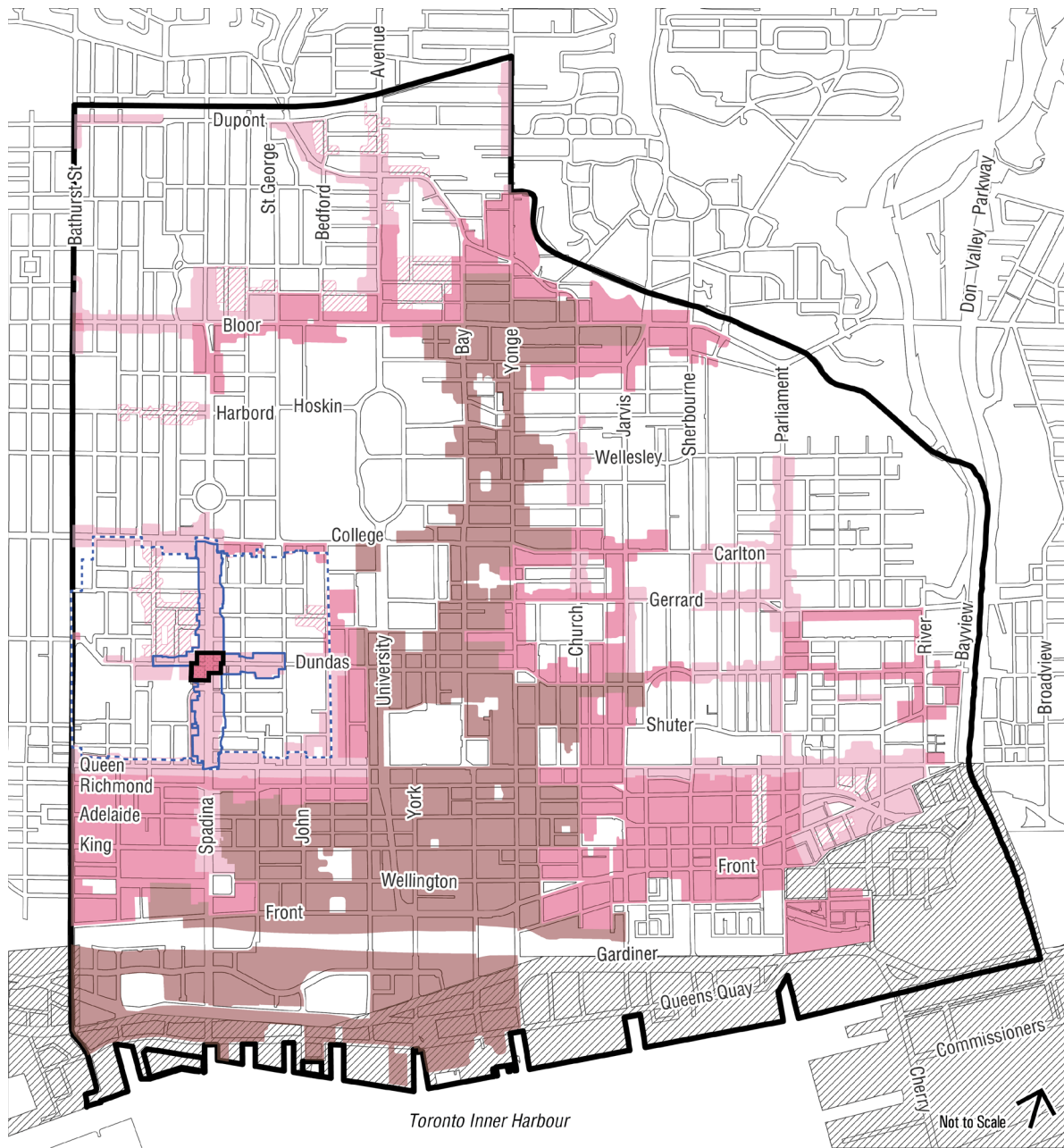
Deleting the words “, and on lots fronting on Spadina Avenue between Dundas Street West and Queen Street West at a density of up to 5.0 times the lot area through a zoning by-law amendment” after the words “at a density of up to 3.0 times the lot area”.

Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policies, Site and Area Specific Policy No. 202 Map is amended by deleting the lands along Spadina Avenue, the east side of McCaul Street, and certain lands to the south of College Street, as shown in attached Appendix 4.

Chapter 7, Map 29, Site and Area Specific Policies, is amended by deleting Site and Area Specific Policy No. 200 in its entirety.

Chapter 7, Map 29, Site and Area Specific Policies, Site and Area Specific Policy No. 202 is amended by deleting the lands along Spadina Avenue, the east side of McCaul Street, and certain lands to the south of College Street, as shown in attached Appendix 4.

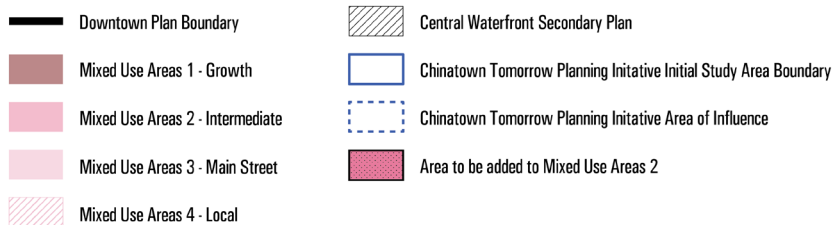
Appendix 1



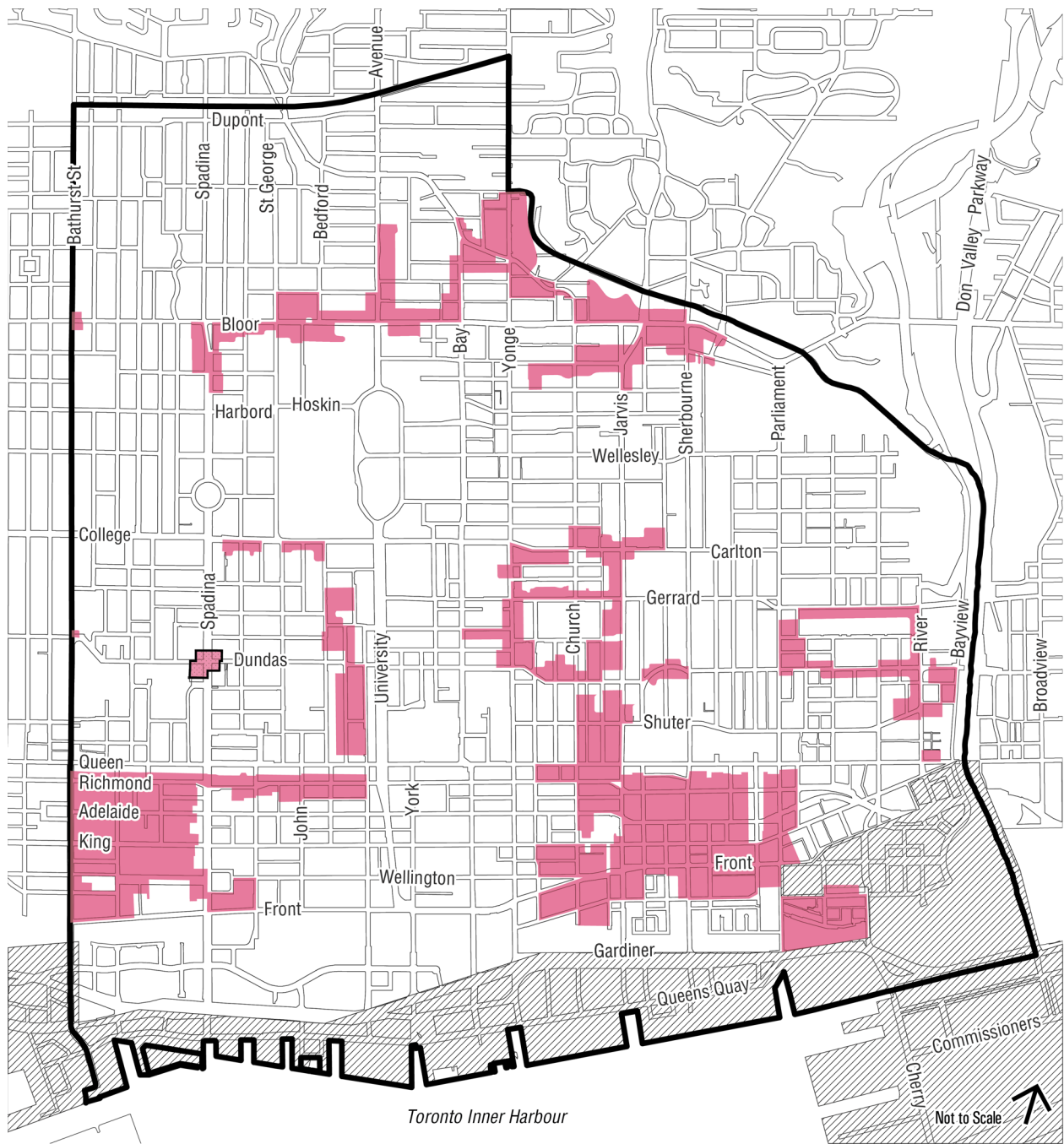
Official Plan Amendment # 961

Downtown Plan

MAP 41-3 Mixed Use Areas



Appendix 2



Official Plan Amendment # 961

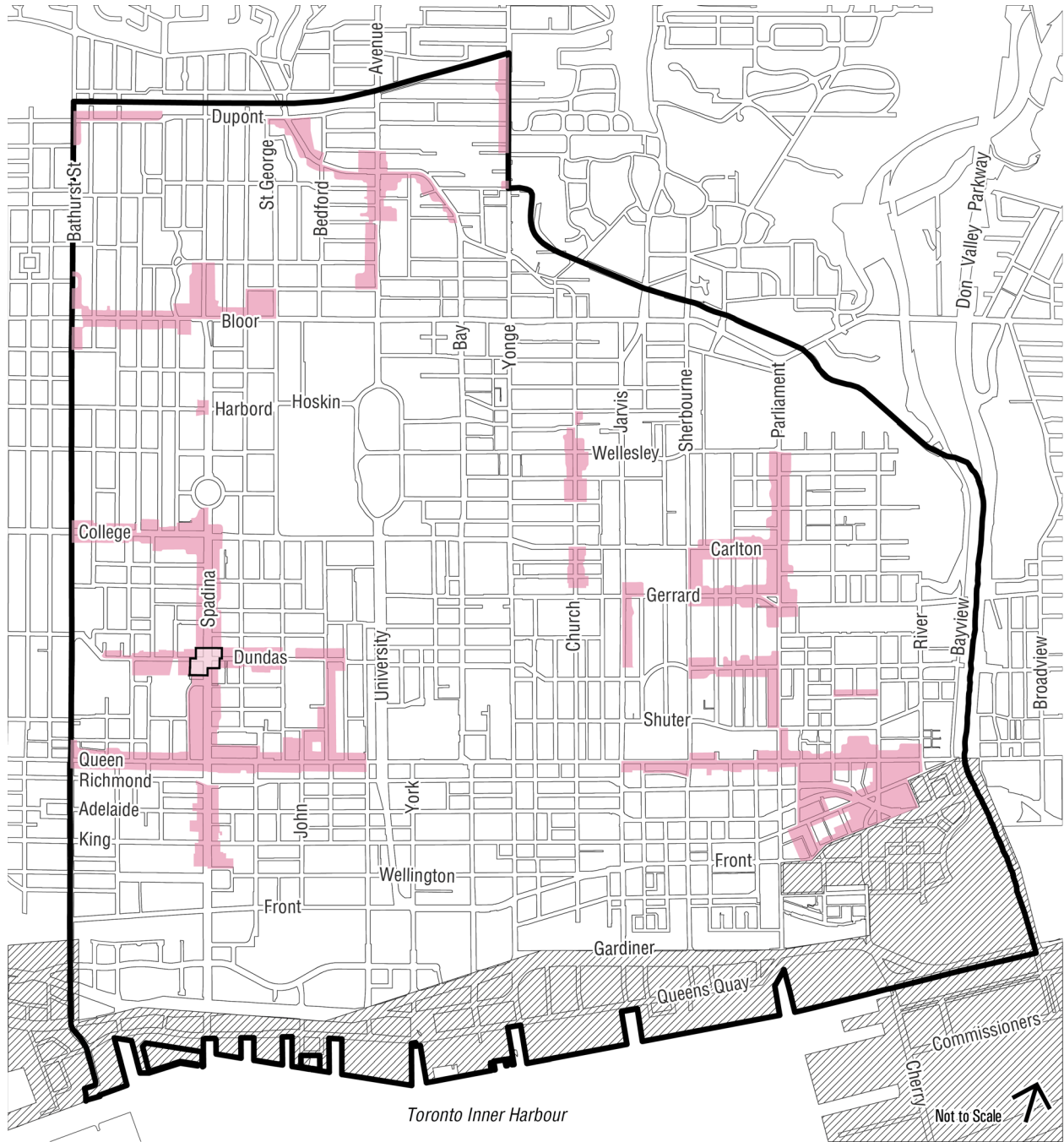
Downtown Plan

MAP 41-3-B Mixed Use Areas 2 - Intermediate

Proposed changes to add Spadina/Dundas as Mixed Use Areas 2 to Map 41-3-B

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Downtown Plan Boundary | Central Waterfront Secondary Plan |
| Mixed Use Areas 2 - Intermediate | Area to be added to Mixed Use Areas 2 in Map 41-3-B |

Appendix 3



Official Plan Amendment # 961

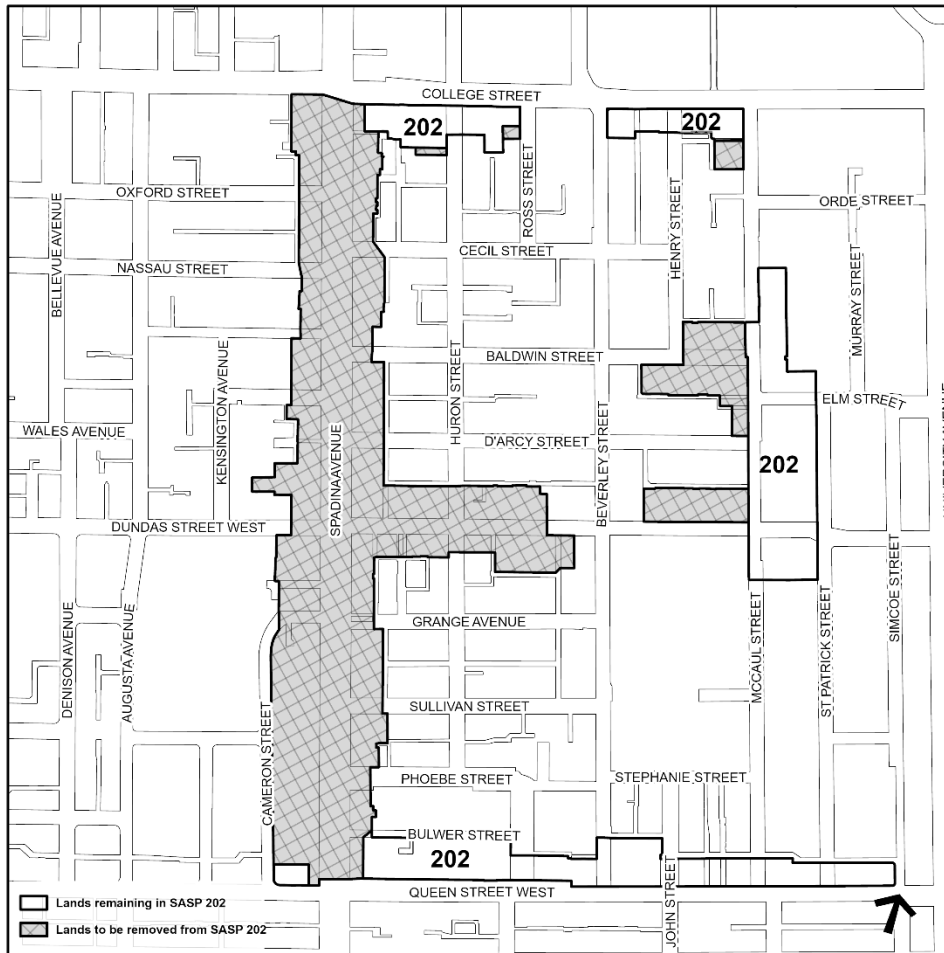
Downtown Plan

MAP 41-3-C Mixed Use Areas 3 - Main Street

Proposed changes to remove Spadina/Dundas as Mixed Use Areas 2 to Map 41-3-C

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Downtown Plan Boundary | Central Waterfront Secondary Plan |
| Mixed Use Areas 3 - Main Street | Area to be removed from Mixed Use Areas 3 in Map 41-3-C |

Appendix 4



Attachment 9: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

This attachment will be provided prior to the July 8, 2026 Toronto and East York Community Council Meeting.