

65 Ookwemin Street – Zoning By-law Amendment – Decision Report – Approval

Date: June 30, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Ward: 14 - Toronto-Danforth

Planning Application Number: 26 160167 STE 14 OZ

SUMMARY

This report recommends approval of the application to amend the Zoning By-law to permit non-residential uses including community, cultural, recreational, sport, entertainment and retail uses, while restricting certain industrial uses at 65 Ookwemin Street. The site has another application that proposes four mixed-use buildings of 45, 32, 31 and 20 storeys before the Ontario Land Tribunal, which is currently under litigation and not yet in-force.

This application will permit low-scale non-residential uses that are intended to activate the site in the interim. No changes in height, density, or built form are proposed as part of the application.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and conforms to the City's Official Plan and the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86 for the lands municipally known as 65 Ookwemin Street substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment included as Attachment 4 to this report.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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 June 26 and 27, 2024, City Council adopted PH13.2 - City-initiated Official Plan (OPA 409) and Zoning By-law (By-law 702-2024) amendments for Ookwemin Minising (then known as Villiers Island). The amendments updated the planning framework for the island in response to Toronto's Housing Action Plan, and permits a dense, inclusive, sustainable, and walkable urban community. This decision permitted "meanwhile uses" including retail, commercial, light industrial, community, cultural, entertainment, sport and agricultural uses, to support the emerging community, early activation programming and visitor experience of Biidaasige Park prior to a site's final redevelopment. The City Council decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.PH13.2>

The majority of OPA 409 policies - including the meanwhile use policies - came into effect through an Ontario Land Tribunal (the "Tribunal") Decision on March 4, 2025. The remaining OPA 409 policies, as well as By-law 702-2024, were approved by the Tribunal on June 1, 2026. These instruments are now in-force across Ookwemin Minising.

Through its decisions on June 26 and 27, 2024 and July 23 and 24, 2025, City Council adopted "CC32.12 - 65 Ookwemin Street (Formerly 309 Cherry Street) - Ontario Land Tribunal Hearing - Request for Directions", which accepted a settlement offer (the "Settlement") authorizing the City Solicitor to attend the Tribunal in support of the revised proposal. The Settlement consisted of four mixed-use buildings of 45, 32, 31 and 20 storeys, in addition to 5.5 percent of the proposed residential GFA as affordable housing for a period of 99 years. The Settlement permitted "meanwhile uses" consistent with the Ookwemin Minising Precinct Plan Update and instruments approved by City Council on the same agenda. The matter still remains under litigation. The City Council decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC32.12>

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING LANDS

Description

The site is a rectangular, 2.01 hectare block in Ookwemin Minising, and is the largest privately-owned site on the island. The site has frontages on Villiers Street to the north, Ookwemin Street to the west and Commissioners Street to the south. The site was previously used as an environmental waste management company and an oil refinery.

The site contains two detached buildings with the same municipal address situated at the northwest corner of the property. The first is a two-storey institutional building constructed in 1920 as a banking hall and offices for the Bank of Montreal while the second is a two-to-four storey industrial building constructed in 1941 as an oil storage warehouse for Canadian Oil Companies Ltd. The 65 Ookwemin Street property was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City Council on March 20 and 21, 2024.

The north portion of the site includes a number of non-residential uses and the south portion of the site is currently vacant. See Attachment 1 for the Location Map.

Surrounding Uses

North: Several low-rise commercial and light industrial uses, in addition to a park and a one storey restaurant located on the northern side of Villiers Street.

South: 275 Cherry Street and 281 Cherry Street, containing two heritage structures. Biidaasige Park is located on the southern side of Commissioners Street.

East: Low-rise commercial and light industrial uses, including the former Queen's City Foundry building at 16 Munition Street.

West: the former Ontario Portland Cement Company Silos, located at 80 Ookwemin Street.

THE APPLICATION

Description

The application proposes to add a site specific exemption to Former City of Toronto By-Law 438-86 to permit non-residential uses related to community, cultural, recreational, sport, entertainment and retail uses and restrict certain industrial uses in the I3 zone. Under Former City of Toronto By-Law 438-86, non-residential floor area of a building on the site cannot be more than two times the lot area.

The site currently has an application to permit four mixed-use buildings of 45, 32,, 31 and 20 storeys before the Ontario Land Tribunal. The matter still remains under litigation. This application does not modify existing or future height, density, or built form permissions, rather the application will permit low-scale non-residential uses that are intended to activate the site on an interim basis.

Additional Information

See the attachments of this report for the Application Data Sheet and Location Map of the proposal. Detailed project information including all plans and reports submitted as part of the application can be found on the City's Application Information Centre at: toronto.ca/65OokweminSt

Reasons for Application

An application is required to amend Former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86 to permit a range of non-residential uses such as community, cultural, recreational, sport, entertainment and retail uses, while restricting certain currently permitted industrial uses in the I3 D2 zone category, which is the base zoning for the site currently in force for the site. Table 1 lists the proposed uses to be permitted and uses not to be permitted in the I3 zone on the site.

Table 1: List of uses to be permitted and no longer be permitted in the I3 zone.

Permitted Uses proposed in the I3 Zone	Uses proposed to no longer be permitted in the I3 Zone
• Amusement Arcade; • Art Gallery; • Cabaret; • Club; • Community Centre; • Eating Establishment; • Entertainment Place of Assembly; • Massage Therapy; • Museum; • Office; • Outdoor Patios; • Outdoor Sales and Display; • Place of Assembly; • Recreation Use; • Retail Store; • Sports Place of Assembly; • Take-out Eating Establishment; • Wellness Centre;	• Animal food factory; • Canning factory (fruits, vegetables); • Cereal food products factory; • Dairy products plant; • Distillery; • Gelatine factory; • Manufacturing plant; • Meat products plant; • Metal products factory; • Packaging plant; • Pharmaceutical factory; • Plastic products factory; • Tannery; • Textile factory; • Vegetable oils plant; • Wholesale dyeing plant; • Wood products factory

The application is separate and apart from the application before the OLT. The application enables non-residential uses to occupy the site on an interim basis.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Application submission requirements were provided to the applicant via email prior to the application submission. The Planning Application Checklist Package is available on the Application Information Centre.

The current application was submitted and deemed complete on May 14, 2026, satisfying the City's minimum application requirements. The reports and studies

submitted in support of this application are available on the Application Information Centre: toronto.ca/65OokweminSt

Agency Circulation Outcomes

The application has been circulated to all appropriate agencies and City Divisions. Responses received have been used to assist in evaluating the application and to formulate the appropriate Zoning By-law amendment.

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), and shall conform to provincial plans.

Official Plan

In the City's current Official Plan, the site is designated Regeneration Areas. See Attachment 2 of this report for the Land Use Map. Ookwemin Minising is not within a delineated Protected Major Transit Station Area/Major Transit Station Area.

Although the current Official Plan is not in force for the Port Lands due to outstanding 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. The current and former Official Plans should be read in their entirety and together.

Former City of Toronto Official Plan (1993)

The former City of Toronto Official Plan (1993) is in force for Ookwemin Minising and the Port Lands. It supports a waterfront Precinct Planning approach and sets out a policy framework, including goals and objectives for the waterfront in Chapter 14.

Central Waterfront Secondary Plan

The Central Waterfront Secondary Plan has four core principles to guide waterfront renewal:

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

The Central Waterfront Secondary Plan designates the site as Regeneration Areas, which allows for a diverse mix of uses including residential, commercial, and industrial, alongside significant open spaces and community services. The Plan supports a broad

range of uses in transitional and emerging districts, including community, cultural, recreational, and retail service uses that contribute to the vitality and identity of waterfront neighbourhoods in formation.

The Central Waterfront Secondary Plan can be found here: [CENTRAL WATERFRONT SECONDARY PLAN \(toronto.ca\)](https://www.toronto.ca/cwp/central-waterfront-secondary-plan/)

Port Lands Area Specific Policy

The Port Lands Area Specific Policy identifies the site within the Ookwemin Minising ("Villiers Island") Mixed-Use Residential District. The vision of the Ookwemin Minising ("Villiers Island") District is a complete, transit-supportive urban neighbourhood accommodating a significant residential population alongside a meaningful complement of non-residential uses, public space, and community services. The policy permits "Meanwhile Uses" on the site prior to development, provided that the use is not residential, does not preclude the long term development of Ookwemin Minising, does not involve underground structures, supports the early phases of revitalization, and are able to be removed or disassembled.

Zoning

The site is zoned I3 D2 under Former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86. The I3 zoning category permits a wide range of industrial uses including manufacturing, processing, warehousing, and storage, as well as certain ancillary commercial and service uses. The D2 regulation restricts the non-residential gross floor area of a building to no more than two times the size of the lot area. Certain community, cultural, recreation, and retail uses are not permitted in the I3 zone. See Attachment 3 of this report for the existing Zoning By-law Map.

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

Provincial Planning Statement and Provincial Plans

Staff's review of this application has had regard for the relevant matters of provincial interest set out in the Planning Act. Staff has reviewed the current proposal for consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and find the proposal consistent with same.

Land Use, height and density

The application proposes to amend the zoning by-law to permit a range of non-residential uses including community, cultural, recreational, entertainment, sport and retail uses. To ensure land use compatibility, the application proposes to prohibit certain industrial uses currently permitted under the zoning by-law, mostly related to manufacturing, such as manufacturing for food and drink, pharmaceuticals, plastic, metals, and textiles. While the in-force zoning does not provide height limits, the non-residential floor area of any building on the site cannot be more than two times the lot area, limiting gross floor area and therefore also height.

The proposed zoning by-law amendment conforms with the current and former Official Plans, Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, and Port Lands Area Specific Policy. Staff are of the opinion that the proposed uses permit a wide range of cultural, economic, retail, and recreational uses that can support the early stages of the Port Lands redevelopment. Staff find the amendment would also effectively limit currently permitted uses that may have a negative impact on future revitalization for the site.

Servicing

Engineering Review staff have reviewed the proposal. Given that there are no changes in height, density or built form from the original rezoning which would impact servicing and sewer capacity, staff have no concerns with the proposed amendment. Servicing capacity will be further evaluated if a development on the site requires a site plan application.

Conclusion

The proposal is consistent with Provincial Planning Statement (2024). The proposal conforms with the current and former Official Plans, Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, and Port Lands Area Specific Policy. The application does not amend existing or future height, built form, or density permissions. The application will permit low-scale non-residential uses that are intended to activate the site on an interim basis. The application conforms to the meanwhile use policies in the Port Lands Area Specific Policy. Staff recommend that Council approve the Zoning By-law Amendment application.

CONTACT

Ali Meghani, Planner, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, Tel. No. 416-394-8236, E-mail: Ali.Meghani@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

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

ATTACHMENTS

City of Toronto Information/Drawings

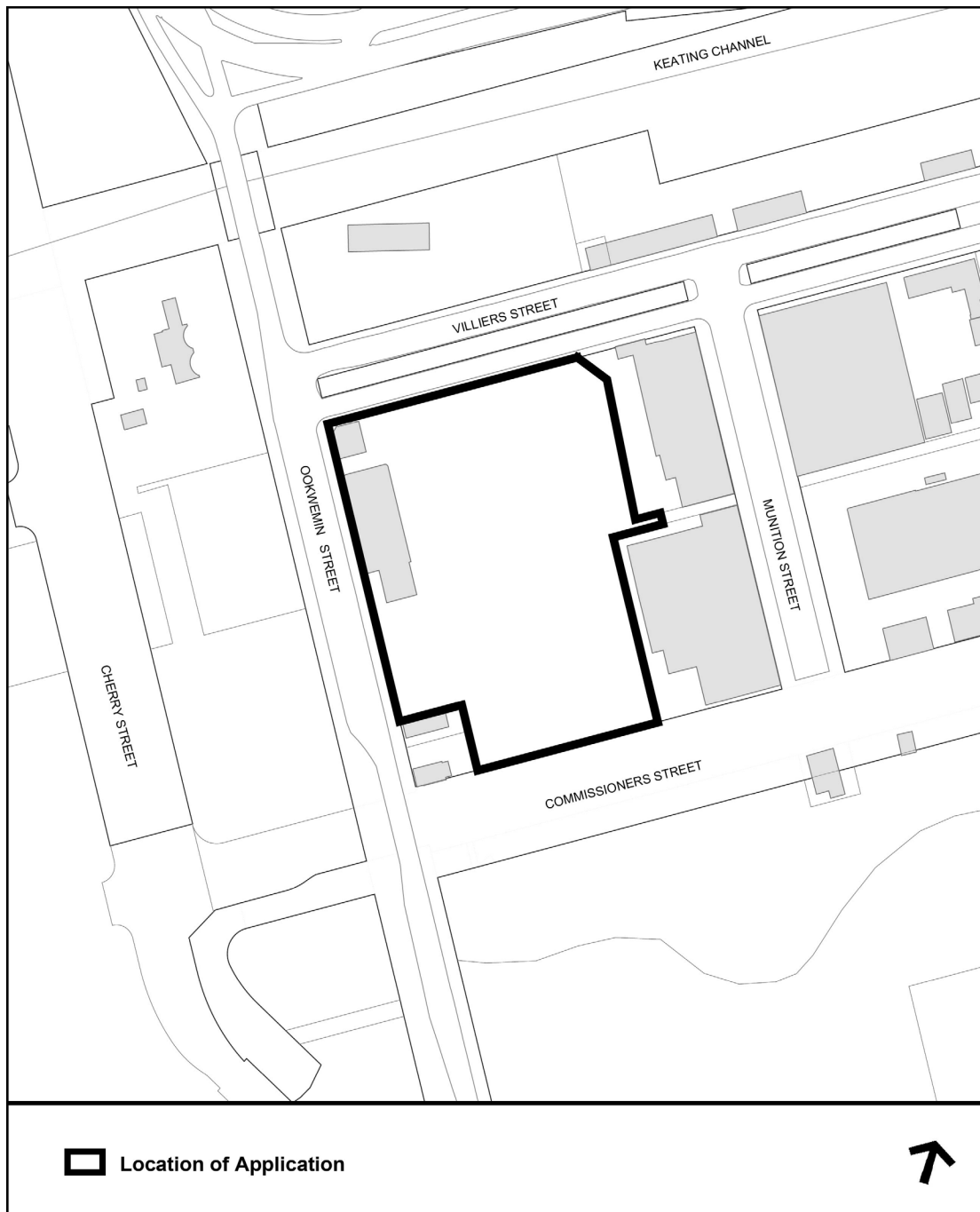
Attachment 1: Location Map

Attachment 2: Official Plan Land Use Map

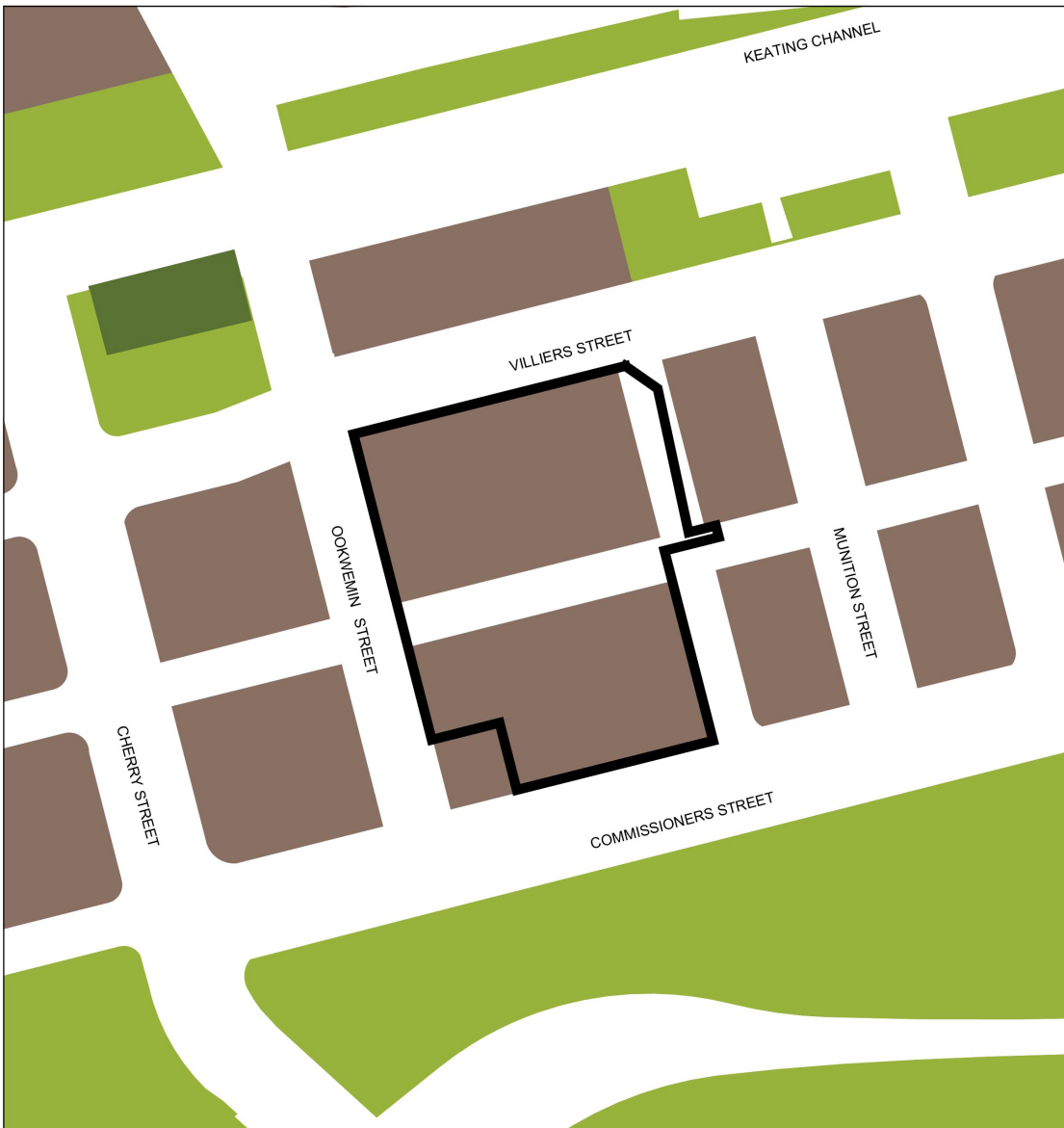
Attachment 3: Existing Zoning By-law Map

Attachment 4: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Attachment 1: Location Map



Attachment 2: Official Plan Land Use Map



Official Plan Land Use Map #18

65 Ookwemin Street

File # 26 160167 STE 14 0Z



Location of Application



Natural Areas



Parks



Regeneration Areas



Not to Scale
Extracted: 05/19/2026

Attachment 3: Existing Zoning By-Law Map



Zoning By-law 569-2013

65 Ookwemin Street

File # 26 160167 STE 14 0Z

- Location of Application
- CRE Commercial Residential Employment
- ON Open Space Natural
- OR Open Space Recreation

- See Former City of Toronto By-law No. 438-86
- I3 Industrial District
- IC Industrial District
- T Industrial District

Not to Scale
Extracted: 05/22/2026

Attachment 4: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Attached separately to this report as a PDF.