

## CHAPTER 3: POLICY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

### 3.1. PROVINCIAL POLICY

#### The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990

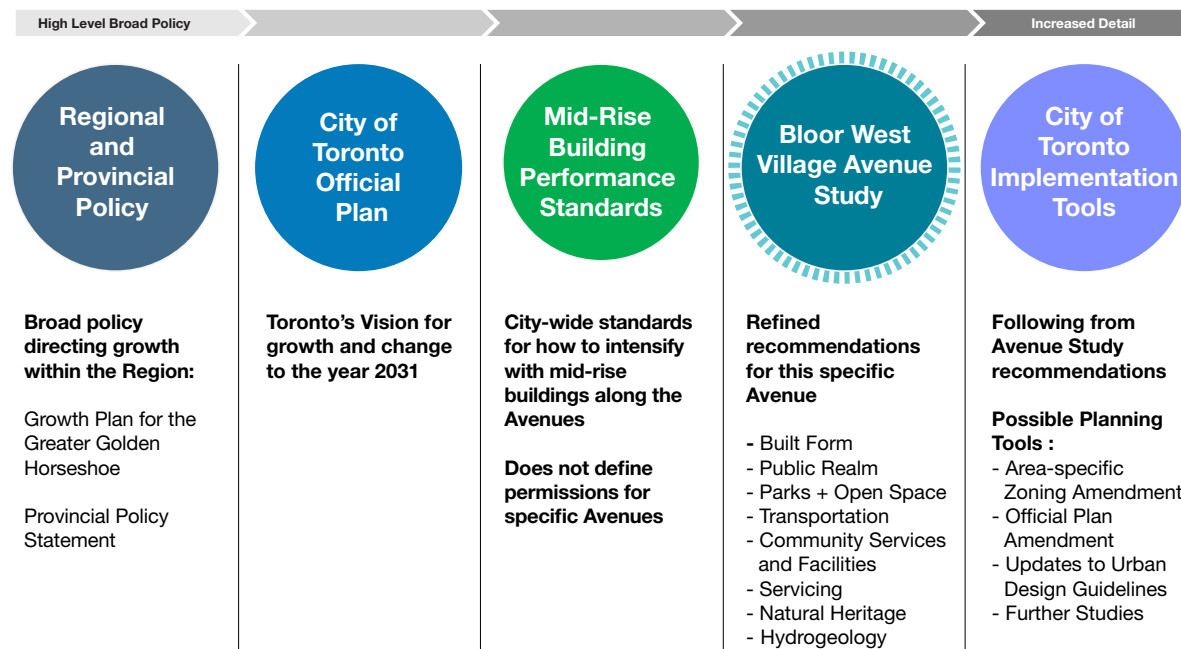
<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1760.aspx>

The Planning Act gives the City of Toronto the authority to create Official Plans and the responsibility to ensure that provincial interests are met. Carrying out Avenue Studies, such as the Bloor West Village Avenue Study, and developing and implementing Official Plan Policies, such as those that will result from this Avenue Study, are two of the tools the City uses to ensure the above matters are adequately addressed.

#### The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page215.aspx>

The Provincial Policy Statement outlines the Government of Ontario's land use planning policies. Section 3 of the Planning Act requires that decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" the PPS. The Bloor West Village Avenue Study must therefore be consistent with the policies of the PPS relating to the efficient use and management of land and infrastructure; the protection of the environment and resources; and the provision of appropriate opportunities for employment and residential development, including support for a mix of uses.



**Figure 3.1** Avenue Study Related To Overall Planning Framework

The most recent PPS, issued in 2014, contains a range of policies applicable across the province. Particularly relevant to Bloor West Village are those promoting active transportation and transit-supportive development; encouraging intensification and redevelopment where it can be accommodated; protecting natural heritage systems and protecting provincially significant areas from impacts due to development on adjacent lands; promoting the co-location of community services accessible to transit and active transportation; and recognizing the importance of age-friendly and accessible community design. The PPS requires the maintenance and restoration of natural heritage areas and promotes development patterns that conserve biodiversity and consider the impacts of climate change. The PPS also recognizes the interests of Aboriginal communities in land use planning matters.

The recommendations of this Avenue Study are consistent with and conform to the PPS.

### **The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017**

[https://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=9&Itemid=14](https://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9&Itemid=14)

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is a framework for managing the region's anticipated growth to the year 2041. The Growth Plan seeks to develop complete communities, limit sprawl, and protect the natural environment. To achieve these goals, the plan directs the majority of growth to strategic areas, including along transit corridors. The Growth Plan contains policies related to the physical and social infrastructure required to support this growth and has provisions for protecting water resources, natural heritage systems, public open space, cultural heritage and other resources essential to life in the region.

All planning decisions in the GGH must conform to the Growth Plan. The principles expressed in the Growth Plan were therefore used to guide the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. The urban design and planning framework developed for the Avenue is intended to accommodate intensification in well-designed forms, protecting the area's sense of place and supporting Bloor West Village's continued evolution as a complete, mixed-use, transit-supportive community.

The recommendations of this Avenue Study are consistent with and conform to the Growth Plan.

### **Greenbelt Plan, 2017**

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page13783.aspx>

The Greenbelt Plan (2017) identifies the Greenbelt within the Greater Golden Horseshoe region as an area where urbanization should not occur to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological and hydrological features and functions occurring in this landscape. The Plan also designates lands within the main corridors of river valleys that flow through Toronto and connect the Greenbelt to Lake Ontario as part of the Greenbelt and directs that planning approaches on lands within and abutting these river valleys should enhance their ecological and hydrological functions. (see policies 3.3.6 and chapter 6).

The recommendations of this Avenue Study are consistent with and conform to the Greenbelt Plan.

### 3.2. CITY OF TORONTO POLICY

#### Official Plan

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

Toronto's Official Plan establishes a vision and land use framework to guide where and how the city will grow and evolve into the future. The Plan directs growth and change to some parts of Toronto while protecting neighbourhoods and green spaces from development pressures. Growth is generally directed to places with good transit access, linking land use and transportation planning.

**Urban Structure.** Map 2 of the Official Plan identifies Bloor Street West within the Study Area as an *Avenue*. The Official Plan describes *Avenues* as being parts of the city that are expected to transform and intensify incrementally over time to accommodate new housing and job opportunities. They will be places with safe and pleasant pedestrian realms and great transit service. While growth is expected, not all lands within an *Avenue* will redevelop. Avenue Studies establish a vision and framework for growth which may result in recommended changes to the zoning by-law and/or design guidelines.

**Official Plan Land Use Designations.** Most of the Study Area, shown on Land Use Plan Maps 15 and 18 in the Official Plan, is designated as *Mixed Use Areas*. A portion of the Study Area west of South Kingsway is designated as *Neighbourhoods*. The north side of Bloor Street facing High Park is designated as *Apartment Neighbourhood*.



Figure 3.2 City of Toronto Urban Structure

- Avenues
- Centres
- Employment Areas
- Green Space System

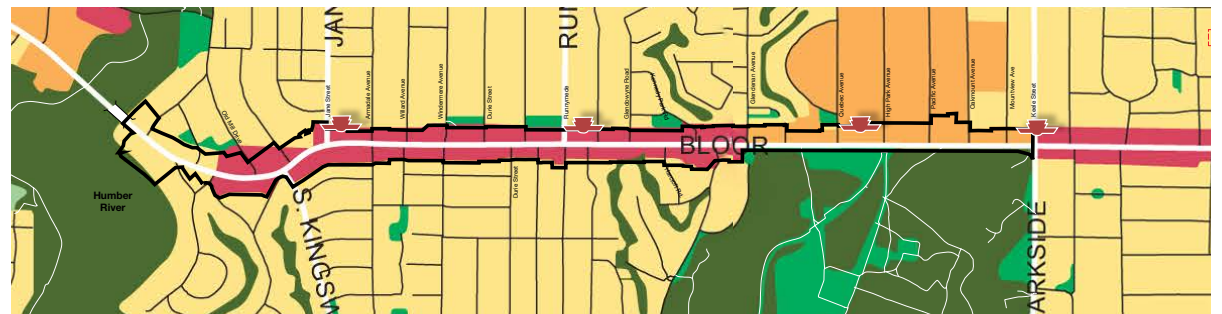


Figure 3.3 City of Toronto Land Uses

- Neighbourhoods
- Apartment Neighbourhoods
- Mixed Use Areas
- Natural Areas
- Parks
- Other Open Space Areas (Including Golf Courses, Cemeteries, Public Utilities)
- Institutional Areas
- Regeneration Areas
- Employment Areas
- Utility Corridors
- Study Area
- Parks and Open Space Areas

*Mixed-use Areas* are important corridors which allow for a broad range of uses including residential, office, retail, service, institutional, entertainment, recreational, cultural, and community services. They are expected to absorb much of anticipated growth in retail, office, and housing, although not all to the same scale or intensity. New development will be generally mid-rise in scale, provide transition between areas (such as to adjacent *Neighbourhoods*), limit shadow impacts, and provide attractive, safe pedestrian environments.

*Neighbourhoods* contain a full range of residential uses as well as parks, school, local institutions, and small-scale stores serving area residents. They are expected to remain physically stable areas of low-rise buildings such as detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and sometimes walk-up apartments dependent on the existing physical character. New development will respect and reinforce the existing physical character.

*Apartment Neighbourhoods* are established areas containing clusters of rental and condominium buildings as well as parks, local institutions, cultural and recreational facilities, and small-scale

retail, service, and office uses. While the scale of buildings is greater, significant new growth is not anticipated beyond low-rise infill and appropriately scaled apartment buildings on under-utilized lots. New development will be located and massed to provide transition to adjacent areas of differing scale, limit shadow impacts, and include ground-floor uses that enhance safety, amenity, and animation of adjacent streets.

Other key Official Plan policies relevant to the Study Area include the following:

- Transportation policies to maintain and develop the city's transportation network. These include increasing transit priority; supporting travel demand management measures to reduce auto dependency in targeted growth areas; ensuring streets and laneways are maintained for public use, access and servicing; and creating an urban environment that encourages and supports walking, transit use, and cycling.
- Municipal infrastructure policies to maintain and develop water, wastewater and stormwater management infrastructure, providing adequate facilities to support new development. These policies also seek to reduce water consumption, wastewater and stormwater flows and to improve water quality.
- Public Realm policies to enhance the design quality, safety and comfort of the urban environment, in particular by adopting a complete streets approach to designing city streets to balance the need of all users and uses, improve

active transportation options, reflect local character, provide access to sunlight and sky view, and serve as a community destination. The Plan also encourages improving physical and visual access from public spaces to the natural features of the City and promotes excellence in architecture, landscape and urban design.

- Parks and Open Space Areas policies that seek to maintain, enhance and expand Toronto's parks system as an important element of city building. New parks and park amenities should be added; high quality, accessible, year-round design should be emphasized; access to existing publicly accessible open spaces should be protected; and private open spaces should be encouraged to supplement City parks. Further, development adjacent to parks and open spaces should minimize shadow, noise, traffic and wind impacts on these spaces.
- Natural Heritage policies require that all changes to the built environment safeguard the health, integrity, and ecological function of the City's significant natural systems. The natural heritage system consists of areas where protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural features and functions should have high priority in city-building decisions.

- Community Services and Facilities policies addressing the City's goals and objectives for providing adequate and equitable access to a full range of social infrastructure in established and growing neighbourhoods. Community services and facilities should be included in all significant private sector development, through incentives and public initiatives, and share use of service facilities is encouraged. Strategies for providing new facilities or improving existing community services should be developed in areas experiencing major growth or change.

#### **Swansea Secondary Plan**

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/9097-cp-official-plan-SP-25-Swansea.pdf>

A small portion of the Study Area west of Jane Street is within the Swansea Secondary Plan. Lands within this area are designated as *Mixed Use Areas* and as *Neighbourhoods* in the Official Plan. Policy 2.1 of the Secondary Plan states: "Where the Zoning By-law permits apartment buildings in areas designated *Neighbourhoods*, any apartment building will respect the zone height and density limits." As discussed below under Zoning, the current height limit for these properties is 9 metres.

Policy 5.3(b)(i) may impact part of the Study Area. This policy directs that any development "will enhance views of Lake Ontario" from the lands "at the rear of 2155 Bloor Street West" (the present No Frills Parking Lot).

#### **City of Toronto Mid-rise Performance Standards**

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

Further direction for development along *Avenues* is given through the *Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study*, adopted by the City in 2010. The Study offers guidance on the appropriate form of intensification along designated *Avenues* to encourage a main street environment that is compatible with adjacent neighbourhoods. The guidelines provide design direction regarding building height, setbacks, and angular planes, in addition to a number of other performance standards.

#### **Building Height**

The anticipated maximum allowable height of buildings on the *Avenues* will be no taller than the width of the Avenue right-of-way. For most of the portion of the Study Area, this performance standard would mean maximum building heights of 27 metres for the majority of the corridor since the right-of-way is mostly 27 metres wide. However, in June 2016, City Council adopted an addendum to Performance Standard 1 for the Bloor West Village character area (which is defined as the segment of Bloor Street from Jane Street to Clendenan Avenue). This addendum reduces the height to

right-of-way ratio from 1:1 to 0.8:1, resulting in a 21.6 metre height limit from Clendenan Avenue to Armadale Avenue and 24.0m from Armadale Avenue to Jane Street.

For the segment of the Study Area where the right-of-way is 30m wide (west of Armadale Avenue to the Humber River), the performance standards would anticipate a maximum building height of 30m, subject to site conditions.

#### **Rear Transitions**

The majority of properties fronting Bloor Street West are considered shallow Avenue properties as defined by the Mid-Rise Performance Standards (less than an ideal 41m on the 27m right-of-way segments and under 41.6m on the 30m segment). A transition between a shallow *Avenue* property and areas designated *Neighbourhoods*, *Parks and Open Space Areas*, and *Natural Areas* to the rear should be created through alternative setback & angular plane provisions.

#### **Zoning**

There are three zoning by-laws that apply to the Study Area: the city-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013, the former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86, and the former City of York By-law 1-83. While By-law 569-2013 is approved and in-force, its status before the Ontario Municipal Board means that the underlying by-laws 438-86 and 1-83 still apply. As such, any amendments made to By-law 569-2013 will also need to be made to 438-86 and 1-83.

Under By-law 569-2013, all properties in the Study Area are zoned either the CR ('commercial residential'), R ('residential'), or O ('open space') zones. At the western end of the Study Area, a number of properties fall under either Former City of York By-law No. 1-83 or Former City of Toronto By-law 438-86. Again, these properties are zoned either CR or R under these by-laws.

As-of-right height and density permissions range from 9 metres (1.0 to 2.0x FSI) for the R zones on the western portion of the Study Area to 14 metres (2.5xFSI) in the CR zone of Bloor West Village and up to 23 metres (2.0xFSI) in the R zones of the eastern portion of the Study Area. The 23 metre R zone corresponds to the *Apartment Neighbourhoods* designation of the Official Plan.

A number of site specific zoning by-laws currently exist within the Study Area to address the more recent developments that range in height from 8 to 12 storeys and densities from 4.36xFSI to 7.05xFSI.

### 3.3. BRINGING PLANNING POLICY UP TO DATE

Planning policy for the Study Area is sometimes inconsistent. For example, zoning height permissions do not reflect the Mid-Rise Performance Standards and the *Avenues* overlay (where intensification is expected) and overlaps with areas designated as Neighbourhoods (where it is not). Part of the purpose of this Avenue Study is to make planning policy consistent with the City's and the stakeholders' intentions for the area. The Avenue Study will result in a coordinated and consistent vision for the area.

### 3.4. OTHER KEY POLICY AND GUIDELINE DOCUMENTS

Other key City of Toronto policy and guideline documents relevant to the Study Area include the following:

#### Green Development Standards

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

City Council approved in 2009 and updated in 2018 the Toronto Green Standard, a two-tier set of environmental performance measures applied during the planning process to create more sustainable developments and help build a resilient city. Also in 2009, Council adopted the City's Green Roof By-law.

#### Bird Friendly Guidelines

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

The 2007 first edition of the Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines offer a comprehensive list of strategies to make new and existing buildings less dangerous to migratory birds. It greatly assisted in drawing attention to the need to mitigate the dangers the urban environment poses to migrating birds and demonstrated how we can all play a role in reducing migratory bird deaths.

The City has since produced two companion documents that support the application of the Toronto Green Standard: "Bird Collision

Deterrence" and "Light Pollution" performance measures. These documents build and expand on the City's original work. Much has been learned since the original guidelines were developed. These two documents supersede the information found in the original guidelines.

#### Bio-diverse Green Roof Guidelines

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

Toronto recently became the first city in North America to release guidelines that encourage green roofs to be designed with biodiversity in mind. This follows Toronto's introduction in 2010 of North America's first Green Roof Bylaw to require and govern the construction of green roofs.

The Biodiverse Green Roof Guidelines provide simple strategies, including a comprehensive list of suitable plants, recommended growing depths and composition, and ideas for creating habitat aimed at specific species. The guidelines complement the existing Green Roof Construction Standard Supplementary Guidelines, and are intended to inspire green roof creators to design for all of the inhabitants of the city. Primarily aimed at architects and landscape architects, the guidelines will be of interest to anyone who wants to understand how green roofs can become part of the larger urban ecosystem.



### **Ravine Strategy**

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/parks-forestry-recreation/ravine-strategy/>

Toronto's first Ravine Strategy will help to support a ravine system that is a natural, connected sanctuary essential for the health and well-being of the city, where use and enjoyment support protection, education and stewardship. The Strategy provides a strong framework for future decision making in ravines. It will help to better manage the multiple pressures and interests in these landscapes while ensuring that the foundation for all decisions is maintenance of a healthy ravine system that connects people with nature in a positive and sustainable way. The Ravine Strategy will help to find the balance between activities that are good for people, but also good for ravines.

### **Wet Weather Flow Master Plan**

<https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/water-environment/managing-rain-melted-snow/the-citys-wet-weather-flow-master-plan/>

Toronto City Council adopted the Wet Weather Flow Master Plan (WWFMP) and a 25-Year Implementation Plan in 2003. The goal of the WWFMP is to reduce and ultimately eliminate

the adverse impacts of wet weather flow, which is generated by runoff when it rains or snows, to protect our environment, and improve the ecosystem health of the watersheds.

### **Wet Weather Flow(WWF) Management Policy and WWF Management Guidelines**

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/9191-wwfm-guidelines-2006-AODA.pdf>

This Policy, also adopted by City Council, uses the associated Management Guidelines as the technical document to define the requirements for managing water quantity, water quality, and water balance for redevelopment of private lands within the City of Toronto.

### **Green Street Technical Guidelines**

<https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/enhancing-our-streets-and-public-realm/green-streets/>

Toronto's 2017 Green Streets Technical Guidelines provide direction for the planning, design, integration and maintenance of a range of green infrastructure options appropriate for Toronto street types and conditions. The Toronto Green Standard identifies key environmental pressures which helped to categorize the green infrastructure techniques with direct benefits for: air quality, climate change mitigation and energy efficiency, water quality and quantity management, ecology and solid waste management.

### **Bike Plan and Cycling Network Plan**

<https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/cycling-in-toronto/cycle-track-projects/cycling-network-10-year-plan/>

The 2001 Bike Plan aims to significantly increase cycling as a viable travel mode, while also improving bike safety and reducing bicycle collisions and injuries, increase bicycle parking, integrate cycling with transit, create bicycle friendly streets, build a city wide bikeway network, and promote cycling in the City. The 2016 Cycling Network Plan update identifies Bloor Street West as it passes through the Study Area as a major corridor for future study.

### **Streetscape Manual**

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

The City of Toronto Streetscape Manual is an urban design reference tool for the improvement of the City's arterial street network—the Main Streets and Green Streets that define and connect neighbourhoods. The Manual focuses on design quality in the public right-of-way, with an emphasis on coherence, beauty, durability, accessibility, pedestrian amenity and tree canopy. The design treatments specified in the Manual centre on

five streetscape elements—paving, street trees, medians, lighting and street furniture. When applied over time, these design treatments will enhance the appearance, health and enjoyment of the urban landscape.

### **Tree Planting Solutions in Hard Surface Boulevards**

[No website link available at time of report.](#)

The City of Toronto has established a goal to increase both the number and size of its street trees as a crucial component in healthy city infrastructure. The City aims to grow large-canopy trees in hard boulevard surfaces that have a complete 40+ year life span and are 40 cm in diameter at breast height. The manual examines and provides cost-efficient options to reach this goal. The manual includes guiding principles for larger, healthier street trees; proposes three different construction methods to grow trees in sidewalks; details and specifications that include rainwater harvesting and horticultural needs; and documents demonstration projects testing utility access for installations and repairs.

### **Complete Street Guidelines**

<https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/enhancing-our-streets-and-public-realm/complete-streets/complete-streets-guidelines/>

The City of Toronto has developed Complete Streets Guidelines to provide a holistic approach for how to design safe, equitable, efficient and beautiful city streets. This effort builds on many of the City's existing policies, guidelines and recent successful street design and construction projects.