

Planning Context

Official Plan

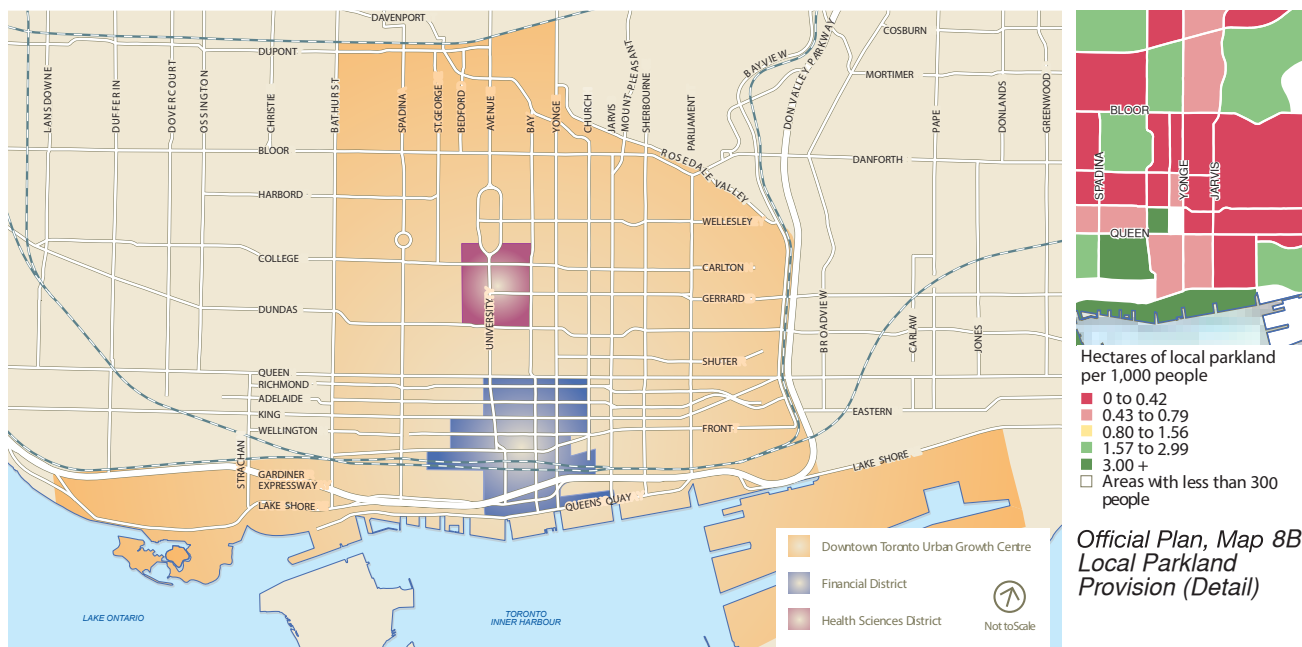
On July 27th, 2018, the City of Toronto Council adopted the Downtown Official Plan Amendment (OPA 406) to implement the comprehensive work undertaken as part of the TOcore initiative, which introduces substantial changes to the policy framework in the Study Area. These changes include significant rewriting of Section 2.2.1, revisions to Map 6 and the introduction of a new Downtown Plan, which provides more detailed guidance for future development and investment in the defined Downtown. This policy review considers the City of Toronto Official Plan with OPA 406 in place. OPA 406 was submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review and approval. The findings included in this report reflect the City's version of OPA 406 prior to amendments provided by the provincial government.

Section 2.2.1 Downtown: The Heart of Toronto

Map 6 identifies the Study Area as being within the Downtown Urban Growth Centre, which will be planned to achieve a minimum density of 400 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031. The Downtown plays a key role in establishing Toronto's identity and is where residents and visitors experience public life most directly, with a diverse mix of institutional, office, cultural and high density residential uses concentrated within a highly connected public realm.

The Downtown will continue to accommodate development which supports its role as the largest economic node in the city and region, with the Financial District as the prime location for prestige commercial office. The Official Plan further recognizes the critical role of the public realm within the Downtown and states that investment by the City, other levels of government and public/private partnerships will focus on improved linkages to open spaces and key destinations, expanded active transportation and transit infrastructure, maintaining high quality and resilient infrastructure and supporting "Priority Retail Streets" and specialty districts.

More generally, the Official Plan identifies the importance of improving and ensuring the high quality maintenance of public amenities, infrastructure, streets and open spaces as well as preserving historic character through design guidelines. Within the Downtown, a priority is placed on improving walking, cycling and transit access, with the objective to implement street improvements to ensure that these networks are safe, convenient and comfortable. Map 8B identifies that the Study Area, as well as much of the Downtown, is located within areas with the lowest per capita parkland provision and therefore the Official Plan identifies enhancing and acquiring new parkland as key priorities.



Official Plan, Map 6: Downtown Toronto Urban Growth Centre

Official Plan, Map 8B: Local Parkland Provision (Detail)

Designations

Map 18 of the Official Plan designates the majority of the Study Area as “Mixed Use Areas”, with some limited properties as “Parks”.

Mixed Use Areas are intended to accommodate a broad range of uses permitting residents to live, work and shop in the same area. Mixed Use Areas are also intended to create animated streets and communities, and reduce car dependency. It is anticipated that Mixed Use Areas will absorb most of Toronto’s growth in retail, office, and service/ commercial uses, as well as a significant portion of residential development. However, the proportion of uses and intensity of development will differ between Mixed Use Areas across the City.

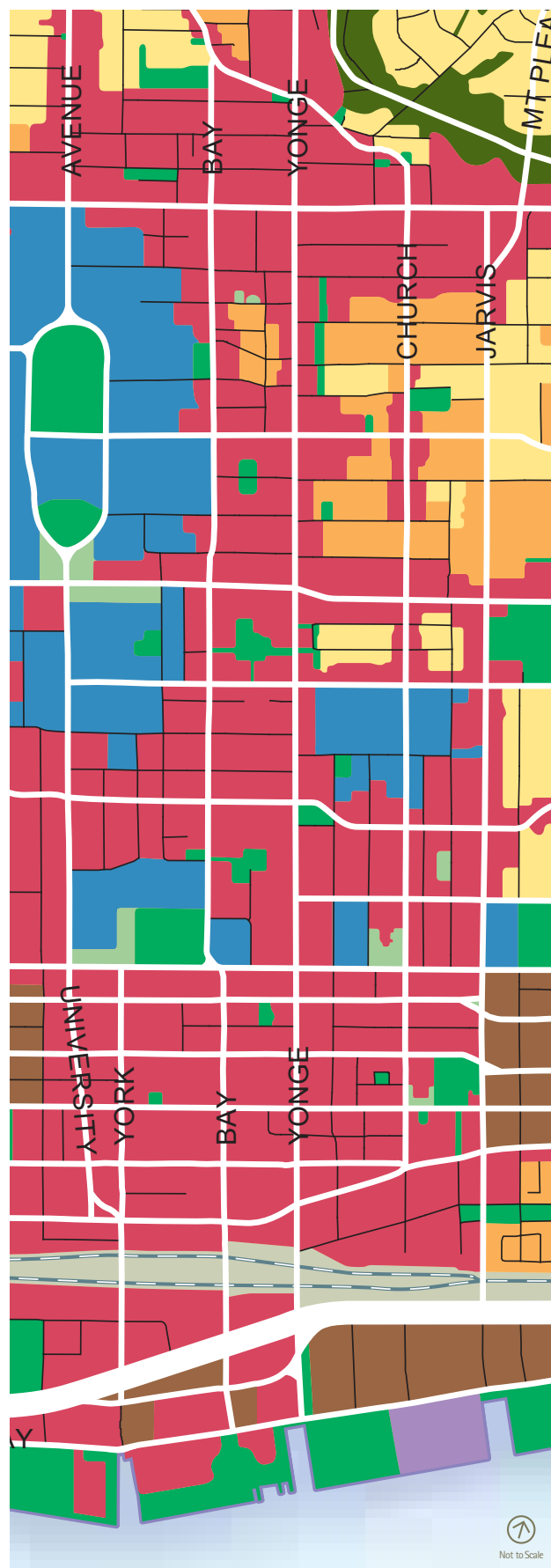
The Official Plan states that a range of commercial, residential, and institutional uses, as well as parks and open spaces, are permitted in the Mixed Use Areas and establishes a set of development criteria to guide future growth. These criteria require new development to provide the following:

- An appropriate balance of uses;
- Ensure massing does not negatively impact surrounding properties;
- Contribute to a pleasant pedestrian environment;
- Provide the appropriate level of services and amenities; and,
- Develop an efficient transportation network which takes advantage of transit services.

Lands designated as Parks primarily include public parks and recreational opportunities, forming a key part of the green open space network in Toronto. Development is generally prohibited within this designation, with the exception of recreation and cultural facilities, cemetery facilities, transit and other public or accessory facilities, where supported by appropriate assessment. Any development must demonstrate that it protects or improves the public open space.

Land Use Designations

Neighbourhoods	Institutional Areas
Apartment Neighbourhoods	Regeneration Areas
Mixed Use Areas	Employment Areas
Natural Areas	Utility Corridors
Parks	
Other Open Space Areas	



Official Plan, Map 18 Land Use Plan (enlarged)