

Kensington Market

Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan

Community Consultation Meeting #4 – Summary Report



November 18, 2024

4:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Prepared by LURA Consulting for the City of Toronto

Introduction

Project History

The Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is a vibrant neighbourhood known for its eclectic architecture, bustling sidewalks, and multi-cultural and counter-cultural traditions. Several waves of immigration from the late 19th century to the present have left a lasting impression on the neighbourhood, with each generation contributing to the overall character and dynamism of Kensington Market.

In the Spring of 2016, with Council Direction, City Planning staff initiated the first step of developing an HCD, the HCD Study. The HCD Study includes historical research, a built-form survey, analysis and evaluation to determine if the study area warrants designation as an HCD. In September 2017, the Toronto Preservation Board endorsed the HCD Study report with a recommendation to develop an HCD Plan for Kensington Market.

In the Spring of 2019, City Planning staff initiated the HCD Plan process. This process includes developing policies and guidelines to conserve the area's heritage value and community and stakeholder consultation. Between Spring 2019 and Fall 2024, City staff hosted a series of consultations with the Community Advisory Group (CAG), composed of local community members, to gather input and explore detailed elements of the plan development. The City held a series of consultations facilitated by Innovation 7, an Indigenous engagement and consultation firm, to obtain input from urban Indigenous communities between Summer 2023 and Spring 2024. A Community Consultation Meeting was held in October 2023 to gather community insights. The final HCD report is anticipated to be presented to the Toronto Preservation Board, Community Council, and City Council at the start of 2025.

Proposed HCD Boundary

The District is located between College Street to the north, Dundas Street West to the south, Bathurst Street to the west, and Spadina Avenue to the east. It excludes Toronto Western Hospital, the low-scale parking garage at 55 Leonard Avenue, and properties fronting onto College Street, Dundas Street West, Bathurst Street, and Spadina Avenue. The boundary runs along the rear lot lines of properties on the west side of Lippincott Street, and side lot lines of properties located at the edge of the District on Oxford, Nassau, Baldwin, St. Andrew, Casimir, and Hickory streets, and Bellevue, Denison, Augusta, and Kensington avenues. It includes the full right-of-way of streets wholly contained within the District, except along the western boundary adjacent to Toronto Western Hospital, where the boundary follows the centreline of Carlyle Street, Wales Avenue, Leonard Avenue, and Nassau Street. Any heritage buildings located along the major edge streets of College Street, Dundas Street West, Bathurst Street, and Spadina Avenue will be considered for individual heritage protection separately from the HCD Plan.

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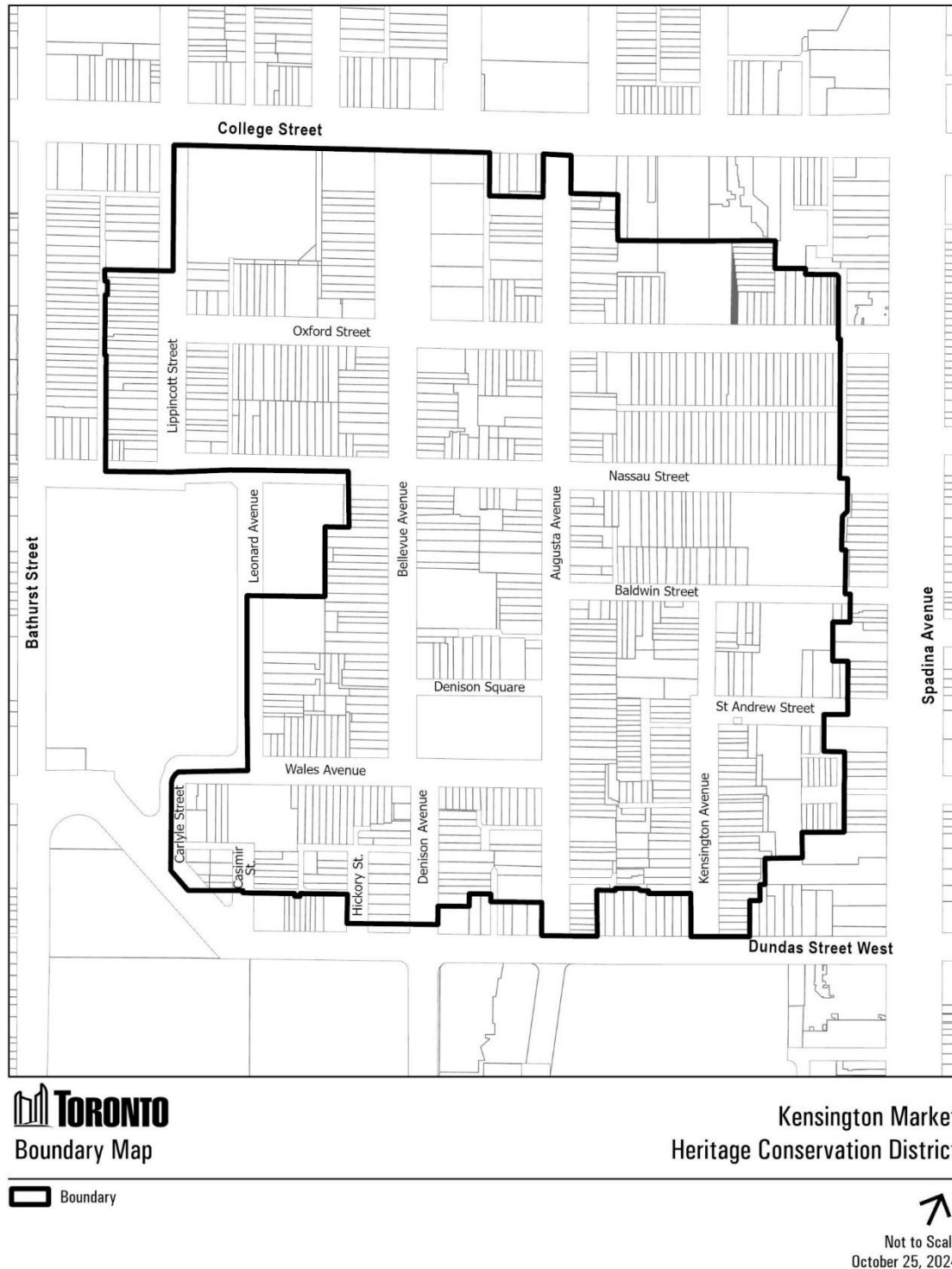


Figure 1: Kensington Market HCD Plan Area

More information about the Kensington Market HCD Plan is available on the City of Toronto's [website](#).

Community Consultation Meeting #4

Meeting Objectives

Community engagement is an important component of the HCD Planning process. The City of Toronto hosted its fourth Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District Community Consultation Meeting in-person on November 18, 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Provide updates on the Kensington Market HCD Plan since the previous Community Consultation meeting in October 2023
- Present the HCD boundary, Statement of Objectives, and Heritage Attributes
- Summarize the policy directions that have been developed for contributing and non-contributing properties in the HCD
- Answer questions about the HCD Plan process and policy approaches
- Document feedback on the HCD policy approaches and other proposed HCD Plan elements

A copy of the meeting notice is included in **Appendix A**.

Meeting Format

The Community Consultation Meeting was held on November 18, 2024, from 4:00 - 7:30 pm at St. Stephen-in-the-Fields Church (103 Bellevue Avenue, Toronto, ON, M5T 2N8). An open house format allowed participants to review material on presentation boards at their own pace and speak to staff and the consultant team if they had questions or feedback. The material was posted to the project website in advance of the meeting. City of Toronto staff were present and supported by third-party facilitators, LURA Consulting.

Thirty-eight (38) people signed in at the meeting, and four (4) participants shared their feedback through a comment form. One (1) additional online survey and email response was provided following the meeting.

Summary of Feedback – What We Heard

The following summarizes the feedback from the comment forms, display boards, and discussions with the project team. The finalized HCD Plan recommendations will be based on a range of information sources and analysis, including reviewing community inputs. [Display boards](#) are available on the City of Toronto's Kensington Market HCD Plan page.

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General Comments

- Many participants are generally supportive of the HCD plan moving forward.
- Participants are seeking clarification of the upcoming HCD regulations compared to policies within the Downtown Secondary Plan.
- Participants are interested in ensuring the HCD Plan does not inhibit the neighbourhood's ability to continue evolving as it has over the years.

District Significance -Recognizing the Intangible Values

- Participants are concerned that the HCD Plan is too rigid and focuses too much on the built environment. Participants want the plan to allow neighbourhoods to show the diversity of the population in the neighbourhood and its character.
- Participants asked how the HCD would preserve the intangible heritage component of Kensington Market.

Feedback on HCD Boundary and Market Character Sub-Area

- Participants shared that surrounding streets such as College, Dundas, and Spadina should be included within the HCD boundaries.
- Some participants inquired about the methodology used to define the HCD Plan boundary. They also wonder why some laneway properties are not identified as contributing properties.
- Participants expressed concern about excluding specific properties from the HCD and wished to better understand the process for excluding properties from the HCD.
- Participants expressed the need to emphasize Kensington Market's distinct character compared to its surroundings.
- Participants noted there are more contributing properties in the residential area of Kensington Market and fewer on Augusta Avenue.

Feedback on HCD Plan Statement of Objectives

- A participant commented that new buildings should be required to align with the existing character of Kensington Market.

Feedback on Policy and Guidelines

Contributing Properties

- Participants shared that some contributing properties are not aesthetically pleasing.
- Some participants are concerned that unaesthetically pleasing housing will deter other new housing developments.
- Individuals suggested:
 - Remove all constraints that do not directly contribute towards the function and liveability of the neighbourhood. They shared that narrow frontage, narrow streets laneways, various allowable uses, and shallow setbacks contribute to the

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character of the neighborhood, while Victorian decorative features, rooflines, windows, do not. They suggested promoting the spirit of Kensington Market more instead of conformity.

- Retaining flexibility of use which has allowed the neighbourhood to evolve to meet people's needs for commercial, residential and beyond. For example, flexibility can be maintained by expanding the mixed commercial/residential zoning and increasing allowable density on the peripheral streets like Bellevue, Lippincott, Oxford, and Nassau.
- Retain mixed-use to emphasize all functions and activities.
- Attendees expressed support that contributing properties would need to be conserved in three dimensions and not only the façade.
- Some participants shared that they love living in the area and have invested in appropriate materials to rehabilitate their property.

Additions and Massing

- Some participants inquired about height limits for new development and laneway properties.
- Some attendees asked about the difference between one and two-storey commercial additions. They suggested that the proposed wording in the HCD draft materials makes it seem as two-storey additions are more important.
- Individuals expressed support for:
 - Allowing rear additions and that they can make them visible from the street.
 - Flexibility of alterations on the ground floor.
- An individual suggested increasing the allowed height to at least six (6) stories throughout the Market to allow more people to live there.

Storefronts and Wall Composition

- Individuals expressed support for:
 - Narrow storefront widths.
 - Preserving and expanding the street market frontages.
- People value the build outs, and do not want them removed.
- A participant inquired about including a photo of the art on the side of the lofts building.
- Some attendees were concerned about requirements for at-grade entrances.

Windows, Doors, Entrances, Porches, & Balconies

- Participants asked about window and door alterations and the ability to build additions and carry out alterations as directed by policy and guidelines.
- Some participants would like clarity in the meaning of legibility with respect for windows and door alterations.
- Individuals suggested that the HCD Plan includes no restrictions on windows.

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Roof and Exterior Walls

- Participants commented that new developments should not be allowed to have flat roofs. They suggested that a gable roof would better fit in with the streetscape.
- Individuals expressed support for a flexible approach to over-cladding. They shared that this allows homes to be more energy efficient.

Public Realm and Landscape

- A participant noted Pedestrian Sundays bring many people to the Market and cause crowding at locations such as the grocery store.
- Some participants suggested placing a maximum cap on restaurant and bar uses throughout the Market, more than just square footage.
- Participants suggested allowing new murals on buildings.
- Participants expressed support in finding opportunities to acknowledge and honour the history and ongoing presence of Indigenous people in the district, including through visual representation of Indigenous heritage.
- Attendees expressed support for flexibility in commercial signage.
- Some participants are concerned about the safety of Sonya's Park.

Feedback on HCD Implementation and Financial Implications

- Participants raised concerns about:
 - The perceived negative impact of heritage designation on property values.
 - Property taxes, especially in business.
 - Maintaining building conditions, specifically the building foundation and the cost of repairs for a contributing property. Some said demolishing and replacing the building would be cheaper for them.
- Participants are interested in learning more about the HCD Plan timelines, appeal processes, and next steps.
- There was a suggestion to offer information for about the heritage incentive grant program and the application form in different languages.

Feedback Relating to Affordability and Affordable Housing

- Participants are concerned about the HCD impact on the nearby CreateTO affordable housing project at 35 Bellevue Avenue.
- A participant was concerned about emphasizing preserving the height, massing, and design features of Victorian homes without considering the spirit of affordability.

Kensington Market Safe Streets Project Comments

- Several participants expressed concerns about the Kensington Market Safe Streets project. They are particularly concerned about making changes to Bellevue Avenue.

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- Participants are concerned about street reconstruction and the potential harmful impacts on features such as pavers, roller curbs, and pedestrianization.
- Participants want to understand the relationship between the Kensington Market Safe Street Project and the HCD Plan.
- A participant supported street pedestrianization similar to the EU countries.

Consultation Suggestions

- Participants are happy with the Community Consultation Meeting and its format.
- Some participants have questions about the next steps for the Kensington HCD Plan timeline and the appeal process.

Other Suggestions, Concerns or Questions

- Participants are interested in how encroachments contribute to the character of the Market. Some shared it made sense not to address encroachments as heritage attributes as it would be difficult to alter them.
- Individual suggested:
 - Removal of on-street parking and the ability to set price to market rate to align incentives and reduce concerns of gentrification.
 - Provide funding for structures to allow mixed commercial/residential/cultural districts to exist.
 - Ways for the City to support traditional fruit/vegetable stands at Kensington Market.
- Many participants advocated for no condominium development in the area.
- Many participants inquired which aspects of contributing properties are most important to retain and whether interiors of buildings within the HCD can be altered. Staff confirmed that the HCD policies do not apply to the interiors of buildings.

Next Steps

The project team will review the feedback received and consider it as one of many inputs to inform the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan for Kensington Market. The finalized HCD Plan will be shared with the Toronto Preservation Board in early 2025.

[Appendix A – Notice of Community Consultation Meeting](#)

The meeting notice is available on the following page.

TORONTO Community Consultation Open House

Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District Plan

As Toronto grows and changes, historic buildings and landscapes play a crucial role in creating a sense of place. Kensington Market is a unique place with a vibrant character and cultural heritage significance. City Planning is hosting a Community Consultation Open House to gather community input and feedback on the proposed Kensington Market Heritage Conservation District (HCD). This consultation will help inform the finalization of the HCD Plan for consideration by the Toronto Preservation Board and Community Council in January.

The event will be a “drop-in” format and will feature display boards explaining the draft HCD Plan, including the district’s cultural heritage value and objectives, draft policies and guidelines, and the heritage permit process. Participants will have the opportunity to meet City staff and the project team from Heritage Planning, ask questions, and provide comments.

**When: Monday, November 18, 2024
4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

Where: St. Stephen-in-the-Fields Church, 103 Bellevue Avenue
College Street entrance

The Kensington Market HCD Study Area (see map) has a concentration of heritage buildings and landscapes that distinguishes it from its surroundings and merits protection as a district under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The draft HCD Plan is being developed through a collaborative process, which has included extensive consultation with a Community Advisory Group over several years.

If you are not able to attend the event, the Open House display boards will be made available online.



For more information about the HCD Plan including answers to frequently asked questions, scan the QR code to the left or visit:

www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/kensington-market-heritage-conservation-district-plan/

Contact: Tatum Taylor Chaubal, Senior Heritage Planner, at Tatum.Taylor@toronto.ca or 416-338-5462

Contact: Councillor Saxe at Councillor.Saxe@toronto.ca or 416-392-4009

If you require special assistance, please contact Emma Doedens, Heritage Planner, at 416-392-7612 or emma.doedens@toronto.ca

