

34. QUEEN-RIVER SECONDARY PLAN

Toronto Official Plan – Chapter 6, Section 34

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Queen-River area is approximately 6.4 hectares and is located at the eastern edge of the *Downtown* as shown on Map 34-1. Historically, the area was home to breweries, other manufacturing uses, and low-rise residential houses. Today, the area is comprised of a number of privately owned properties, big and small, containing a mix of commercial, institutional and residential uses. Much of the area has been built-out and contains a variety of building forms including semi-detached houses, townhouses, automobile dealerships and low-rise office buildings. The eastern edge of the Queen-River area is partially within a provincially regulated floodplain and slope hazard associated with the Don Valley.

The Queen-River area has been slowly changing as vacant and underutilized sites have been redeveloped. Residential uses have become more common in the area. In addition, the areas surrounding Queen-River are undergoing significant changes. To the west, revitalization efforts are transforming Regent Park into a vibrant mixed-use and mixed-income neighbourhood with enhanced parks and community services. South of Queen-River, development in the West Don Lands is turning the former industrial area into a mixed-use community comprised of low and mid-rise buildings with taller buildings at strategic locations. Approximately 30 percent of the land area in the West Don Lands is to be used as parks and public spaces.

As interest in redeveloping underutilized sites to include residential uses continues, planning policies are needed to ensure that future development and reinvestment in the Queen-River area addresses:

- 1.1. the relationship between the existing and emerging area context;
- 1.2. the role existing buildings play in determining compatible built form;
- 1.3. the appropriate interface between residential and non-residential uses;
- 1.4. the promotion of new non-residential uses;
- 1.5. the compatibility of new development with the environmental challenges brought forward by the Don Valley and the provincially-regulated floodplain related to the Don River; and
- 1.6. public realm improvements, introducing new open spaces and connections to help achieve a more complete community.

2. VISION AND GOALS

2.1. Vision

2.1.1. Finding the Right Balance for New Growth within Queen-River

This Secondary Plan establishes a vision and policies for development in the area that seek to maintain the established stable residential neighbourhoods while allowing for a greater intensity of built form on some of its larger sites, primarily by allowing for the introduction of taller buildings on a small number of sites in the Secondary Plan area. Where tall buildings are introduced, they will be characterized by generous tower separations or spacing distances which address the existing and planned context of the area to ensure the prevailing character of the area is one of mixed built form and use. To this end, the Secondary Plan policies establish the maximum number of tall buildings to be allowed within the area. The policies also help protect the existing low-rise residential neighbourhood areas from negative impacts associated with this more intense form of development such as increased shadowing and reduced access to

skyview, light and privacy.

2.1.2. Promoting a Mix of Uses

The Queen-River area continues to contain a number of viable non-residential uses as well as an established and growing residential community. As new development proceeds, particular attention will be paid to the interface between non-residential and residential land uses to ensure their compatibility and to maintain and promote a viable environment for non-residential uses.

2.1.3. Creating a Sense of Place and Identity

A high quality and generous public realm is a key component of a healthy, liveable and safe community. This Secondary Plan includes policies to make the area more attractive and liveable by fostering high quality outdoor spaces that: include attractive tree lined streets, parks, publicly accessible open spaces; improve connectivity within the area and the surrounding areas; and improve physical and visual access to the Don Valley.

2.2. **Goals**

2.2.1. The Queen-River Secondary Plan provides planning policy that balances the need for more intensive forms of regeneration with the need to recognize and improve existing buildings and their accompanying uses in the area. It will be implemented as underutilized sites are redeveloped over time. The goals of the Secondary Plan are to:

- a) identify appropriate locations for growth while ensuring new development is compatible with the existing and planned context;
- b) ensure that new development respects and reinforces the existing and planned built form character of the surrounding area;
- c) ensure that existing stable residential uses continue to have access to skyview, light and privacy by requiring new development to provide appropriate separation distances and transitions in building height and massing to lower-scaled residential *Neighbourhoods*;
- d) reinforce the prevailing character of low and midrise buildings while allowing for a limited number of tall buildings;
- e) preserve existing employment and accommodate growth of non-residential uses;
- f) ensure that new development addresses the interface between residential uses and non-residential uses in order to encourage the retention of commercial uses within the area by minimizing conflicts between land uses; and
- g) provide a framework for coordinated improvements to the public realm including streetscape improvements, the creation of new publicly accessible open spaces, improved community connectivity within the area and to the surrounding areas, and improved physical and visual access to the Don Valley.

3. **LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

Land Use Designations for the Queen-River Secondary Plan are shown on Map 34-1. Lands will be developed in conformity with the policies of the Official Plan including the *Neighbourhoods* land use policies which limit growth in stable residential areas and the *Mixed Use Areas* policies which provide opportunities for growth. The policies of the Official Plan will continue to apply,

with some of these policies being further modified and enriched by the Queen-River Secondary Plan to address the local context and achieve the goals of this Secondary Plan. These more detailed or context derived policies are intended to work together with the Official Plan policies; however, should conflict arise between the two, the policies of this Secondary Plan will prevail.

The development policies in this Secondary Plan are divided into two sections. The first section includes area specific policies that apply to the land use designations as identified on Map 34-1. The second section contains policies that apply to the entire Secondary Plan area.

3.1. **Mixed Use Area 'A'**

Mixed Use Area 'A' is the eastern most area on the south side of Dundas Street East in the area identified as the *Downtown* and Central Waterfront on Map 2 - Urban Structure of the Official Plan. The area is surrounded by residential and commercial uses in lower-scale buildings and by underutilized sites where new development is expected. The existing surrounding buildings as well as the Regent Park revitalization west of *Mixed Use Area 'A'*, informs the built form and streetscape character for this section of Dundas Street East.

Mixed Use Area 'A' is expected to accommodate future growth. New development should better integrate the built form and streetscape of this area with the Regent Park redevelopment along Dundas Street East while taking into account the adjacent existing built form. This area also provides one of the few opportunities to increase connectivity to, and within, the Queen-River area. A pedestrian connection to Defries Street will be established through this site. The ground floor uses of buildings along this pedestrian connection will be used to animate this space.

- 3.1.1. A maximum of one tall building, consisting of a base building and tower, may be permitted within *Mixed Use Area 'A'*.
- 3.1.2. The tall building will have a maximum height of 88 metres.
- 3.1.3. The tower portion of a tall building in the area will be located on the eastern portion of *Mixed Use Area 'A'* in order to limit the shadow, overlook and loss of privacy impacts for properties.
- 3.1.4. An outdoor pedestrian connection from Dundas Street East to Defries Street will be required as generally shown on Map 34-2 as part of the development approvals process for new development in *Mixed Use Area 'A'*.
- 3.1.5. The creation of a publicly accessible open space at the eastern end of Mark Street will be encouraged as part of the development approvals process for new development in *Mixed Use Area 'A'* in consultation with the appropriate City staff and external agencies.
- 3.1.6. New development shall be set back by a minimum of 10 metres from the stable top of bank of the Don River valley and locations where slope instability, erosion and flooding present a significant risk to life or property.
- 3.1.7. The City will actively pursue the provision of affordable housing units in new developments.

3.2. **Mixed Use Area 'B'**

Mixed Use Area 'B' is bordered by four streets, two of which terminate at the embankment adjacent to Bayview Avenue. This area is comprised of commercial uses contained in low-rise buildings. This secondary plan anticipates growth in this area and allows for one tower with a mix of residential and non-residential uses.

Redevelopment in this area should be designed to improve animation along the adjacent streets and improve the public realm including the possibility of creating a publicly accessible open space at the eastern end of Labatt Avenue that has the flexibility to connect to a future Bayview Avenue sidewalk. As the streets in this area are narrow, new development within this area should include an appropriately pedestrian-scaled streetwall so as to not overwhelm the public realm.

- 3.2.1. A maximum of one tall building, consisting of a 4-storey base building, an 11-storey middle component, and tower, may be permitted within *Mixed Use Area 'B'*.
- 3.2.2. The tall building will have a maximum height of 130.5 metres, including mechanical penthouse.
- 3.2.3. The creation of a publicly accessible open space at the eastern end of Labatt Avenue will be encouraged as part of the development approvals process for new development in *Mixed Use Area 'B'* in consultation with the appropriate City staff and external agencies.
- 3.2.4. New development shall be set back a minimum of 10 metres from the top of bank of the Don River valley and other locations where slope instability, erosion and flooding present a significant risk to life or property.

3.3. **Mixed Use Area 'C'**

Mixed Use Area 'C' is located approximately in the centre of the Queen-River area and marks the dividing line between the primarily residential uses in lower-scale buildings concentrated in the south of the Queen-River area and the non-residential uses on large lots that occupy a large portion of the north end of Queen-River. Redevelopment in this area should respect the existing character and height of the street wall on the east side of River Street. It should provide adequate separation and transition in built form to the low-scale residential uses immediately south of the area in order to mitigate the negative impacts of higher built form elements on low-scale areas such as overlook, reduced privacy and loss of sky view. Redevelopment in this area should provide significant improvements to the public realm including publicly accessible open space.

- 3.3.1. A maximum of one tall building, consisting of a 2-storey base building, a 10-storey middle component, and tower, may be permitted within *Mixed Use Area 'C'*.
- 3.3.2. The tall building will have a maximum height of 120 metres.
- 3.3.3. The creation of a publicly accessible open space in Mixed Use Area 'C' will be required as part of any significant development proposal and secured through the development approvals process.

3.4. **Mixed Use Area 'D'**

Mixed Use Area 'D' is located at the southern boundary of the Queen-River area within the predominantly low to mid-rise Corktown neighbourhood and immediately north of the West Don Lands. Redevelopment within this area will provide transition to the mid to low-rise stable *Neighbourhoods* to the north to reduce privacy and overlook concerns. New development will reinforce the pedestrian scale and character of Queen Street East. New development will provide high quality architecture and an animated street presence on Queen Street East.

- 3.4.1. A maximum of one tall building, consisting of a base building and tower, may be permitted within *Mixed Use Area 'D'*.

- 3.4.2. The tall building will have a maximum height of 47 metres. The stated maximum height limit for any proposed tall building within *Mixed Use Area 'D'* may only be achieved when the City is satisfied that the proposed development will not create any undue adverse impacts on adjacent properties related specifically to noise, shadow, wind, traffic, privacy and overlook.
- 3.4.3. Any redevelopment will be subject to the Provincial natural hazard policies to the satisfaction of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.
- 3.4.4. The City will actively pursue the provision of affordable housing units in new developments.

3.5. **Mixed Use Area 'E'**

Mixed Use Area 'E' is located on the east side of River Street between Dundas Street East and Labatt Avenue. Redevelopment in this area may include mid-rise buildings and up to two tall buildings in appropriate locations that provide for appropriate tower separation. Redevelopment should provide significant improvements to the public realm.

- 3.5.1. A maximum of two tall buildings, each consisting of a base building and tower, may be permitted within *Mixed Use Area 'E'*, provided that one tall building must be located north of Mark Street and the other tall building must be located adjacent to River Street and adjacent to the planned Park / Open Space located on the north side of Labatt Avenue.
- 3.5.2. Tall buildings in *Mixed Use Area 'E'* will have a maximum height of 106 metres.
- 3.5.3. New development in *Mixed Use Area 'E'* on lands adjacent to Labatt Avenue must implement the public realm improvements identified on Map 34-2 through a combination of parkland and publicly accessible open space, as appropriate.
- 3.5.4. New development in *Mixed Use Area 'E'* on lands adjacent to River Street and Dundas Street East should provide privately-owned publicly accessible space (POPS) adjacent to the existing open space feature located within the right-of-way on the southeast corner of River Street and Dundas Street East.
- 3.5.5. The City will actively pursue the provision of affordable housing units in new developments.

3.6. **Neighbourhoods**

There is one area identified as *Neighbourhoods* in the Queen-River Secondary Plan Area, which is located south of Labatt Street and *Mixed Use Area 'C'*. This area is made up of a mix of older and more recently constructed house-form buildings as well as historical commercial buildings that have been adapted and reused for residential and live/work uses. The built form and laneways in this area exhibit a character most closely related to the historic Corktown community of which it is a part. This *Neighbourhoods* designated area is considered a physically stable area.

- 3.6.1. A 5-storey mixed-use building is permitted on the property municipally known as 41 River Street.

3.7. **Existing Use Area**

This area contains commercial and office uses and is located in the south-east portion of the Queen-River area. It is subject to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority regulation and is within a floodplain which restricts future development/redevelopment opportunities. The

Queen-River Secondary Plan does not alter the existing development permissions in this area.

- 3.7.1. Existing uses and buildings will continue to be permitted in the area.
- 3.7.2. Minor additions, replacement structures, property improvements and ancillary structures may be permitted within this area subject to all requirements and conditions as set out by the City and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.
- 3.7.3. This Secondary Plan does not alter the existing development permissions in the area.
- 3.7.4. Access for trucks will be maintained for commercial and industrial uses within the Existing Uses Area.

4. GENERAL POLICIES

4.1. Built Form

The following built form policies represent key principles that are essential in implementing the vision of this Secondary Plan. In addition to the area specific policies, these general built form policies apply on an area-wide basis to help reduce the negative impacts associated with tall buildings such as increased shadowing and reduced access to sky view, light and privacy. They ensure new development fits within the existing and planned context, provides appropriate transitions to low-rise buildings and respects the scale and proportion of adjacent streets.

City of Toronto urban design guidelines, including those for tall buildings, mid-rise buildings and townhouses, will also be applied to the Queen-River Secondary Plan area as part of the development approval process, but do not form part of this plan.

4.1.1. Towers

- a) The tower portion of a tall building will be set back a minimum of 20 metres excluding balconies from the nearest property line of an area designated *Neighbourhoods*.
- b) Tall buildings are encouraged to have a floor plate no larger than 750 square metres, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of City Staff that the impact of a larger floor plate (sunlight/shadow, transition, sky view and wind) can be sufficiently mitigated.

4.1.2. Base buildings

- a) A base building height of up to approximately 100 percent of the widest adjacent right-of-way width may be permitted provided there is a base building step-back at a maximum height of approximately 80 percent of the adjacent right-of-way width.
- b) Base buildings will be designed to include step-backs and/or setbacks to limit shadow impacts on properties within areas designated *Neighbourhoods*.
- c) The portion of the base building immediately adjacent to lower-scale areas should be no higher than the height of adjacent buildings.
- d) The base building height may increase as the distance from the adjacent lower-scale buildings increases.

4.2. Public Realm

The public realm is comprised of streets, parks and other publicly owned and/or publicly accessible land. As the Queen-River area transitions to include more residential uses, public realm improvements are essential to create a more liveable community.

Opportunities for coordinated public realm improvements are limited due to the gradual nature of implementation and the lack of publicly owned lands within this Secondary Plan area. New developments in the area will be expected to contribute to public realm improvements by providing generous building setbacks, implementing an appropriate streetscape frontage, and through assisting with the creation of new parks and/or publicly accessible privately owned open space and connections between these spaces.

In keeping with the vision of this plan to create a high quality public realm that contributes to a healthy, liveable and safe community, streetscape improvements will be pursued in the Queen-River area, as outlined in the following policies and as shown on Map 34-2.

4.2.1. Laneway Improvements

- a) Laneway improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment and reflect “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” principles will be encouraged, where applicable, as part of the development approvals process.

4.2.2. Parks and Open Space

- a) Publicly accessible open space will be provided substantially in accordance with Map 34-2.
- b) Additional on-site publicly accessible open space will be encouraged as part of the development review process.
- c) The feasibility of removing the right turn channel at the southeast corner of River Street and Dundas Street East as shown on Map 34-2, and replacing it with a publicly accessible open space and related pedestrian amenities, will be reviewed and further evaluated by the City as part of future capital project considerations and/or as part of a community benefits related to the development approvals process for new developments in the area.

4.2.3. Pedestrian Connections

- a) New developments within *Mixed Use Area 'A'* will provide publicly accessible pedestrian route/open space on-site substantially in accordance with Map 34-2 as part of the development approvals process.
- b) The creation of a sidewalk or multi-use trail along the west side of Bayview Avenue outside the Queen-River boundary, as shown on Map 34-2, connecting the Queen-River area with the West Don Lands will be encouraged as part of future capital project considerations and/or as part of a community benefits related to the development approvals process for new developments in the area.

4.3. **Noise and Odour Mitigation**

4.3.1. New residential development will be appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from existing adjacent or nearby non-residential uses, as necessary, and to the satisfaction of the City to prevent or mitigate adverse effects from noise, vibration, traffic, and odour upon occupants of the new development.

4.3.2. New non-residential development will be appropriately designed, buffered and/or

separated from existing adjacent or nearby residential uses as necessary, and to the satisfaction of the City to prevent or mitigate adverse effects from noise, vibration, traffic, and odour upon occupants of the adjacent or near existing residential uses.

4.4. **Parking**

4.4.1. New surface parking lots and the significant expansion of existing surface parking are not permitted in the Queen-River Secondary Plan area unless it is used for the purposes of a vehicle display area for a motor vehicle establishment. Minor adjustments to existing surface parking lots that do not significantly increase the number of parking spaces are permitted.

4.5. **Height and/or Density Incentives**

The policies of Section 5.1.1 of the Official Plan regarding Section 37 of the *Planning Act* will apply to the Queen-River Secondary Plan Area with the additional following policy direction.

4.5.1. In determining community benefits the following will be considered priorities, although others may also be secured as appropriate, and should be considered in the context of the policies of the Queen-River Secondary Plan:

- a) sidewalk and/or multi-use trail along the west side of Bayview Avenue connecting the Queen-River area with the West Don Lands (located adjacent to the Secondary Plan area);
- b) laneway improvements that improve safety and enhance the pedestrian environment;
- c) the removal of the right turn channel at the southeast corner of River Street and Dundas Street East and replacement with a public plaza or landscaped open space, including pedestrian amenities; and
- d) the creation of publicly accessible open spaces and/or parkettes at the eastern terminus of Mark Street and Labatt Avenue as shown on Map 34-2.

Additional community improvements, services and facilities may be identified that are not outlined in the Secondary Plan as part of the review and development approvals process for new development in the area. Community services and facilities studies may be used to assist in this identification.

5. **INTERPRETATION**

5.1. The lands affected by the Queen-River Secondary Plan are shown on Map 34-1.

5.2. The boundaries of this area are approximate and minor adjustments do not require an Official Plan Amendment.

5.3. The Queen-River Secondary Plan should be read as a whole together with the policies of the Official Plan to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for decision making in the Queen-River area.

5.4. The policies of the Official Plan apply to the Queen-River area, unless otherwise stated in this Plan. Where there is a conflict between the policies of the Official Plan and those in the Secondary Plan, the Secondary Plan policies will prevail.

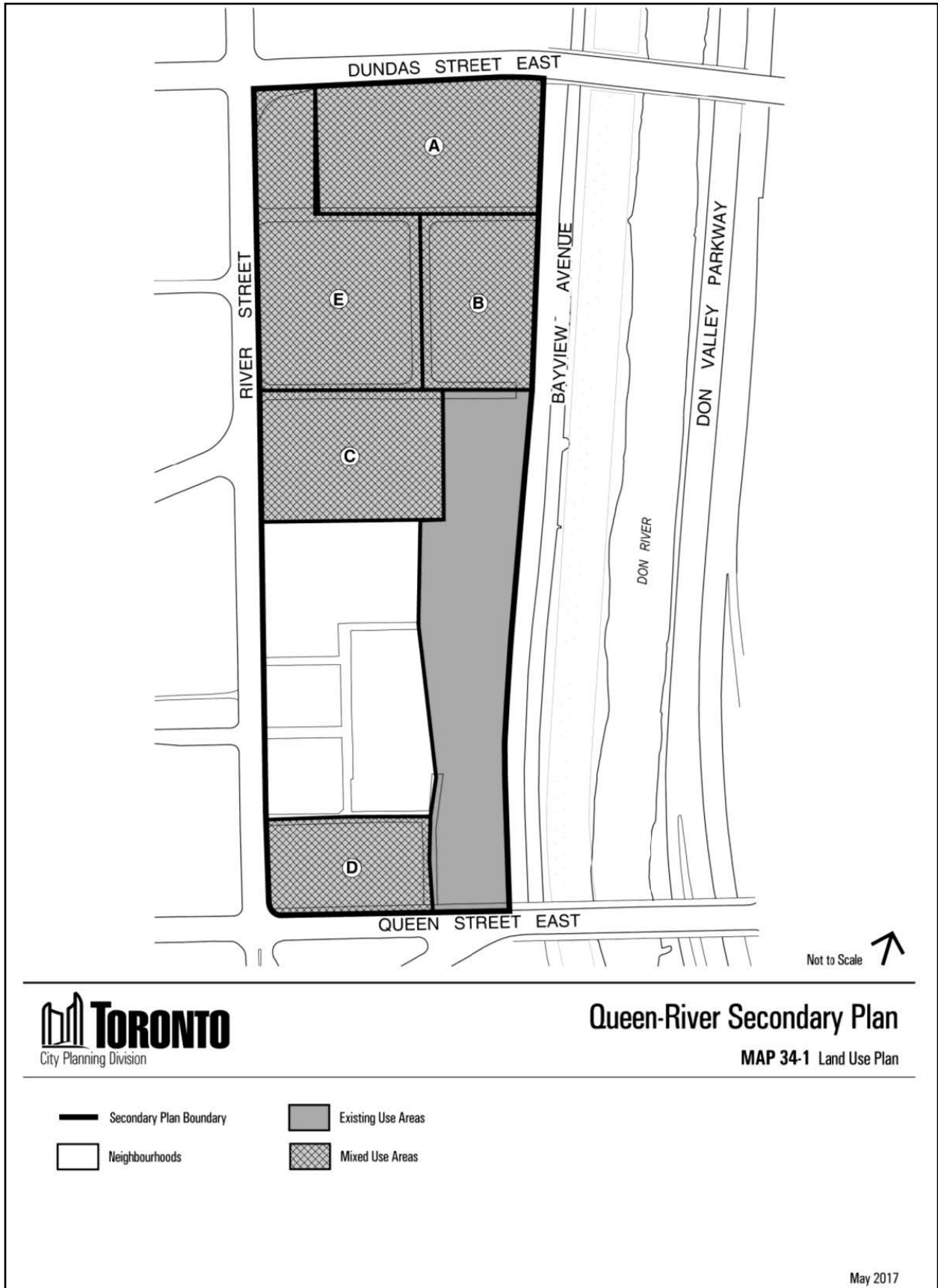
- 5.5. Building heights will be determined in accordance with the definitions in the in-force zoning by-law and does not include mechanicals, elevator shafts, parapets or other building elements to be determined through the development approval process.

6. MAPS

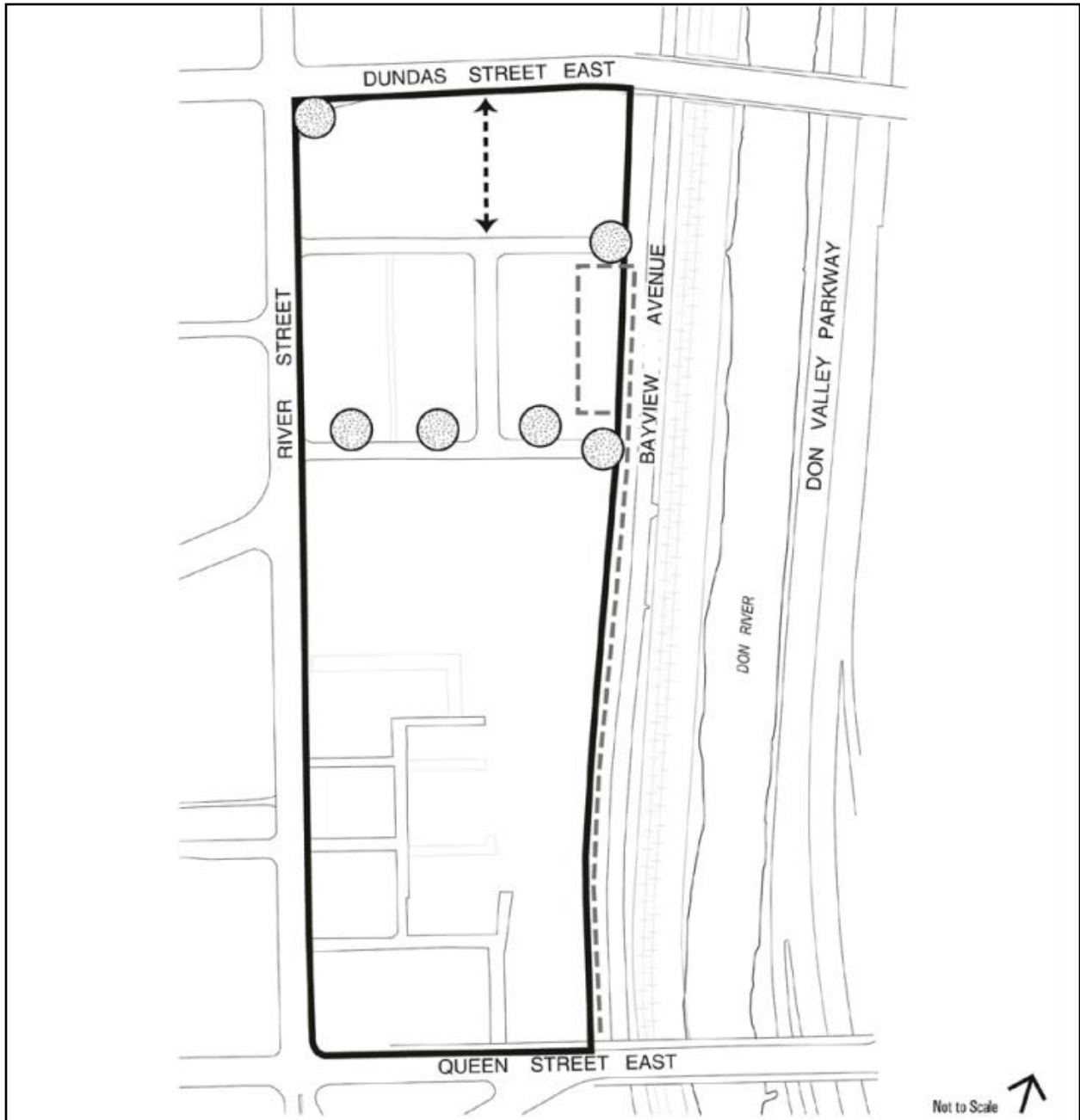
The maps listed below are shown on the pages that follow.

Map 34-1: Land Use Plan

Map 34-2: Public Realm Structure Plan



MAP 34-2: PUBLIC REALM PLAN



Queen-River Secondary Plan

MAP 34- 2 Public Realm Structure Plan

-  Secondary Plan Boundary
-  Mid-Block Walkways
-  Park / Open Space
-  Planned Pedestrian Route

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