

Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework

Where We Are and What's Next

A Project Guide and Resource

September 1, 2026

Introduction

The City is continuing work on the Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework, a multi-year planning initiative intended to guide future growth and development in the area.

The work builds on several years of community advocacy, City research, consultation and Council direction. Residents, businesses, community organizations and other stakeholders have raised issues including cultural identity, housing and commercial affordability, displacement, local business vitality, public realm improvements, and how future development can respond to the needs and character of the community.

The Planning Framework brings this work together within a planning context, informed by technical analysis, previous studies and engagement, ongoing consultation, applicable City policies and Council direction.

This document summarizes the work completed to date, what staff have heard, how feedback is considered, decisions made to date, upcoming engagement and next steps toward completing the Planning Framework.

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1. What is a Planning Framework?

A Planning Framework is a non-statutory planning document that provides guidance for future development and City initiatives within a defined area.

What is a Planning Framework?

A Planning Framework can help identify:

- the area's existing and desired character;
- priorities for future growth and development;
- public realm and streetscape priorities;
- built form and development considerations;
- cultural and community priorities relevant to planning; and
- connections between development and broader neighbourhood objectives.

What is a Planning Framework?

The Planning Framework does not replace the Official Plan, Zoning By-law or other statutory planning tools, and cannot by itself deliver all social, economic or housing outcomes identified through consultation.

It can help ensure that future development review reflects local conditions, community priorities and Council direction.

The work is proceeding through interconnected phases:

- understanding the area and previous work;
- developing draft directions;
- gathering public and stakeholder input;
- refining the Framework; and
- reporting to Planning and Housing Committee with recommendations.

The series of phases build on one another.

2. How the Project Came About

The draft Planning Framework was not developed with a blank slate.

Work on the Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework builds on several years of community advocacy, City research, engagement and Council direction.

Little Jamaica has long been recognized as an important Black and Caribbean cultural and commercial centre along Eglinton Avenue West.

Community leaders, businesses and residents have raised concerns about prolonged transit construction, the loss of Black-owned and operated businesses, housing and commercial affordability, displacement, neighbourhood change and the need to preserve and strengthen the area's cultural identity.

How the Project Came About

- In **2020**, City Council directed a coordinated response that included an interdivisional team, a Cultural District Plan, and a planning framework study to help guide future development including built form, public realm, retail space, and cultural heritage.
 - Council also directed that the work use an equity lens and include consultation with Black, Caribbean, equity-deserving and other local communities.
- In **2021**, Council directed staff to develop a broader Cultural Districts Program for Toronto.
 - Little Jamaica was identified as one of the communities that would help inform this work, which considered ways to strengthen culturally significant neighbourhoods, support local businesses and retail, promote community-owned spaces and identify planning and other tools to sustain cultural identity.

How the Project Came About

- By **2022**, these directions were being advanced through the Little Jamaica Initiative, an interdivisional effort covering anti-Black racism, housing, economic development, mobility, culture, development review and community services.
- Also in **2022**, Jay Pitter Placemaking began broad engagement related to the Cultural Districts Program and Little Jamaica through surveys, interviews, walking tours, an intergenerational community advisory group, participatory panels and workshops.
- Participants raised concerns about gentrification, displacement, affordability, cultural erasure, community ownership, culturally significant businesses, public space, arts and culture.

How the Project Came About

- Related City work has continued alongside the Planning Framework. In **2026**, staff brought forward a city-wide Cultural Districts Program proposing formal recognition of Little Jamaica as one of Toronto's initial Cultural Districts, together with capacity-building and potential tools to support culturally significant businesses and respond to commercial displacement.
- *The Planning Framework is one part of this broader work.* It brings together previous research, Council direction, technical planning analysis and community input to guide future development and planning decisions in Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan. The current phase of consultation provides opportunities to refine and update the work completed to date.

3. Consultation and Work to Date

Community engagement has been an important part of the work in Little Jamaica.

The current draft Planning Framework builds on several years of engagement undertaken through the Cultural Districts initiative and subsequent planning work.

Each stage has informed the work that followed.

Consultation and Work to Date - 2019

2019 - Preliminary Community and Stakeholder Discussions

- The roots of the current work extend back to at least 2019, when community organizations and local stakeholders were raising concerns and ideas about Little Jamaica and the surrounding area.
- City staff and the Ward 12 Councillor participated in community-led discussions on neighbourhood change, major infrastructure construction, local businesses, cultural identity and heritage, development pressures, and the importance of meaningful participation by Black residents, businesses and community organizations.
- These discussions helped establish the context for the City work and Council directions that followed.

Consultation and Work to Date - 2020

2020 - Council Direction and Formal City Response

- In 2020, Council directed a coordinated City response to issues raised through community advocacy and stakeholder discussions.
- Directions covered economic development, housing, cultural heritage, planning and community supports, including a Cultural District Plan and comprehensive planning framework study, with robust community engagement.

Consultation and Work to Date - 2021

2021 - Launch of the Little Jamaica Cultural District Work

- In March 2021, the City held a virtual community meeting to launch discussion about Little Jamaica and the Cultural Districts Program. Participants raised issues including:
 - recognition and protection of Black and Jamaican cultural heritage;
 - impacts of Eglinton Crosstown construction;
 - Cost of living, displacement and affordable housing;
 - support for Black-owned and independent businesses;
 - cultural and community spaces, public realm, parks and gathering places;
 - opportunities for youth, artists and cultural programming; and
 - continued community participation as the work progressed.
- These themes continued through later phases of the project.

Consultation and Work to Date – 2021-2022

2021-2022 - Development of the Cultural Districts Program

- The City undertook broader engagement to develop a city-wide Cultural Districts Program through a variety of engagement formats including an advisory group, working sessions, participatory panels, workshops, and discussions with community organizations and subject-matter experts.
- The engagement considered land-use planning, housing, public space, accessibility, Indigenous place-keeping, Black communities, small businesses, environmental sustainability and intergenerational placemaking.
- Recurring themes received in feedback included displacement, affordable housing and commercial space, accessible public spaces, community gathering places, support for locally rooted businesses and organizations, and meaningful opportunities for communities to shape change.

Consultation and Work to Date – 2022-2023

2022-2023 - Little Jamaica-Focused Planning and Place-making Research and Engagement

- Jay Pitter Placemaking then undertook a Little Jamaica-focused planning and place-making engagement process using multiple forms of outreach, including:
 - stakeholder interviews and review of community-produced reports and research;
 - a local advisory group and Deep Listening Circles;
 - community events and a regular presence at local businesses and community locations;
 - youth engagement and a design charrette;
 - informal conversations, community walks and asset mapping; and
 - engagement with businesses, community organizations, institutions, advocates, residents and other stakeholders.

Consultation and Work to Date – 2022-2023

Recurring themes received in feedback included:

- protecting and celebrating Black and Caribbean cultural identity;
- addressing displacement and housing affordability;
- supporting existing and locally rooted businesses;
- creating affordable cultural, commercial and community space;
- improving public spaces, amenities, mobility and accessibility;
- responding to construction and neighbourhood change; and
- ensuring that people of different ages, backgrounds and abilities can participate in community life.

The engagement also documented differing perspectives on growth, development, housing, boundaries, public safety and other issues.

Consultation and Work to Date – 2025

2025 - Cultural Districts Program and Planning Workshop

- In September 2025, the City held a stakeholder workshop with representatives from Little Jamaica, West Chinatown and Church-Wellesley Village, supported by Economic Development and Culture, City Planning, Development Review, and Social Development.
- Discussions on planning and development included Cultural District and Community Improvement Plan boundaries; affordable commercial and community space; redevelopment impacts on culturally significant businesses and community uses; flexible and appropriately sized spaces; long-term affordability and lease arrangements; transportation and access; community land trusts; and opportunities for new development to support cultural and community uses.
- For Little Jamaica, stakeholders also discussed the relationship between development activity and the Cultural District boundary, the need for flexibility as the neighbourhood changes, and opportunities to create affordable spaces for businesses, cultural activities and community uses.
- The engagement was summarized in the City's 2026 Cultural Districts [report](#).

Consultation and Work to Date – 2026

Planning Framework Development Through the 2026 Proposals Report

- Building on previous work, Community Planning drafted a proposed Planning Framework. The Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework draft and proposals [report](#) was adopted by Planning and Housing Committee on April 14, 2026. The 2026 Proposals Report summarized consultation to that point and presented emerging directions for further discussion and refinement.

May-December 2026 - Final Phase of Engagement

- Following the Proposals Report, the project has entered a final phase of engagement focused on refining the draft Planning Framework. Opportunities include online and written participation, structured stakeholder questionnaires and focused discussions, Stakeholder Advisory Committee working sessions and broader engagement through the remainder of 2026.
- This phase will help staff understand areas of support, outstanding concerns and differing perspectives, and identify where the Framework should be refined. The final staff report will summarize this engagement and how feedback was considered.

4(a). Key City Reports and Project Milestones

The Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework has developed through Council directions, staff reports, research and community engagement. The reports below are key public documents showing how the work has evolved.

Developing a Cultural Districts Program - 2021

In October 2021, Economic Development and Culture and City Planning reported on developing a city-wide Cultural Districts Program in response to Council directions concerning Little Jamaica and other culturally significant areas. The [report](#) considered ways to protect cultural identity, support small businesses and cultural spaces, respond to displacement and affordability pressures, and undertake further community consultation.

How it contributed:

It established the broader Cultural Districts approach within which the Little Jamaica work was initially advanced and identified cultural, economic and equity considerations that continued into later planning work.

Little Jamaica Initiative - Master Plan and Aligned Initiatives: Introduction and Status Report - 2022

In March 2022, Economic Development and Culture and City Planning introduced the Little Jamaica Initiative in a [report](#), bringing together Council directions related to cultural planning, future development, economic development, and other complementary work.

How it contributed:

It coordinated previously separate City directions and initiatives and established the foundation for the community-based research and engagement that followed.

It also established a broad geographic scope and study boundary for research, analysis and community engagement.

Draft Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework – Proposals Report - 2026

In April 2026, Development Review brought forward a [Proposals Report](#) to Planning and Housing Committee, including a draft of the Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework. It was presented as a basis for further consultation and brought together previous engagement, planning policy, technical analysis and related City initiatives into emerging directions for managing growth and change.

How it contributed:

It marked the transition from background work to consultation on a draft Framework. The report also presented a draft Planning Framework boundary that currently aligns with the approved Cultural District boundary.

The Committee requested that a Stakeholder Advisory Committee support the refinement of the draft before final recommendations are brought forward.

Establishing Toronto's Cultural Districts Program - 2026

In June 2026, Economic Development and Culture brought forward recommendations in a [report](#) to City Council, to establish a City-wide Cultural Districts Program, including formal recognition of Little Jamaica and implementation tools intended to support cultural identity, community-led placemaking, inclusive economic development and responses to commercial displacement.

A key implementation tool is the potential use of Community Improvement Plans (CIPs), which can enable financial incentives and other measures within defined areas to support culturally significant businesses and address commercial displacement.

Establishing Toronto's Cultural Districts Program - 2026

How it contributes:

The Cultural Districts Program and Planning Framework are distinct but complementary. The Cultural Districts Program provides cultural, economic-development and potential CIP tools, while the Planning Framework provides guidance for growth and development in Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan.

The report established a Cultural District boundary developed through research, mapping and community engagement as part of the Cultural District planning process.

The approved Cultural District boundary is intended to recognize Little Jamaica's cultural presence along Eglinton Ave. W., include connected residential areas, and support cultural and economic activity while helping focus City programs and resources.

Oakwood Village Streets Plan - 2026

- In May and June 2026, Transportation Services brought forward a report and supplementary report, respectively, that concluded the Oakwood Village Streets Plan. This plan identified, prioritized, and recommended short-term action and long-term changes to traffic operations and road design to support safety for all modes of transportation. The reports ([2026.TE33.52](#) and [2026.TE33.53](#)) presented recommended traffic calming, in-road speed signs, intersection and mid-block safety improvements, new turn restrictions, and parking restrictions.

How it contributed:

- The study's technical analysis and community consultation provided insights into transportation, mobility, accessibility, and public realm priorities in Oakwood Village and parts of Little Jamaica that informed the content of the draft Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework.

4(b). Related City-wide Policy and Accountability Reports

The Planning Framework is one part of a broader body of City work. Its development is informed by project-specific research, consultation and Council direction, as well as city-wide work on cultural districts, inclusive economic development, anti-Black racism, community economic development and commercial displacement.

The following highlighted reports demonstrate how other City work informs and contributes to the Planning Framework. It is not an exhaustive list.

Partnership and Accountability Circle - Year 4 Report - 2023

The Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit's Partnership and Accountability Circle (PAC) provides community-based advice and accountability on implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. The **Year 4 Report** identified Inclusive Economic Development as a priority and addressed conditions in Little Jamaica, recognizing City efforts while raising concerns about prolonged LRT construction, gentrification and displacement affecting Black-owned businesses. It called for continued business support, further engagement with Little Jamaica businesses and stronger coordination among governments and partners.

How it contributes:

The report reinforces issues and themes identified through consultation that informed the draft Planning Framework, including commercial displacement, support for Black businesses, and intergovernmental coordination.

A Framework to Advance Inclusive Economic Development in Toronto - 2024

In 2024, staff from Economic Development and Culture, Social Development, Employment and Social Services and City Planning brought forward a proposed city-wide framework for Inclusive Economic Development, with an intentional focus on Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving communities. The framework addressed workforce development, entrepreneurship and asset ownership, and research, monitoring and equity impact.

The [report](#) recommended that City Planning work with other divisions through new or updated Secondary Plans to consider inclusive economic development and mitigation of commercial displacement.

How it contributes:

The report reinforces that land-use planning is one tool within a broader response to commercial displacement, business retention and inclusive economic development.

City of Toronto Inclusive Economic Development Framework - 2026

In March 2026, the City brought forward the finalized Inclusive Economic Development Framework, developed across City divisions and with an external Inclusive Economic Development Working Table. It establishes a common approach focused on inclusive employment and sector pathways and inclusive entrepreneurship and ownership, within implementation of Sidewalks to Skylines: A 10-Year Action Plan for Toronto's Economy.

The [report](#) recommends continued collaboration among City Planning, Economic Development and Culture, Social Development and other divisions through area-based planning, including use of land-use, commercial-space and related policies and information to support local employment, diverse business activity and access to jobs.

How it contributes:

The report provides current city-wide policy context for considering neighbourhood economic change alongside planning policy and supports coordinated use of planning, economic-development and community-development tools.

5. Key Themes and Priorities Emerging from Engagement

Engagement has generated substantial and diverse input from residents, businesses, community organizations, cultural leaders, youth, institutions and other stakeholders. Residents have not always shared the same priorities or solutions, but recurring themes have emerged.

These themes continue to inform the Planning Framework. They do not represent every comment received or imply a single community perspective.

Protect and strengthen Little Jamaica's cultural identity

- Residents have consistently emphasized recognizing and strengthening Little Jamaica's longstanding Jamaican, Caribbean and broader Black cultural presence.
- This includes tangible heritage such as businesses, buildings, cultural spaces and gathering places, and intangible heritage such as music, food, faith, entrepreneurship, celebrations, stories and everyday cultural practices.
- Feedback received has also described culture as dynamic, with a desire to celebrate the area's distinctive identity while remaining welcoming to the diversity of people who live, work, gather and establish businesses there.

Address displacement and support the ability to remain in the community

- Residential, commercial and cultural displacement has been one of the most persistent concerns of community members.
- Residents have raised concerns about rising housing and commercial rents, redevelopment, prolonged LRT construction and broader economic change, and emphasized support for affordable housing, affordable commercial and community space, locally owned and culturally significant businesses, and greater community ownership or stewardship of space.

Support local businesses and inclusive economic opportunity

- Small and independent businesses are frequently described in feedback as both economic assets and important contributors to Little Jamaica's cultural and social life.
- Priorities include retaining existing businesses, supporting Black-owned and culturally significant businesses, providing affordable and appropriately sized commercial spaces, reducing barriers for entrepreneurs and creating opportunities for new businesses.
- Recent Cultural Districts Program and Community Improvement Plan engagement has also explored flexible spaces, smaller storefronts, long-term affordable leases, incubator and production space, community land trusts and related approaches.

Create welcoming public spaces, amenities and places to gather

- Residents and stakeholders have emphasized parks and green spaces; safe and comfortable streets and sidewalks; spaces for markets, festivals and informal cultural activity; community and cultural gathering spaces; spaces for youth and seniors; food and community gardens; and improved access to public facilities.
- Public spaces should be accessible, culturally responsive and flexible.

Improve mobility while addressing the impacts of change

- Transportation has been discussed as both an opportunity and a source of disruption. Residents have welcomed the improved transit accessibility anticipated from the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, prior to its opening, while detailing the impacts of prolonged construction.
- Residents requested city staff to consider improvements to pedestrian safety, sidewalk conditions, cycling connections, transit access, parking, accessibility and the relationship between mobility and the vitality of the retail corridor.

Advance equity and recognize different experiences of place

- Equity has been a recurring principle raised throughout the engagement. Residents have emphasized the historic and continuing effects of anti-Black racism and how planning policy, development and economic change can affect communities differently.
- Engagement has also highlighted Indigenous place-keeping and reconciliation, supporting accessibility and disability inclusion, people with low incomes, youth and elders, newcomers, women and 2SLGBTQ+ communities.
- These perspectives reinforce the importance of considering who benefits from neighbourhood change, who may face barriers or displacement, and how city decisions can contribute to more inclusive outcomes.

Maintain meaningful and broad community participation

- Community involvement in shaping the future of the area has been a recurring theme.
- Residents have proposed different approaches to engagement and governance, while broadly supporting accessible opportunities to provide input, transparency about how decisions are made and continued engagement as work progresses.
- Because Little Jamaica is a diverse community and no single individual, organization or stakeholder group speaks for the community as a whole, the Planning Framework draws on multiple engagement formats and a range of perspectives with a principle of inclusivity.

Different perspectives are also part of the engagement record

- Not every issue has produced consensus. Residents have expressed different views on community boundaries, the form and scale of future development, parking and mobility, the role of new development, approaches to community governance and which actions should be prioritized.
- Engagement is intended to help staff understand this range of perspectives and consider it alongside technical analysis, Council direction and applicable City and provincial policies.

6. Current and Upcoming Consultation

The next phase of engagement will provide several ways for stakeholders and community members to contribute.

Current Consultation

Structured Stakeholder Questionnaires

- Targeted questionnaires were distributed in July 2026 and are being used to gather feedback on specific elements of the draft Planning Framework. They allow stakeholders to review draft directions, identify gaps and priorities, and provide written comments for staff consideration.

Focused Stakeholder Discussions

- Staff are scheduling focused discussions with organizations and individuals who have provided feedback on questionnaires that staff would like to explore in greater depth and who have specific and relevant knowledge, expertise or lived experience.

Upcoming Consultation

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Working Sessions

- A Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) will support the final phase of the Planning Framework, consistent with the request from Planning and Housing Committee. The SAC will be a staff-led advisory forum with project-specific Terms of Reference.
- Working sessions will provide a forum for stakeholders to review and discuss draft Framework directions and provide advice and feedback to staff.
- The SAC is advisory and is not responsible for decisions made by staff. It supplements other engagement and is not intended to establish a single community position.
- Additional information about membership, meeting format and schedule will be shared with prospective stakeholders as the process is finalized.

Broader Public Engagement

- Broader community participation will continue as the Planning Framework is refined, including online engagement, public consultation and opportunities to provide written comments.

7. How Feedback Is Considered

Community and stakeholder feedback is an important input into the Planning Framework.

How Feedback Is Considered

- Staff review feedback from questionnaires, meetings, stakeholder discussions, written submissions, online engagement and other consultation activities alongside:
 - Council and Committee direction and requests;
 - the Official Plan and other applicable planning policies;
 - technical and planning analysis;
 - City strategies, initiatives and interdivisional input;
 - previous research and engagement; and
 - professional planning judgement.

How Feedback Is Considered

- Consultation helps staff understand community priorities, identify issues, and refine recommendations. It does not mean that every suggestion will be incorporated.
- Perspectives may differ, and some suggestions may fall outside the scope or tools of the Planning Framework. Staff will direct feedback to the appropriate divisions for out-of-scope feedback.
- The Final Report will summarize key themes from engagement and explain how feedback informed the Framework and why some matters are being addressed through other City processes.

8. How Decisions Are Made

The Planning Framework is developed through an iterative process.

How Decisions Are Made

- Staff consider public and stakeholder feedback alongside Council and Committee direction and requests, planning policy, technical analysis, City strategies and initiatives, interdivisional input and professional planning judgement when preparing recommendations.
- Consultation helps staff understand local conditions and lived experience, identify priorities and potential impacts, and consider community ideas.
- Feedback may lead to changes to the draft Planning Framework, further analysis or additional engagement.

How Decisions Are Made

- **Council and Committees** provide formal direction and consider recommendations requiring approval.
- **City staff** make the administrative, technical and project-management decisions needed to advance the work, including preparing draft materials, undertaking analysis and designing engagement activities.
- **Community and stakeholder** feedback informs staff analysis and recommendations.

What is fixed, what is evolving, and what comes next

Some elements are established through Council or Committee direction and requests, while others continue to be refined through analysis and consultation.

Established direction includes:

- the purpose and mandate of the Planning Framework;
- the request to establish a Stakeholder Advisory Committee to help refine the draft Framework; and
- reporting through the City's formal decision-making process.

Still being developed and informed by consultation are:

- elements of the Planning Framework;
- the geographical extent of the community;
- final priorities and recommendations;
- how community concerns are reflected in the final Framework; and
- the detailed format and focus of upcoming engagement activities.

9. What's Next

Over the coming months, staff will continue stakeholder and public engagement and use the feedback received to refine the Planning Framework.

Next steps

Anticipated next steps are:

- Continue stakeholder questionnaires, written engagement and focused discussions.
- Convene Stakeholder Advisory Committee working sessions.
- Refine the draft Planning Framework and undertake broader public consultation.
- Review and synthesize feedback from engagement.
- Prepare the final Planning Framework and staff recommendations.
- Report to Planning and Housing Committee, currently anticipated in January 2027.

The timing and sequencing of activities may be adjusted as the work progresses.

10. How You Can Participate

There will continue to be several ways to participate in the Planning Framework.

How You Can Participate

There will continue to be several ways to participate in the Planning Framework.

Community members and stakeholders can:

- participate in online engagement;
- attend public consultation events;
- provide written comments through the project email;
- participate in stakeholder activities where applicable; and
- review project materials and engagement information on the project website.

Upcoming engagement opportunities, materials and project milestones will be posted on the project website.

How You Can Participate

The project email is the primary contact for the Planning Framework and helps the project team centrally track and respond to inquiries.

- Interactive Mapping Exercise: [Little Jamaica & Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework & CHRA | Have Your Say Toronto](#)
- Project website: www.toronto.ca/LJOVPlanningFramework
- Project email: LJOV.Planning.Framework@toronto.ca

