

GYRA
www.GYRA.ca info@gyra.ca
November 2015 Report

Note: This is an excerpt from the November 2015 Full Report document. For a copy of the full report, please visit: <http://www.gyra.ca/reports/>

URBAN MATTERS

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework & Implementation Strategy

The Framework presented to Councillor Wong-Tam and Planning staff on October 27, 2015, by the Planning Partnership, with representatives of the Bloor-Yorkville Community in attendance, was well received. Brief summary of presentation:

Consultation

- Consulted with the public at a workshop
- Worked cooperatively and collaboratively with BIA, YBB, ABC and GYRA
- Discussed and reviewed with City staff
- Presented to the Boards of Directors of BIA, YBB, ABC and GYRA

Building A Plan

- Establishes a long-term vision long term vision for the future of the future of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area
- Contributes to the economic success of the City by promoting significant development in key locations, and at the right scale
- Improves the pedestrian environment
- Protects and enhances Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area as a place to live, work, shop, visit and invest

Emerging Directions

- Clear framework to guide development in distinct character areas and ensure heritage character is retained
- Simple, well-crafted and useable open spaces
- Fine grained network of pedestrian spaces
- Beautiful streets

Objectives for the Policy Approach

Range of objectives identified for Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown to:

- Ensure that new development or redevelopment is appropriate and considered in a comprehensive way
- Recognize the link between growth and requirements for community facilities
- Promote accessible and animated interconnectivity between and among buildings
- Provide design guidance to protect and enhance the character and vitality of the Urban Village and Neighbourhood areas and to promote investment for the Urban Core, Urban Ridge and Urban Corridor areas
- Protect the employment function with emphasis on the office function
- Ensure public funds are generated by new development

Application

- The Plan applies to the lands known as Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area
- The policies of this Plan will form the basis of a Secondary Plan and/or implementing zoning regulations

Vision

Fundamental components of the vision include:

- Heritage value of context and built form
- Pedestrian Realm Network to achieve the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Enhancing the Pedestrian Realm Network and interconnectivity within the Area and adjacent areas
- Designing and constructing environmentally sustainable buildings
- Promoting Active Transportation

Intent and Objectives of the Plan

It is the intent of this Plan to promote:

- Compatible development
- Built form as the determining factor for types of development permitted
- Building transition as a key determining factor for compatible development
- Capacity of the site and Area to accommodate publicly accessible open space, community facilities and available municipal infrastructure

Objectives of the Plan recognize that:

- Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area context is diverse and development in stable and sensitive areas will be compatible
- Clear principles, policies and design guidance need to be provided
- Enhancing key fundamental attributes of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area will contribute to the Area's ongoing success

It is likely the Secondary Plan policies will be referenced in the TOcore recommendations.

City of Toronto, City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis Metro Hall, 22nd Floor,
Toronto ON M5V 3C6

TOcore@toronto.ca | www.toronto.ca/tocore | #TOcore

TOcore planning toronto's downtown

First Round of Community Consultations

Summary Report

In the month of June, the City of Toronto hosted community consultation meetings on *TOcore: Planning Toronto's Downtown*, an interdivisional study looking at how the downtown should grow in the next forty years. Three community consultation meetings were held in June 2015, one in each downtown ward, chaired by the local councillor.

Altogether, approximately 120 people participated in the three community consultations, including residents and workers in Downtown and those who visit Downtown.

The purpose of the consultations was to inform the public of the study, introduce the study's goals and to provide an opportunity for the public to share their questions, comments and feedback on the study. Twenty-two panels were put on display as individual stations inviting feedback. The panels show the challenges and opportunities of each of TOcore's eight study goals: **Balancing Growth; Creating Complete Communities; Sustaining a Robust Economy; Increasing Mobility; Improving Parks and Public Spaces; Enhancing Community Services and Facilities; Creating a Resilient Downtown; and Ensuring Capacity in the Pipe.**

Each consultation started with an open house at 6:30 p.m. Gregg Lintern, Director of Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, presented an overview of the TOcore study, speaking to the residential and non-residential growth trends in the Downtown, introducing the study goals, and detailing the three phases within the study that span three years from 2014 to 2017. Following the presentation, 30 minutes were devoted to questions from the members of the public for clarification purposes on the presentation.

At 8:00 p.m, members of the public were encouraged to visit each of the panel stations to provide their views in writing on flipcharts and on sticky-notes posted on maps, as well as through conversations with City Staff from 6 collaborating divisions, including:

- City Planning;
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation;
- Transportation Services;
- Economic Development and Culture;
- Toronto Water; and
- Environment & Energy Division.

This summary report is a review of all the comments received. Questions about this summary can be directed to George Pantazis, Assistant Planner, Strategic Initiatives, City of Toronto, by email (gpantaztoronto.ca) or by phone (416-392-3566).

Summary of Feedback

The summary of feedback below is organized by ward and study goal. The feedback was shared through conversations with study team members and in writing on flipcharts, responding to questions posed by each study goal.

Ward 27

Planning Framework & the Economy *Questions*

What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

What would you like to see improved in your neighbourhood?

What are the most important planning issues we need to address to make Downtown a great place to live? What ideas do you have to make Downtown a better place to work? Shop? Learn? Play?

Feedback

- **Streetscape and diversity of uses makes Downtown a place you want to be. Need to encourage more active retail and restaurant uses throughout the Downtown.**
- **Need to increase safety through urban design in our streets, parks, laneways,**

etc. Parks and Public Realm *Questions*

What do you enjoy most about your favourite Downtown park, open space or street?

What improvements would you like to see to parks, open spaces and streets in the Downtown? What is your top priority for change?

Feedback

- **Downtown parks are being overrun by dogs**
- **Close streets to pedestrians during specific hours and open them up later for cars**

- **Turn wider laneways into café areas with shipping container restaurants like on Bathurst and Dundas.**
- **For parks and public realm**, need to study: lighting, noise, dogs, traffic speed and safety.
- **Continue to develop culture corridors within our public realm**

Community Services and Facilities (recreation, childcare, libraries, schools, and human services)

Questions

What community services are most important to you and your family?

What improvements would you like to see to community services in the Downtown? What is your top priority for change?

Feedback

- **TOcore panels do not address the role of churches as local community-based services**
- **Should consider building salt water pools**
- **Need to increase policing within Downtown**

Transportation Questions

What mode of transportation do you use the most to move around or travel to and from Downtown? What improvements would you like to see to transit (surface and underground), cycling and pedestrian networks, and goods movements?

What is your top priority for change?

Feedback

- **Consider reserved/dedicated street car lanes without physical ROW construction (only signage and enforcement). Could have these lanes dedicated only on peak hours (for example, Gerard Street)**
- **King Street should be streetcar and pedestrian only**
- **Increase parking on side streets, reduce on main street so traffic, transit, cyclists can flow easily and safely**
- **Sidewalks not wide enough on Jarvis, Church and Yonge. Take away traffic lane and improve sidewalk width as pedestrian volumes are high.**
- **Reduce space for cars and preserve lane system for walking**
- **Add more lanes for connectivity**
- **Zone areas in Downtown for service vehicles only**
- **Improve accessibility for subway and streetcar**
- **Discourage traffic on "cut through routes," such as Charles Street from Jarvis to University**
- **Reduce lanes on Jarvis back to 4 lanes and widen sidewalks**

The following position paper was drawn up by BCCA (Bay Cloverhill Community Association) and CWNA (Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association) with request neighbouring residents' associations support. GYRA board expressed unanimous support. BCCA & CWNA met with TOcore planner George Pantazis and learned the TOcore recommendations will go to Community Council on November 10, 2015. The position paper covers many issues identified in the TOcore findings. BCCA will circulate the paper to Councillor Wong-Tam, planner Oren Tamir and Mizrahi Developments (One Bloor West).

Neighbourhood Concerns

Needed: An examination Of the Broader Picture

The building proposed for 1 Bloor West is clearly going to have a major impact on this central intersection in Toronto. And it's only one of several major proposed developments in the immediate area. We ask the city to step back from each of these separate site specific developments and examine some basic, but broader, contextual issues.

We point to four areas of neighbourhood concern:

1. **Traffic** - What should be allowed; what should be forbidden; what should be encouraged; what should be discouraged? How large an area should be studied?
2. **Parks** - The suburban park formula doesn't work in downtown Toronto. We need a downtown park formula. And a new approach to smaller parks.
3. **Shadow** - As more and more shadow covers our neighbourhood, we need a way to increasingly resist additional shadow.
4. **Infrastructure** - More buildings are being approved, but there has been no corresponding commitment to improve infrastructure.

Although we do not have the answers, the community wants and needs answers in order to thrive. We do ask that these areas of concern receive the attention they deserve from the city, and from the province. We suggest possible points that could be raised to begin the discussion. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in such a broader contextual discussion.

Traffic

NEEDED: Examination of a Broad Area for General Traffic Solutions

Our neighbourhood is blessed (or cursed) with a legacy of streets, laneways and avenues that were created in response to needs in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. For many years, our neighbourhood was not seen as a place where people would choose to live. It was often viewed as no more than the place for traffic corridors to allow people to get from their suburban residence to their downtown job.

That transit reality has to change in response to the thousands of new people who have chosen a downtown residence in our neighbourhood. Our neighbourhood is no longer just a way to get downtown; it's now a downtown place where people in increasing numbers live. We need to step back from a very local consideration of traffic and the impact of individual buildings on traffic.

What traffic patterns should be established? How should we make the best use of the limited public domain available in downtown? How do we best provide for the bicycles and pedestrians that will be coming with all of the new local residents? Should we, perhaps, do away with one-way residential streets? More broadly, what role should our neighbourhood streets play, if any, in transit corridor provision?

Parks

NEEDED: A Downtown Solution to a Suburban Park Formula

The province has a suburban park formula that makes little sense in downtown Toronto. The required provision of 5% of occupied land area (or equivalent value) for parks works in a suburban area of single family homes. It doesn't work in downtown Toronto. The amount of park space (or equivalent value) to provide should be directly related to the number of residential units being proposed.

Even if no change in the suburban park formula can be made in the short-term, there are more immediate steps that could be taken. A large fraction of our neighbourhood is dedicated to the exclusive use of vehicles. Changes should be possible. A one-way residential street should not need space for more than one traffic lane and, perhaps, one parking lane, with sections of the parking lane reserved for loading and unloading.

We are concerned that the provision of new park space does not correspond either fractionally or sufficiently to the dramatic increase in residential population. The policy of a developer providing "cash in lieu" of park facilities yields no new green space in the downtown. Some method of procuring real park spaces must be found within the community welcoming the development. And there are specific, promising opportunities in the immediate area. For example, the northern portion of Balmuto could be closed to through traffic with a resulting space being either park

or mixed use. And the eastern end of St Mary could be reduced to one traffic lane with the released space used to increase the public (park) space immediately south of 10 St Mary. There may be other immediate opportunities, but these two opportunities could begin the discussion.

Park Maintenance: we are also concerned about the attention our existing parks receive. We have no large parks in our neighbourhood, but we do have a number of small existing and planned parks along both sides of Yonge Street. These parks are not well-maintained, certainly maintenance efforts have not increased to keep up with increased local residential population. We seek a solution to this ongoing neglect which should not be allowed to continue. Possibly such park maintenance budgets should be in a ratio that reflects the population of the community in which the park is located.

Shadow

NEEDED: A Formula to Prevent the Deemed "Not Significant Increase Of Shadow" by developers for each and every Downtown Tower Project

There is a danger that each of the many new buildings may only marginally increase the shadowed area in the neighbourhood, but we could eventually be left with nothing except shadowed area. No one building need cause all that much additional shadow, but the aggregate shadowing could still be nearly total. We need an approach which makes it progressively more difficult for new buildings to increase the shadow on our parks, public areas and streets.

We offer no formula, but would ask that some approach be developed so that shadow impact will be viewed incrementally. The first shadow on a park, public area or street should only be approved after all reasonable efforts have been made to reduce that impact. As the percentage of a park, public area or street that is shadowed increases, additional shadowing should be increasingly resisted. A formula could be developed, but it will remain a judgment call. Don't allow our parks, public areas or streets to be in complete or nearly complete shadow!

Infrastructure

NEEDED: Insight into the capacity and the Structural adequacy Of Toronto's Infrastructure

In a well-organized world, new development would not be allowed until after plans and funding were in place to provide the infrastructure for such new development. The failure of the city to provide adequate downtown subway service is only the most visible example of a growing infrastructure gap. We also "enjoy" increasing failures of the water-mains in downtown Toronto - breaks are becoming more frequent.

We are not in a position to assess the adequacy of other infrastructure services. We do note, however, that sewer overflow seems to be increasingly frequent. And a third main hydro-electric power line into the GTA has been discussed, but we have seen no commitment to develop such a third main line. All of which adds to our concern.

The city has visibly not done enough to develop additional subway service in downtown Toronto. It may not have done enough to adequately maintain and expand water, sewer, hydro-electric and gas service for downtown. Under such circumstances, it would make sense to take somewhat drastic steps, e.g. no new downtown development until the infrastructure is adequately maintained and upgraded.

Cumberland Passage Lighting, Village of Yorkville Park

A light was installed pointing to the rear of the TTC Cumberland subway entrance building, and not on the passage (leading to 145 Cumberland) and the area behind where illumination is needed, that GYRA requested two years ago. This section is a regular drinking hangout and sleeping area. After a flurry of emails between GYRA, the BIA and the Planning Partnership (the City liaison contact) in October 2015, it was learned the light installed is to illuminate the rear of the TTC building, and is not the light GYRA residents have patiently waited for to illuminate the passage. On October 07, 2015 the Planning Partnership was requested to ask the City project manager for park improvements to fast track lighting over the passage.

Village of Yorkville Park - Trees

With the exception of the pine grove trees, the trees in the park have completed their cycle and are either dead or dying. The Bloor-Yorkville BIA is presently working on replacing these trees.

Ramsden Park Revitalization to Begin October 29, 2015

Construction on the Revitalization of Ramsden Park is set to begin on October 29, weather permitting. The scope of work for Stage 1 of Phase 1 will include removal and replacement of the tennis courts, adjacent pathways and all necessary infrastructure, water lines, and storm sewers. Construction will be ongoing to the end of the 2015 construction season. End date is weather dependent. Work will resume, and is anticipated to be completed on the first stage in the spring of 2016. Once Stage 1 is complete, the tennis courts will open up to the public and work will commence on Stage 2 of Phase 1. Stage 2 will include the removal and replacement of the playground, wading pool/splash pad, and see the addition of a new shade structure, adjacent pathways, and infrastructure. Construction for Stage 2 will be ongoing throughout the summer of 2016 and into the fall.

Design details for Phase 1:

[https://ramsdenparkconsultation.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/final-design phase-1-overall.pdf](https://ramsdenparkconsultation.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/final-design%20phase-1-overall.pdf) and here

[https://ramsdenparkconsultation.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/final-design playground.pdf](https://ramsdenparkconsultation.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/final-design%20playground.pdf).

Toronto Ward Boundary Review

The Toronto Ward Boundary Review will look at the size and shape of Toronto's wards. The Review is being undertaken to ensure that each person in Toronto is fairly represented at City Council.

A key focus of the Toronto Ward Boundary Review is to make sure the number of people in each ward is similar to all the other wards in the city.

The Review will also look at communities of interest and neighbourhoods within the city. Ward boundaries should not split up well-established communities. Other factors such as a ward's history and physical or natural features will also be considered as part of the Review of Toronto's ward boundaries.

Why is this being done now?

Currently, in the City of Toronto, there is a wide range in the number of people living in each ward. Due to factors such as population growth and new construction, some of the city's wards are 30 percent to 45 percent above the population of the average city ward. As a result, one person's vote does not necessarily have the same value or weight as that of someone in another ward.

Who is responsible?

The City of Toronto oversees the Toronto Ward Boundary Review, but the study is being conducted by an independent team of consultants who are responsible for making sure the process is not influenced by political interests.

How is it being conducted?

The Toronto Ward Boundary Review follows a 5 step process, which includes research, two rounds of public consultation and civic engagement, development of ward boundary options, and then a final report with recommendations to City Council.

What the Toronto Ward Boundary Review is not.

The Toronto Ward Boundary Review does not cover items such as: how municipal government is organized (e.g. whether there should be political parties or whether there should be more community representation); how people

vote; who votes (e.g. Canadian citizens only or all Toronto residents); how good a job a Councillor is doing; or how City departments operate.

For more information visit: www.drawthelines.ca.

Get involved

The Toronto Ward Boundary Review includes a public involvement process that allows Council members, stakeholders and the public to express their opinions on the current ward boundary structure as well as on the options that will be proposed. There are several ways that you can provide input to the Ward Boundary Review, including:

- Public meetings: The first round of public meetings for the Toronto Ward Boundary Review occurred between December 2014 and February 2015.
- Online Survey: Online surveys are available for Round One and Round Two of the consultation process. In Round One the Input Survey gathered general comments about the City's current ward boundaries. In Round Two, the Feedback Survey gathered comments on various ward boundary options. Both surveys can be accessed at <http://www.drawthelines.ca/survey/>
- Stay Informed: Check the website www.drawthelines.ca for up to date information about the Toronto Ward Boundary Review.
- Final Report with Recommendations to Council: February 2016 to May 2016.

For more information about how to get involved in the Toronto [Wardwww.drawthelines.ca](http://www.drawthelines.ca)

The boundaries report predicts Toronto will add 600,000 residents by 2031, mainly in the downtown waterfront and major avenues. The proposed options are:-

- Increase wards to 47, with an average population of 61,000
- Maintain 44 wards but change boundaries, with average population of 70,000
- Increase wards to 58, with average population of 45,000-55,000
- Reduce wards to 38, with average population of 75,000
- Reduce wards to 41 based on natural boundaries e.g. rivers, expressways and hydro corridors, with average population of 70,000

Feedback from the meetings and survey will inform the Final Ward Boundary Review Report. This Report will include a recommended option and be presented to the Executive Committee and City Council in May 2016.

Yorkville Patio Noise after 11 PM

See October 2015 Report for details. The Yorkville Residents Anti-Noise Coalition is waiting date of follow-up meeting hosted by Kasa Moto.

Noise bylaw Review

See October 2015 Report for details.