



---

# GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

April 2022

toronto  
**downtown west**  
Business Improvement Area

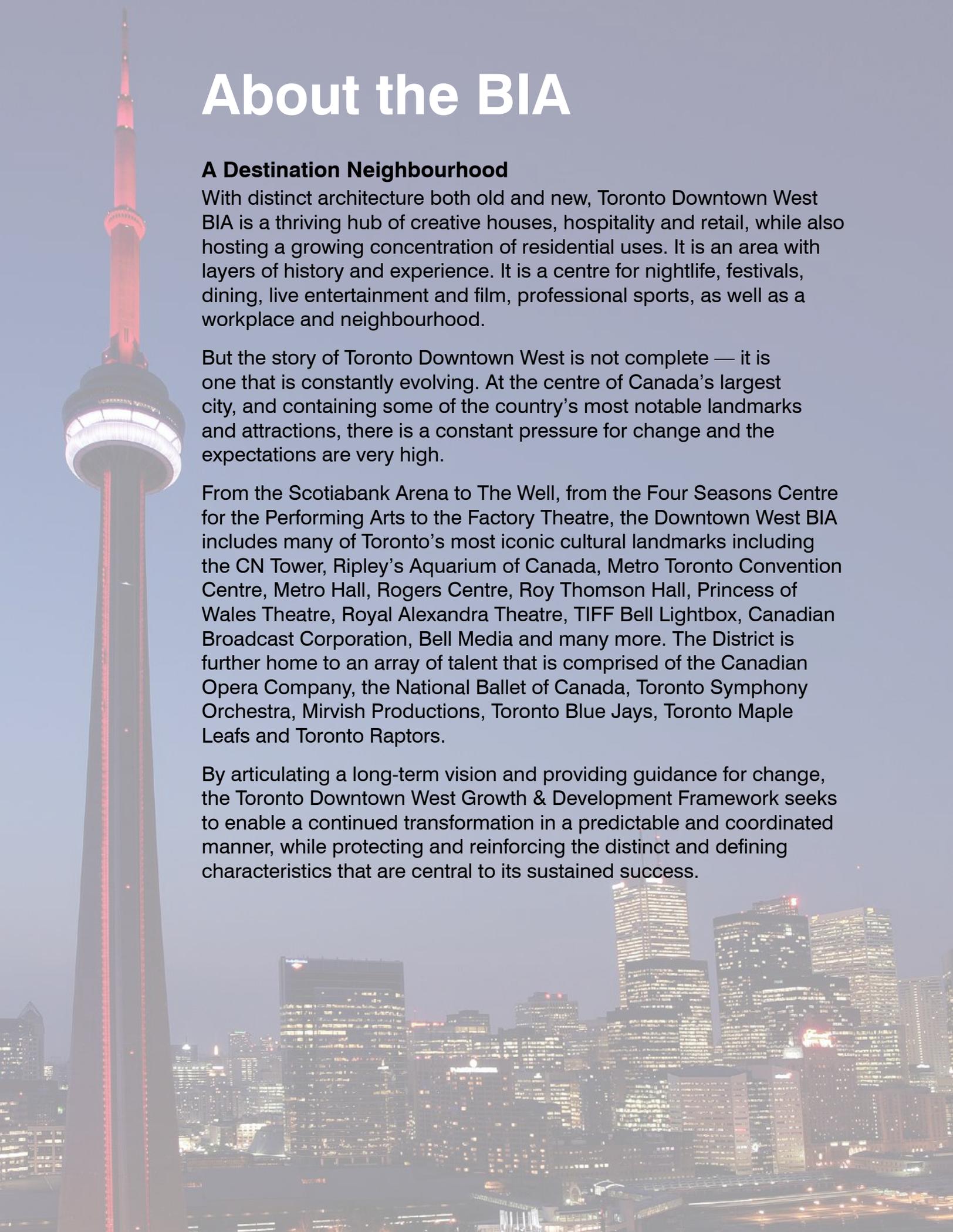




# Contents

<b>About the BIA</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Study Area	2
1.2 Purpose of this Document	3
1.3 Background to this Document	4
1.4 Document Structure	4
<b>2 Policy Review</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>KEY AREAS OF FOCUS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>3 Pedestrian Realm Network &amp; Park Space System</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1 Defining the Pedestrian Realm Network	20
3.2 Required Contributions to the Pedestrian Realm Network	21
3.3 Park Space System	23
3.4 Streetscapes as Community Open Space	37
3.5 Park Space Initiatives	38
<b>4 Streetscapes</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1 Streetscape Hierarchy	41
4.2 Streetscape Initiatives	56
<b>5 Uses at Grade</b>	<b>70</b>
5.1 Goals & Objectives	70
5.2 Priority Retail Streets	71
5.3 Retail Diversity	78
5.4 Design Considerations for Retail Streets	85
<b>6 Development Review Checklist</b>	<b>98</b>
Development Review Checklist	99





# About the BIA

## **A Destination Neighbourhood**

With distinct architecture both old and new, Toronto Downtown West BIA is a thriving hub of creative houses, hospitality and retail, while also hosting a growing concentration of residential uses. It is an area with layers of history and experience. It is a centre for nightlife, festivals, dining, live entertainment and film, professional sports, as well as a workplace and neighbourhood.

But the story of Toronto Downtown West is not complete — it is one that is constantly evolving. At the centre of Canada's largest city, and containing some of the country's most notable landmarks and attractions, there is a constant pressure for change and the expectations are very high.

From the Scotiabank Arena to The Well, from the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts to the Factory Theatre, the Downtown West BIA includes many of Toronto's most iconic cultural landmarks including the CN Tower, Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Metro Hall, Rogers Centre, Roy Thomson Hall, Princess of Wales Theatre, Royal Alexandra Theatre, TIFF Bell Lightbox, Canadian Broadcast Corporation, Bell Media and many more. The District is further home to an array of talent that is comprised of the Canadian Opera Company, the National Ballet of Canada, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Mirvish Productions, Toronto Blue Jays, Toronto Maple Leafs and Toronto Raptors.

By articulating a long-term vision and providing guidance for change, the Toronto Downtown West Growth & Development Framework seeks to enable a continued transformation in a predictable and coordinated manner, while protecting and reinforcing the distinct and defining characteristics that are central to its sustained success.



# 1 Introduction

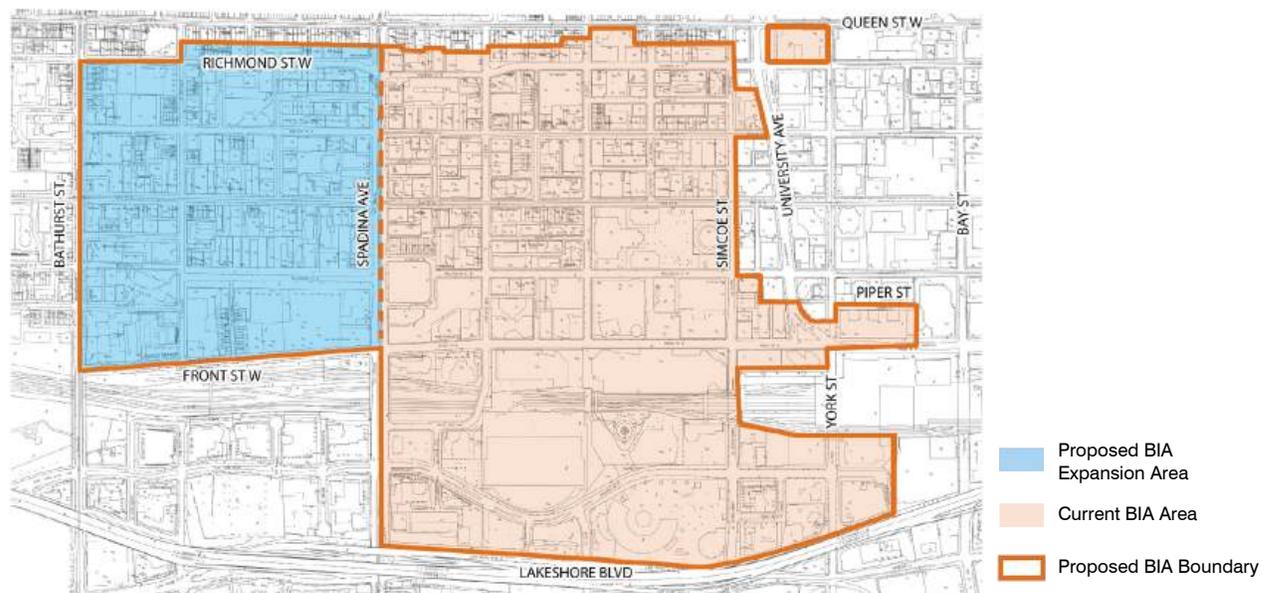
## 1.1 Study Area

The formerly named Toronto Entertainment District Business Improvement Area (BIA) was first established in 2008, with a mandate to promote, improve, and preserve this dynamic area of Toronto. The Toronto Entertainment District encompassed a significant part of the Downtown area, generally bounded by the Financial District to the east, Queen Street West to the north, Spadina Avenue to the west, and the Gardiner Expressway and Harbourfront to the south (see orange area in map, opposite).

Since 2008, the Toronto Entertainment District, along with the area west from Spadina Avenue to Bathurst Street, has experienced a significant transformation. As a result, the BIA elected to undertake two initiatives - to change its name to Toronto Downtown West BIA and to expand the BIA boundary to Bathurst Street, generally from Front Street in the south to Richmond Street West in the north (see blue area in map).

The name change to Toronto Downtown West BIA provides the BIA with a more inclusive and reflective representation of all the businesses in the area.

### Toronto Downtown West BIA Geographic Boundary



## Neighbourhood Statistics

### Development Summary

- From Application to Under Construction, there are consistently over **65** active developments
- Total new residential units in process: **24,000+**
- Total new non-residential GFA in process: **1,000,000+ sq m (10,760,000+ sq ft)**
- Total new hotels in process: **6**; number of rooms: **1,000+**

### Population

- Current residential population: **35,000+**
- Current working population: **115,000+**
- Current dog population: **20,000+**
- Current annual visitors to the area: **20,000,000+**
- Current number of hotels: **18**, number of rooms: **6,962**

## 1.2 Purpose of this Document

A Growth and Development Framework such as this is most effective when it can compel, inspire and bring about intended outcomes. To do so, it must be rooted in the realm of possibilities, be legible to a broad spectrum of users and provide clear and concise direction to decision-makers. To be credible, the Growth and Development Framework must also be substantiated through technical analysis and define the appropriate tools or mechanisms for implementation.

By articulating a long-term vision to work towards, this Growth and Development Framework can help guide ongoing decisions that impact the physical environment of the Downtown West BIA in a coordinated and strategic manner. In addition to guiding the BIA in its mandate, the Growth and Development Framework can also provide benchmarks and standards for developers and set priorities for investments in the public realm.

Some of the benefits of having a Growth and Development Framework include:

- **Provides Clarity and Predictability** — establishing development parameters and design standards
- **Direction for Protecting Areas** — identifying and strategizing for the protection of the treasured aspects of the area that define its unique and distinct character
- **Direction for Enhancing Areas** — strategies for revitalizing and improving areas in the Downtown West BIA
- **Unifies and Strengthens the Community** — providing the Downtown West BIA with one, unified and consistent voice to respond to or act on issues and opportunities
- **Direction for Actions** — guidance for decision-making and identifies strategies and priorities for initiatives and investments
- **Profile and Image Building** — raises awareness for the Downtown West BIA and its long-term objectives, as well as providing tools and materials for marketing and promotions

## 1.3 Background to this Document

The original Toronto Entertainment BIA Master Plan was completed in 2009, following a 10 month process involving consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders, interest groups, property owners and the public.

Approximately three years after its adoption, the Master Plan was reviewed and amended in 2012. Without altering the intent and spirit of the original document, amendments were introduced to contextualize, clarify or update specific sections or guidelines. As a testament to the value and success of the original Plan, a significant number of the proposed public realm improvements had been undertaken or initiated, and new ideas and priorities were emerging. Furthermore, the extraordinary pace of development had greatly transformed the context since 2009, which the Master Plan needed to reflect and address so as to remain current and relevant. Further minor refinements and updates were undertaken in 2013.

This current iteration of the Growth and Development Framework, now renamed to reflect the new Toronto Downtown West BIA branding, will reflect a further evolution of the BIA. Not only will this Growth and Development Framework address the expanded boundary area west to Bathurst Street, but it will further respond to the changing context for the area and delve further into those areas which are of the most importance to the BIA. In particular, since the original Master Plan was prepared in 2009, the City of Toronto has approved detailed planning policy frameworks for the lands with the Downtown West BIA, in many cases overlapping with the scope of the original Master Plan. As a result, the objective of this Growth and Development Framework is to refocus on those elements that have the greatest impact on the 'experience' of the area - the Key Areas of Focus are: **Pedestrian Realm and Parks, Streetscapes and Uses at Grade.**

## 1.4 Document Structure

A key objective in structuring this Growth and Development Framework has been to ensure a highly accessible and easily readable document. The Toronto Downtown West BIA Growth and Development Framework is organized according to the following six parts:

**1 Introduction** - The introduction provides the context for the master planning process, including the purpose and background of the Plan.

**2 Policy Review** - The policy review provides an overview of all of the relevant policy and guideline documents that are applicable to various areas within the Downtown West BIA.

### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

**3 Pedestrian Realm Network & Park Space System** - The pedestrian realm network and park space system provides guidelines on developer contributions, the park space system and streetscapes.

**4 Streetscapes** - The streetscapes provides guidelines for the streetscape hierarchy, design strategies for specific streets, a streetscape palette and healthy street trees.

**5 Uses at Grade** - The uses at grade provides guidelines for priority retail streets, retail diversity and design for retail streets.

**6 Development Review Checklist** - the development review checklist is for use by the BIA in reviewing and providing comments on development applications to further the objectives of this Plan.

## 2020

**Committee review of existing Master Plan and high level plans for new document**

**Held Global Trends Presentation with Lisa Bate**

**Priorities identified from City and Provincial Studies**

**Retail Strategy underway**

## 2021

**Committee review of new planning framework**

**5 Priorities with 3 -Key Areas of Focus identified**

**Completion of Retail Strategy**

**Committee review of Retail Strategy**

**Committee Review of new Growth & Development Framework content outline**

## 2022

**Committee Review of draft Growth and Development Framework Document**

**Comments submitted by Committee**

**Final Review of Growth and Development Framework Document**

**Final Document to full Board**

**Document made public: present to city planners, developers**

*Chart of process leading towards the Downtown West BIA's new Growth and Development Framework*

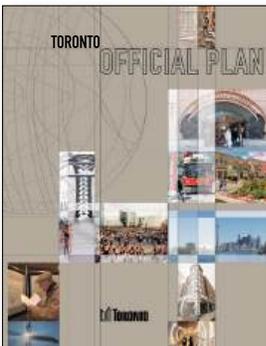


## 2 Policy Review



### Growth Plan

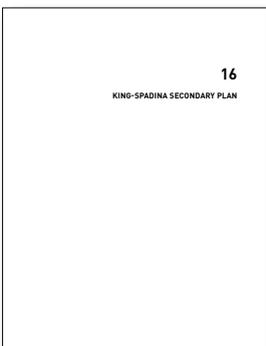
The [Growth Plan](#) prepares for anticipated growth within the Greater Golden Horseshoe by differentiating growth areas from Greenbelt areas. The Growth Plan sets minimum density targets for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) and Urban Growth Centres (UGC). The City of Toronto is undertaking a Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan to bring it in conformity with the Growth Plan, which will result in a revised vision for the city to 2051. The MTSAs present in the existing and expanded BIA include St. Andrew Station, Osgoode Station and Union Station.



### Toronto Official Plan

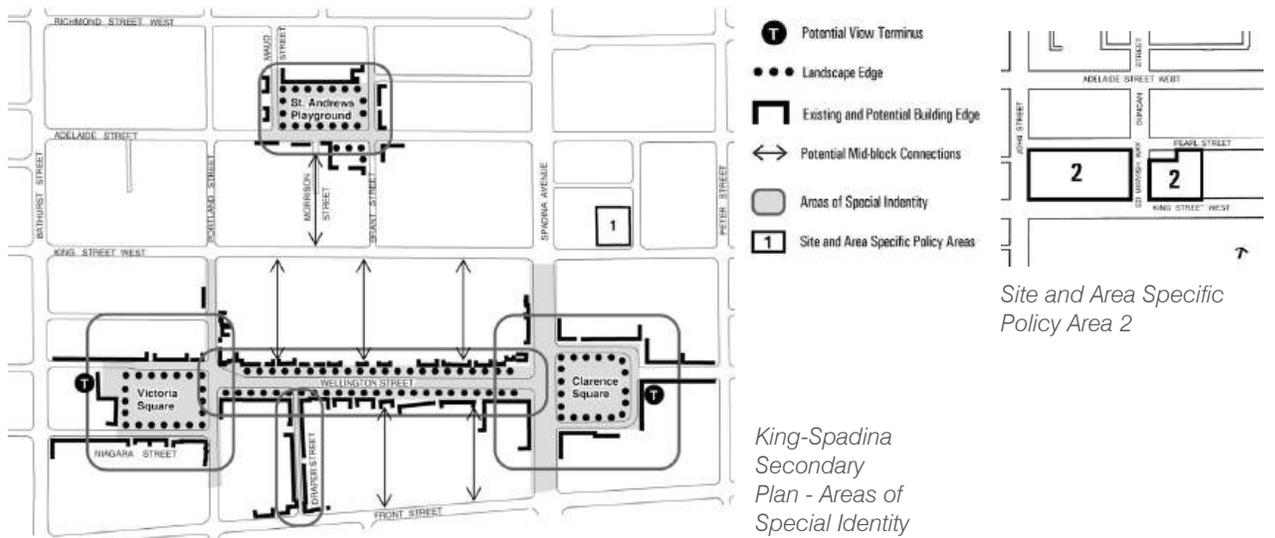
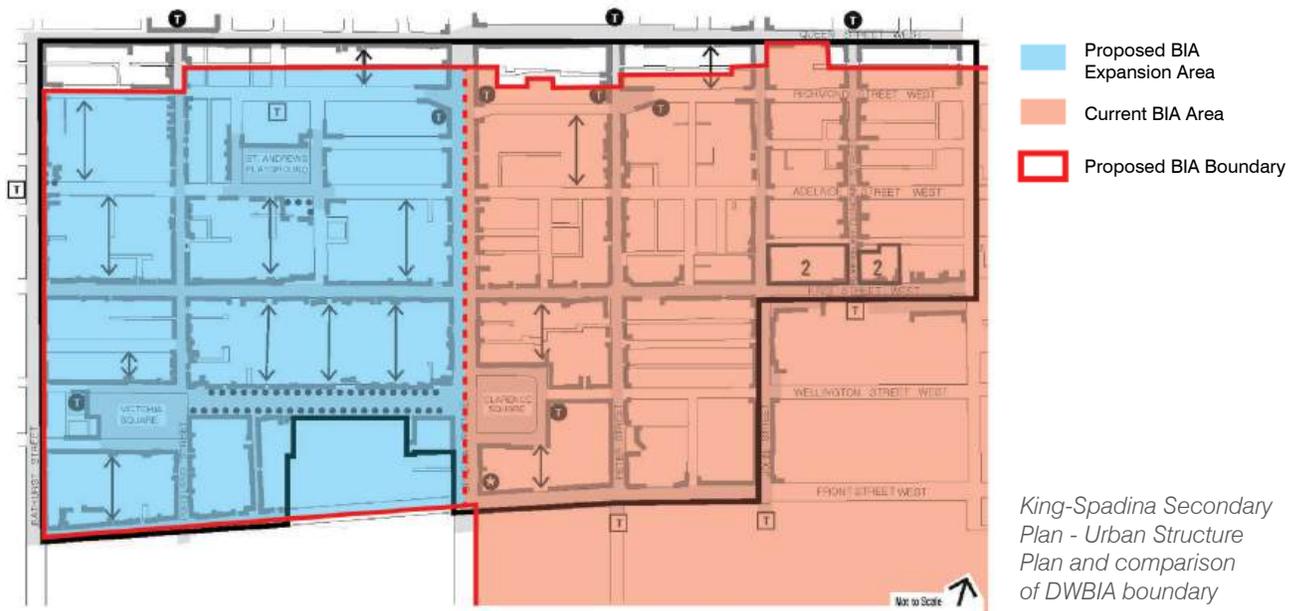
The vision of the [Official Plan](#) (OP) is to create an attractive and safe city, where people of all ages and abilities can enjoy a good quality of life. It is based on principles of diversity and opportunity, beauty, connectivity and stewardship. The OP lays the foundation for more specific area studies, strategies and Secondary Plans (i.e. Downtown Secondary Plan).

The existing and expanded BIA is located entirely within the Downtown and Central Waterfront, where the OP provides specific policy direction regarding density targets, public realm, housing, streetscapes, and transit, among others.



### King-Spadina Secondary Plan

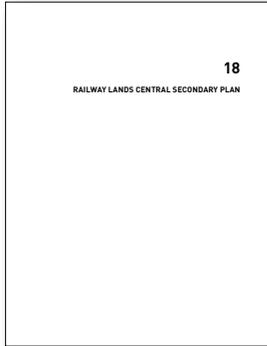
The [King-Spadina Secondary Plan](#) area contains both the existing and expanded BIA, and is bounded by Bathurst Street to the west, Queen to the north, Simcoe to the East and Front Street to the south. The major objectives of this Plan are to attract new investment into the King-Spadina Area, provide a mixture of compatible land uses, promote retention of commercial and light industrial uses and retain heritage buildings for restoration and reuse. This Plan contains two Site and Area Specific Policies (13.1-13.2) and identifies five Areas of Special Identity.



SASP 13.1 pertains to the lands on the north-west corner of King Street and Charlotte Street. The SASP states that four affordable housing units provided as affordable rental housing may be registered as condominium units. This may be done so long as the units are owned by a non-profit housing provider, secured in agreements with the housing provider as affordable rental housing for at least 25 years, and secured in agreements with the housing provider as rental housing for an additional term beyond the initial term they are secured as affordable rental housing (total of at least 50 years).

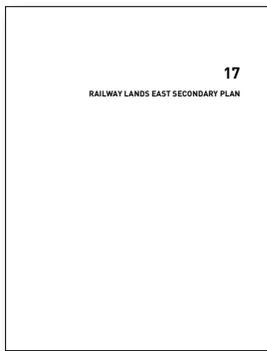
SASP 13.2 pertains to the lands at 260-270 King Street West and 274-322 King Street West. The SASP is intended to guide and shape development, redevelopment and private investment on the subject site to ensure that they recognize and continue the historic commitment and dedication to the performing arts and the cultural evolution of this King Street West segment and the broader area. The SASP encourages uses that strengthen and enhance the cultural activity and significance of the area, as well as public realm improvements that enhance “Theatre Row” along King Street West and link to the John Street Cultural Corridor.

The five Areas of Special Identity identified in the King-Spadina Secondary Plan include St. Andrew's Playground, Victoria Square, Clarence Square, Draper Street, and Wellington Street between Portland Street and Spadina Avenue. Certain measures will be implemented in these areas, such as zoning regulations and design guidelines that respect and promote the unique character of these areas.



### **Railway Lands Central Secondary Plan**

The [Railway Lands Central Secondary Plan](#) Area contains some of the existing BIA lands, bounded by Front Street to the north, the Gardiner Expressway to the south, Spadina Avenue to the west and John Street to the east. This plan regulates development within the Plan Area to ensure that: the barrier effects of the road and rail corridors are minimized, the central City is reunited with the Central Waterfront, a mix of land uses is provided, redevelopment takes full advantage of opportunities presented by their size and central location to satisfy a broad range of needs, street-oriented development is allowed throughout the Plan Area, links are established, an attractive public realm is created and co-operative arrangements are fostered among the parties involved in the development of the Railway Lands Central.



### **Railway Lands East Secondary Plan**

The [Railway Lands East Secondary Plan](#) Area contains some of the existing BIA lands bounded by Front Street to the north, the Gardiner Expressway to the south, John Street to the west and Yonge Street to the east. Development within the Plan Area aims to minimize barrier effects of the rail and road corridors, ensure redevelopments take advantage of their size and central location to satisfy a broad range of uses, safeguard a structured street system in new developments, establish links, create an attractive public realm and enter into co-operative arrangements among parties involved in the development of the Railway Lands East.

### **Site and Area Specific Policies**

#### **495. South of Wellington Street West, west of Spadina Avenue, North of Front Street West and east of Draper Street**

Applies to lands within the expanded BIA. This site is proposed to be redesignated as “Mixed Use Areas” from “Regeneration Areas” in recognition of the evolution of King-Spadina from an area in need of revitalization to a successful mixed-use neighbourhood. A draft site-specific Official Plan Amendment to the King-Spadina Secondary Plan seeks to remove the site governed by this SASP from the King-Spadina Secondary Plan granted the sites unique context (size and proximity to rail corridor). This SASP includes a range of specific policies on topics such as use, built-form, parkland, public realm, unit sizes, density and transition.

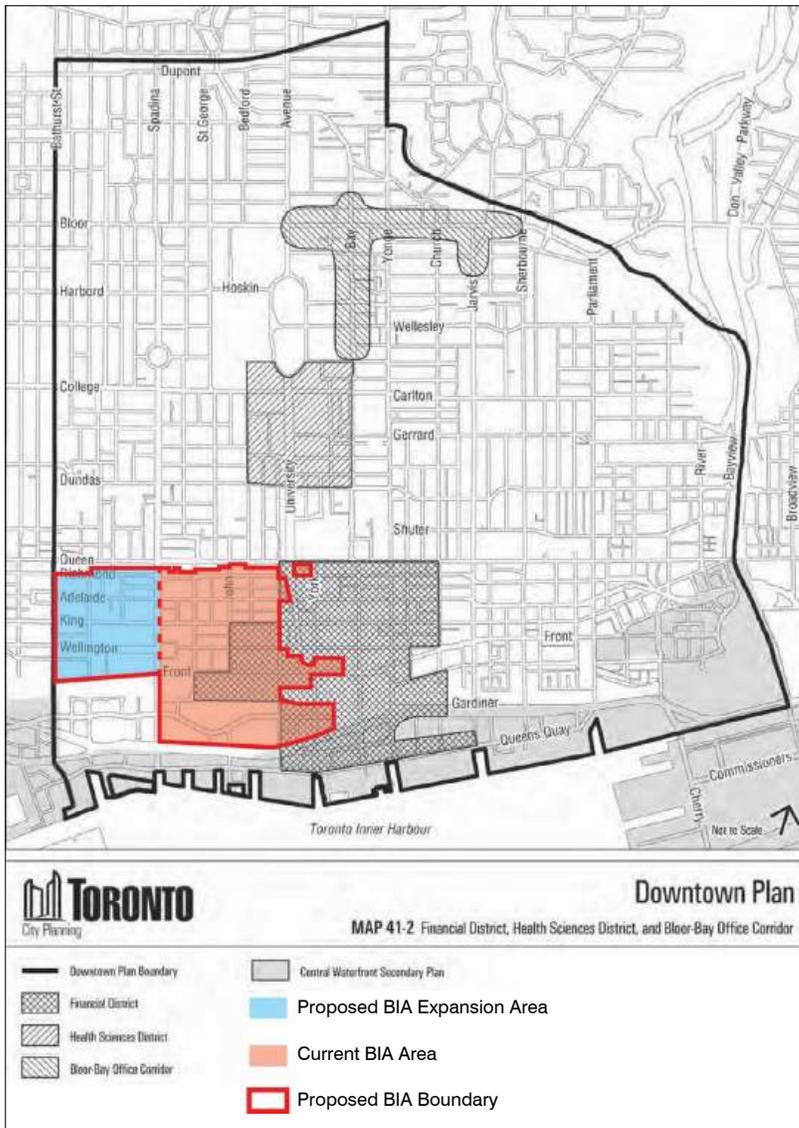
#### **265. Certain Lands on the South side of Bremner Boulevard, East of Rees Street**

Applies to lands within the existing BIA and states that the provisions of the Official Plan prohibiting the disposal of City-owned land in the Green Space System or Parks and Open Space Areas do not apply.

## Downtown Secondary Plan

The BIA falls within the boundaries of the [Downtown Secondary Plan](#) which provides policy guidance on growth, land use, parks, public realm, mobility, built form, community services, housing, culture and energy. Its purpose is to clarify how the City of Toronto Official Plan objectives, such as complete communities, resilience, and others, are to be achieved within the Downtown Secondary Plan Area.

The current and expanded BIA fall within the boundaries of various policy areas within the Downtown Secondary Plan which provide further policy direction. These policy areas include the Downtown Film Precinct, Cultural Precinct, Shoreline Stitch, Park Districts, Mixed Use Areas and Financial District.



## Downtown Community Services & Facilities Strategy

The [Downtown Community Services and Facilities](#) (CS & F) Strategy provides the implementation framework for achieving the goals of the Downtown Plan. It also provides direction on securing space and capital resources for each of the five community service sectors - schools, child care, libraries, recreation and human services - for the next 25 years, working towards achieving complete communities in the downtown.

The CS & F Strategy identifies community space and facilities needs downtown, setting priorities to support growth by sector and geography. The BIA falls within the boundaries of four districts: King-Spadina (current and expanded BIA), Financial District (current BIA), Waterfront West (current BIA) and Waterfront Central (current BIA).

## Downtown Energy Strategy

The purpose of the [Downtown Energy Strategy](#) is to set out a series of actions achieving reductions in overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, addressing constraints within the electricity distribution grid and enhancing resilience to area-wide power outages. This is intended to contribute to the City's long-term

goals of reducing GHG emissions, resulting in environmental, social and economic benefits; supporting new and existing thermal energy networks and local renewable energy solutions; and anticipating future energy demand. Policies within the Downtown Energy Strategy apply to all lands within the Downtown Plan and BIA.

### **Downtown Mobility Strategy**

The [Downtown Mobility Strategy](#) seeks to enable the growing numbers of residents, workers, students and visitors in the downtown to travel safely, efficiently and more sustainably while strengthening the City's economic competitiveness and environmental resiliency. It outlines a series of actions that work closely together with the Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan, helps align infrastructure planning with long-term growth, and supports rapid transit and existing City transportation initiatives, while making better use of existing right-of-way space.

Priority actions are separated into five categories – complete streets, walking, cycling, public transit and motor vehicles – and affect all lands within the Downtown Plan and BIA.

### **Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan**

The [Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan](#) establishes a vision and framework for achieving an expanded, improved and connected parks and public realm network within downtown Toronto. The Plan recognizes that parks and open spaces are central pieces of infrastructure and a key component of complete communities. The Plan seeks to provide equitable access to parkland, which is crucial to support urban life in high growth/high-density areas like the downtown. This Plan provides a roadmap for acquisition, expansion and improvements to parkland, addressing population and employment growth over the next 25 years.

This plan is based on Five Transformative Ideas: The Core Circle, Great Streets, Shoreline Stitch, Park Districts and Local Places. Together, these ideas form a clear vision for the Downtown's future urban landscape. This plan affects all lands within the Downtown Plan and BIA.

### **Downtown Water Strategy**

The [Downtown Water Strategy](#) identifies infrastructure improvements that are required to accommodate population and employment growth. It recognizes the limited space available in the City's road allowance to accommodate additional infrastructure, as well as capacity constraints imposed by groundwater infiltration and wet weather flows.

The Water Strategy outlines actions to enhance water supply, and wastewater and stormwater infrastructure through the Toronto Water Capital Program. This strategy applies to all lands within the Downtown Plan and BIA.



## Streetscape User Manual

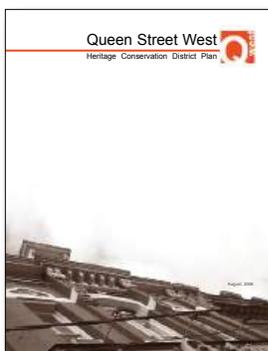
The [Streetscape Manual](#) is a reference tool developed to guide the design, construction and maintenance of sidewalk and boulevard improvements on Toronto's arterial road network. The Manual identifies a hierarchy of streetscape types (Main Street, Green Streets, Special Areas), separates the sidewalk zone into four functional zones and identifies various streetscape elements (paving, lighting, furniture, etc.). Furthermore, the Manual identifies many streets that are part of BIAs, which frequently customize streetscape design to enhance or create a local identity. Major arterial roads within the BIA include Queen Street, Richmond Street, Adelaide Street, King Street, Bathurst Street, Spadina Avenue and University Avenue. Minor arterial roads include Wellington Street and Front Street.



## King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Plan

The purpose of the [King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Plan](#) (HCD) is to establish a framework that will conserve the District's cultural heritage value through protection, conservation and management of its heritage attributes. The policies and guidelines contained within this Plan guide the review of development applications and permits within the HCD and inform decisions of city staff. This Plan contains a statement explaining the cultural heritage value of the District, describes heritage attributes, states objectives to be achieved through designation, develops policies, procedures and guidelines for achieving the stated objectives and describes the classes of alterations that property owners in the District may carry out without obtaining a permit.

The King-Spadina HCD contains the existing and expanded BIA, and is bounded by Bathurst Street to the west, Simcoe Street to the east, Richmond Street to the north and Front Street to the south. The policies of this Plan aim to regulate development so as not to negatively impact heritage attributes, reflect historical significance, and maintain views and accessibility. The King-Spadina HCD is currently under appeal.



## Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District Plan

The purpose of the [Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District Plan](#) (HCD) is to maintain and enhance the unique heritage character of Queen Street West, preserve significant buildings and building features, ensure changes to Contributing Buildings enhance the HCD, maintain Queen Street West's identity as both a neighbourhood Main Street and destination, support pedestrian amenities, encourage redevelopment and revitalization of underutilized sites, and involve local residents and business owners in the ongoing evolution of the HCD.

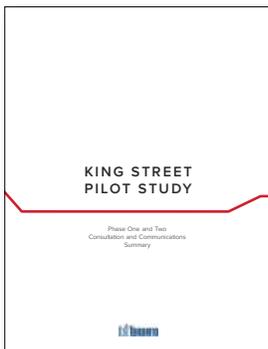
The Queen Street West HCD extends along Queen Street West and is bounded by Bathurst Street to the east and University Avenue to the west. Within the existing BIA, only a small number of buildings front onto Queen Street West. The policies of this Plan regulate massing, facades, voids, building height, public realm and provide guidelines for maintaining heritage attributes.



## Union Station Heritage Conservation District

The objective of the [Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan](#) (HCD) is to define the cultural heritage value of the area surrounding Union Station and establish a historical framework to guide the enhancement of the Union Station District. The goal of this Plan is to recognize the cultural heritage value of the District by balancing the preservation of its architectural integrity with new and innovative design ideas. Guidelines within this Plan aim to preserve original or historically significant materials and architectural features and repair rather than replace architectural features. If replacement is necessary, it should be historically accurate. If the building (or external research) provides minimal insights, other contributing buildings may be used as examples, and the inventiveness of new construction should be encouraged as long as such projects respect the historic character of the district.

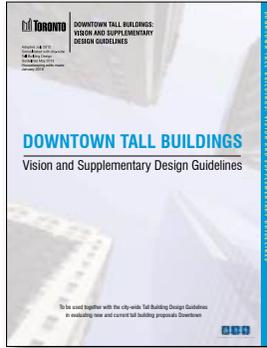
The Union Station HCD is bounded by Wellington Street to the north, John Street and Rees Street to the west, Lakeshore Boulevard/Harbour Street to the south and Church Street to the east. It contains the south-east portion of the existing BIA. The Plan includes policies for alterations, additions and the demolition of contributing buildings, as well as policies for public realm and new construction.



## King Street Transit Priority Corridor

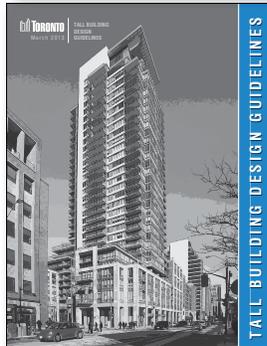
The [King Street Transit Priority Corridor](#) (formerly the King Street Pilot Study and the King Street Visioning Study) explored bold, transformative ideas for how to redesign King Street in order to move people more efficiently on transit, improve placemaking and support economic prosperity. Former streetcar operations suffered from slow travel speeds and delays caused by traffic signals and turning vehicles, leading to overcrowding. The TTC had made operational changes to improve streetcar service, but more significant change was needed to improve transit service on King Street. The purpose of the King Street Pilot Study was to develop and implement pilot projects testing a range of options to determine what might improve transit reliability, capacity and efficiency.

In 2019 City Council made King Street a permanent Transit Priority Corridor after the Pilot Study demonstrated that people can be moved more efficiently on public transit relatively quickly and cost-effectively. The King Street Transit Priority Corridor crosses through the expanded and existing BIA.



## Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines & Tall Building Design Guidelines

The [Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines](#) apply to the lands bounded by Bathurst Street to the west, the rail corridor north of Dupont Street, the Don Valley Parkway to the east and Toronto Harbour to the south. It excludes Secondary Plan Areas within this boundary. As a result, BIA lands within the King-Spadina, Railway Lands East and Railway Lands Central Secondary Plans are excluded from these guidelines, although a portion of the existing BIA lands east of University Avenue are included. These guidelines are to be used together with the city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines to evaluate all new and current tall building proposals located within the Downtown area boundary.



The Downtown Tall Buildings Design Guidelines specify height requirements and setbacks, and identify High and Secondary High Streets, Special Character Streets (i.e. Yonge Street), and factors mitigating height. By contrast, the city-wide [Tall Building Guidelines](#) go into greater detail regarding building form, massing, and streetscape.

## Retail Design Manual



The [Retail Design Manual](#) encourages the integration of design considerations for retail space into the planning of new development at an early stage in the process and can be applied across Toronto's diverse retail contexts. The Manual provides guidance on architectural and design factors for the street frontage of buildings, public realm interface and retail units; however, it only considers the ground floor along the street edge and public spaces. Retail refers to stores selling merchandise, restaurants, personal services, entertainment venues and other uses typically occupying ground floor space in commercial districts and buildings.

## Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines



The [Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines](#) assist in achieving the appropriate design of low-rise buildings. These guidelines apply to "Apartment Buildings", as defined in the Toronto City-wide Comprehensive Zoning By-law 569-2013. Lands within the BIA are zoned primarily "Commercial Residential" and "Commercial Residential Employment", with the majority of "Commercial Residential" fronting onto Queen Street West. Both designations allow "apartment building" as a permitted use.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to demonstrate how the public realm and built form policy objectives of the Official Plan can be addressed by identifying strategies to enhance the character and quality of the living environment. The strategies include design strategies; the allowances of appropriate infill development, while protecting stable residential neighbourhoods and heritage features; and provide best practices and guidance in the creation and evaluation of development proposals. The Guidelines address site context, building type, site organization, building design and the pedestrian realm.



## Toronto Complete Streets Guidelines

Toronto's [Complete Streets Guidelines](#) should be considered in all street design projects in the City of Toronto. The Guidelines endeavour to make all streets as complete as possible and apply to both large and small street projects. This includes BIA projects, Secondary Plans, Precinct Plans and streetscape improvements.

The Guidelines categorize streets by type (Civic Street, Downtown & Centres Main Street, Mixed Use Connector Street, etc.), outline design objectives for each street type, and address various aspects of street design for pedestrians, cyclists, transit, green infrastructure, roadways and intersections.

## The Toronto Green Standard v3

The [Toronto Green Standard v3](#) (TGS) sets minimum performance standards for all development applications received after May, 1 2018. Tier 1 standards are mandatory, while Tier 2, 3, 4 standards are optional. TGS is categorized by development type (low-rise residential, mid- to high-rise residential and non-residential, publicly owned facilities), and provides performance standards for each relating to air quality, ecology, solid waste, energy efficiency, greenhouse gases and resilience, and water quality, balance and efficiency. TGS encourages applicants to meet higher tier standards through the Development Charge Refund Program. v4 of the Toronto Green Standard was adopted by Toronto City Council in July, 2021 and will come into effect in May, 2022 for all new planning applications.



## Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities

These [Guidelines](#) are intended to improve the quality of bicycle parking that is secured through the development approval process, including off-site bicycle parking requirements in the public right-of-way. The guidelines cover accessibility, safety and security, convenience, design and care of bicycle parking facilities.

## Erosion and Sediment Control Guide for Urban Construction

This guide provides erosion and sediment control practitioners, developers and regulatory agencies with up-to-date practical guidance on the effective application of erosion and sediment control (ESC) measures. Objectives include defining key terms and concepts, defining risk assessment methods, providing strategies for the effective application of ESC measures, clarifying the ESC plan submission requirements and outlining expectations for ESC inspections and performance monitoring on construction sites.

## Wet Weather Flow Management Guidelines

These [guidelines](#) provide a practical working aid in the review and approval of stormwater management plans for new development and redevelopment. The guidelines provide guidance on stormwater management practices and approval requirements. They also guide the design and implementation of stormwater management measures to achieve the long-term objectives of the Wet Weather Flow Management Plan.



## Toronto Green Streets Technical Guidelines

These [guidelines](#) provide direction for the planning, design, integration and maintenance of green infrastructure options appropriate for Toronto street types and conditions. The guidelines offer green infrastructure solutions that can yield significant environmental benefits while relieving urban pressures on ecological systems, improving air quality, enhancing water quality and achieving energy efficiency. They support the environmental objectives of the Toronto Green Standard, as Green Streets are designed to focus on the at-source treatment of stormwater runoff by replicating the function of a natural drainage system. Green streets enhance the longevity of urban forests, mitigate heat island effects, manage stormwater, promote infiltration, enhance air quality and conserve energy.

## Bird Friendly Best Practices for Effective Lighting and Glass

These [guidelines](#) succeed the previous Bird Friendly Development Guidelines (2007) and support measures within the TGS to mitigate bird collisions with buildings. These documents answer many of the most common questions on bird-friendly design and provide local examples of strategies used to reduce the number of bird collision fatalities in Toronto.



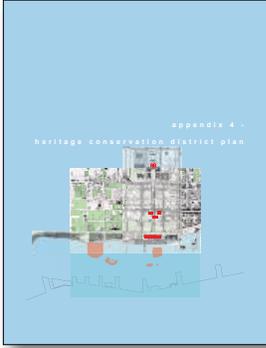
## City of Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines

These [guidelines](#) contain minimum accessibility standards required by the Ontario Building Code, as well as recommendations exceeding the required minimum standards. The Guidelines support the assertion that accessible design must make approaching, entering and using buildings and structures easier. It must also provide an equivalent level of safety for everyone, emphasize dignity and independence, and be fully integrated within building form and function. This includes design considerations for elements such as exterior routes, arrival/departure areas, special areas, outdoor amenities and support systems, interior routes, and interior systems and controls.



## Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities

These [Guidelines](#) seek to fulfill the Official Plan objectives of creating complete communities and creating an attractive, safe city where people of all ages and abilities can enjoy a good quality of life. The City has observed that new development is predominantly infill on sites of less than one hectare, marketed to smaller households without children. These Guidelines provide for a greater diversity of housing and child-friendly design considerations to create complete vertical communities. They include guidelines for the neighbourhood, building and individual unit. These guidelines apply to all new multi-residential mid-rise and tall building development applications including 20 or more units.

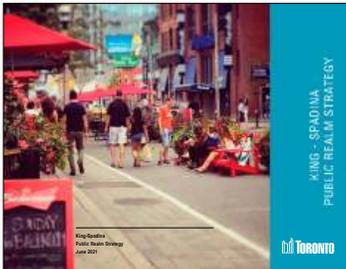


## Pet Friendly Design Guidelines and Best Practices for New Multi-Unit Buildings

As Toronto continues to grow, many neighbourhoods are becoming increasingly compact and are characterized by multi-unit buildings. As the residential population has increased, so has the pet population. The needs of these communities are addressed within these [guidelines](#) to make development more supportive of a growing pet population, reduce the current burden on the public realm and provide needed pet amenities in high density residential communities. The physical design of public and private spaces is addressed at the neighbourhood, building and unit scale.

## King-Spadina Design Guidelines

These [guidelines](#) apply to all lands within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area, which includes the existing and expanded BIA. The guidelines identify the important characteristics of Areas of Special Identity and provide design guidelines for general site plan issues, pedestrian routes, setbacks, streetscape, open space, grading, servicing, height and massing. Areas of Special Identity include Clarence Square, Victoria Square, portions of Wellington Street, Draper Street, St. Andrew's Playground and various Special Streets. Design considerations seek to maintain the unique character of these areas, while creating an attractive public realm.



## King Spadina Public Realm Strategy

This [document](#) is an expanded and revised version of the 2014 *King Spadina East Precinct Public Realm Strategy*. The expanded study area is the same as the King Spadina Secondary Plan area. The study was approved by Toronto and East York Community Council in June 2021.

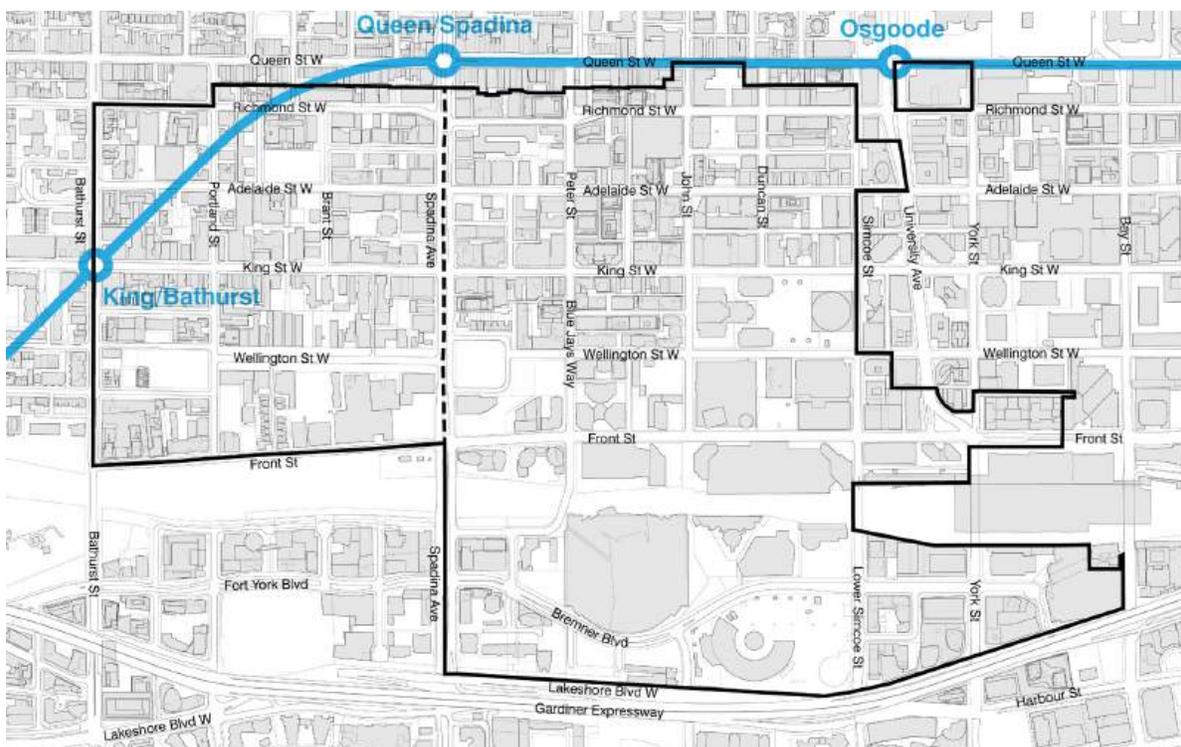
The objectives of this strategy are as follows: provide a public realm structure and corresponding strategy for improvements to streets and open spaces in the Precinct; expand the open space network; provide a variety of connected open spaces; improve streetscapes to improve safety and sense of place; enhance the pedestrian realm; orient buildings and massing to ensure the public realm and adjacent properties have adequate access to light and sky views; and, finally, ensure appropriate relationships between the public realm and built form. This Public Realm Strategy is meant to compliment the Downtown West BIA HCD study and reinforce the character and identity of the King-Spadina area by providing a public realm framework for development.

## Railway Lands West and Central Design Guidelines

The existing BIA falls within the boundaries of the Railway Lands Central and East. These [design guidelines](#) are intended to provide a context for the development of said lands into a predominantly residential neighbourhood, accompanied with non-residential uses and entertainment uses, new streets, parks, schools and other amenities. The guidelines promote a high quality of design, describe the anticipated approach to site planning, provide a coordinated approach to the design and definition of the public realm and allow for a range of development scenarios.

## Ontario Line

Metrolinx is currently planning for the [Ontario Line](#), a proposed 15.6-kilometre, 15-stop subway line that will run from Exhibition Place, through downtown along Queen Street, and north to the Ontario Science Centre via Pape Station. Three stations are proposed within or directly adjacent to the Downtown West BIA: Osgoode (interchange with Line 1), Queen/Spadina and King/Bathurst. Construction may potentially start in 2022 with an estimated completion in 2030. It is expected that significant impacts will be experienced in the BIA during construction, particularly around the station locations. Noise, road closures, diversions and other effects on traffic and circulation are expected.



Map of proposed Ontario Line route and stations through the Downtown West BIA



# KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

The Downtown West BIA's Growth and Development Framework focuses on those elements that have the greatest impact on the 'experience' of the area: the Pedestrian Realm and Parks, Streetscapes and Uses at Grade.

The following sections address these three Key Areas of Focus.

## **3 Pedestrian Realm Network & Park Space System**

The pedestrian realm network and park space system provides guidelines on developer contributions, the park space system and streetscapes.

## **4 Streetscapes**

The streetscapes provides guidelines for the streetscape hierarchy, design strategies for specific streets, a streetscape palette and healthy street trees.

## **5 Uses at Grade**

The uses at grade provides guidelines for priority retail streets, retail diversity and design for retail streets.



# 3 Pedestrian Realm Network & Park Space System

## 3.1 Defining the Pedestrian Realm Network

The Pedestrian Realm Network in the Toronto Downtown West BIA is comprised of various and diverse components, including parks, connecting links and streetscapes. All of the components play vital roles in animating the Downtown West area. The components included within the Pedestrian Realm Network are significant contributions in the provision of recreational opportunities and for social activity. Specific planning, design and maintenance considerations are required to ensure the vitality and longevity of these spaces.

The various components of the Pedestrian Realm Network must be considered in concert with one another and within the context of this urban community. A comprehensive understanding of how these spaces work together and complement each other, and their adjacent uses, will lead to a more connected, accessible and logical network of pedestrian spaces throughout the Downtown West BIA. Moving people in to, out of and through the community easily and safely, and providing a variety of spaces for socializing, special events and recreation, is a priority of this Plan.

## 3.2 Required Contributions to the Pedestrian Realm Network

All development shall be required to make a contribution to the Pedestrian Realm Network. The City has the authority to require parkland dedication, or cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication under Section 42 of the Planning Act. In addition, Section 37 of the Planning Act, implemented through a Community Benefits Charge By-law, may be used to provide funds to build components of the Pedestrian Realm Network, and the Development Charges Act can be used to fund pedestrian realm development/improvements that are required to properly accommodate a growing population.

### To achieve the Pedestrian Realm Network objectives of this Plan:

-  All cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication funds resulting from development within the Toronto Downtown West BIA shall be spent by the City to enhance the supply of public parkland within the BIA. Further, it is expected that significant funding for Pedestrian Realm Network improvements within the BIA shall be allocated from Community Benefits and Development Charges;
-  All developments on sites less than 1,000 square metres in size shall be required to dedicate land and/or make a cash-in-lieu of parkland payment;
-  All development on sites greater than 1,000 square metres shall include:
  - A Pedestrian Realm Network land contribution of not less than 7.5 percent of the net developable site area;
  - An Urban Square or Pocket Park with a minimum frontage on a public street of 7.5 metres, and a minimum size of 75 square metres. Larger sites shall include larger Pocket Parks/Urban Squares;
  - Promenades or Connecting Links with a minimum width of 6 metres; and/or,
  - A cash or additional land contribution that makes up any land dedication shortfall, once the minimum of 7.5 percent of the land area has been dedicated;
-  Park spaces above the second storey that have a public access limitation of any kind, shall be considered amenity space for building residents, and shall not be accepted by the City as contributing to the parkland dedication requirements of the Planning Act, or the City of Toronto Official Plan;
-  Connecting Links that are covered, or incorporated within buildings may be accepted by the City as contributing to the parkland dedication requirements of the Planning Act, or the City of Toronto Official Plan, subject to design, maintenance and public accessibility agreements satisfactory to the City;
-  The key components of the Pedestrian Realm Network, including public or publicly accessible indoor or outdoor spaces should include public art and other special design features. Public art contributions shall be secured in accordance with the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan and applicable City programs such as the Percent for Public Art Program; and,



All new developments shall provide Pedestrian Realm Network improvements and shall incorporate generous sidewalks, as well as adequate space for public events. A primary Pedestrian Realm Network improvement objective along the John Street Promenade, Boulevards and Main Streets is to increase the width of sidewalks and planting strips to 6.0 metres from curb edge to primary building face as a minimum standard. The City shall consider the reduction of traffic lanes where sidewalk widths are inadequate, or unsafe.



Other Pedestrian Realm Network improvement considerations may include:

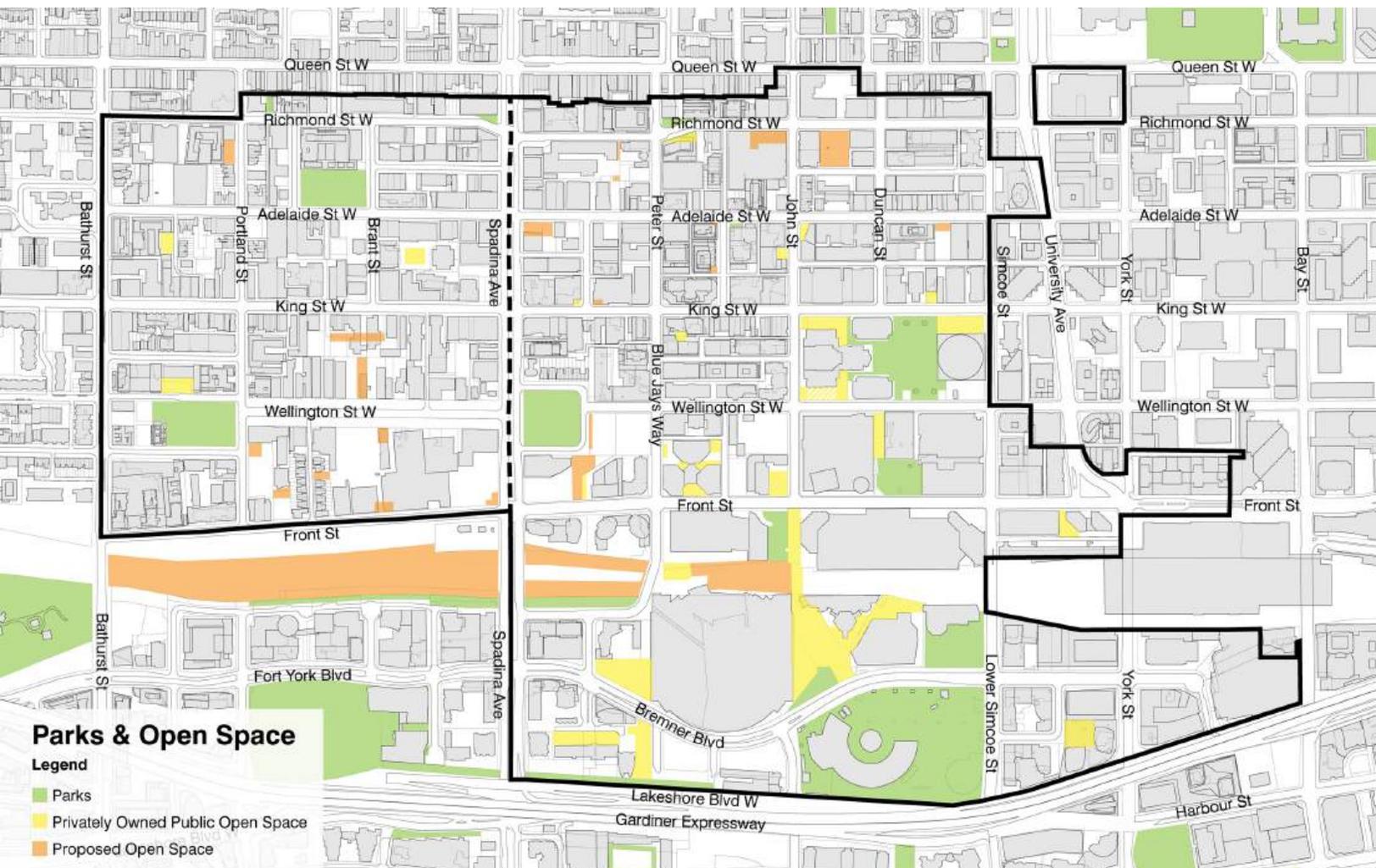
- Pedestrian comfort should be prioritized for proposed additions to the Pedestrian Realm Network and improvements to existing spaces, paying particular attention to avoiding excessive wind effects and mitigation strategies for wind effects;
- Where appropriate, splash barriers, especially along stretches that have minimal sidewalk width;
- Canopies to provide an improved pedestrian environment and a unifying visual element;
- Improved cycling amenities within the right-of-way;
- Appropriate lighting and street furniture;
- Promenades, Sliver Parks and widened sidewalks that accommodate street activities, sidewalk cafés and spill out retail, where appropriate;
- Locating curb cuts for vehicular access for parking and loading either from a laneway or within the building mass at one place on the site;
- Protecting existing trees and planting new trees to ensure a continuous tree canopy along all sidewalks; and,
- Inclusion of dog stations for new residential buildings accessible to, and for the exclusive use of their residents.

### 3.3 Park Space System

The existing and future Park Space System within the Downtown West BIA is identified on the following map. It includes an array of park types and scales, geographically distributed throughout the BIA.

It is the intent of this Plan to ensure that:

- The City actively seeks out opportunities to assemble the full range of park spaces, including large parcels of land, within the Downtown West BIA to establish new publicly accessible parks; and,
- Park Acquisition, Revitalization and Maintenance Plans are prepared by the City for all existing and new park spaces. Enhanced maintenance protocols will be established to ensure the ongoing success of these key assets.



Map of Parks & Open Space in the Downtown West BIA

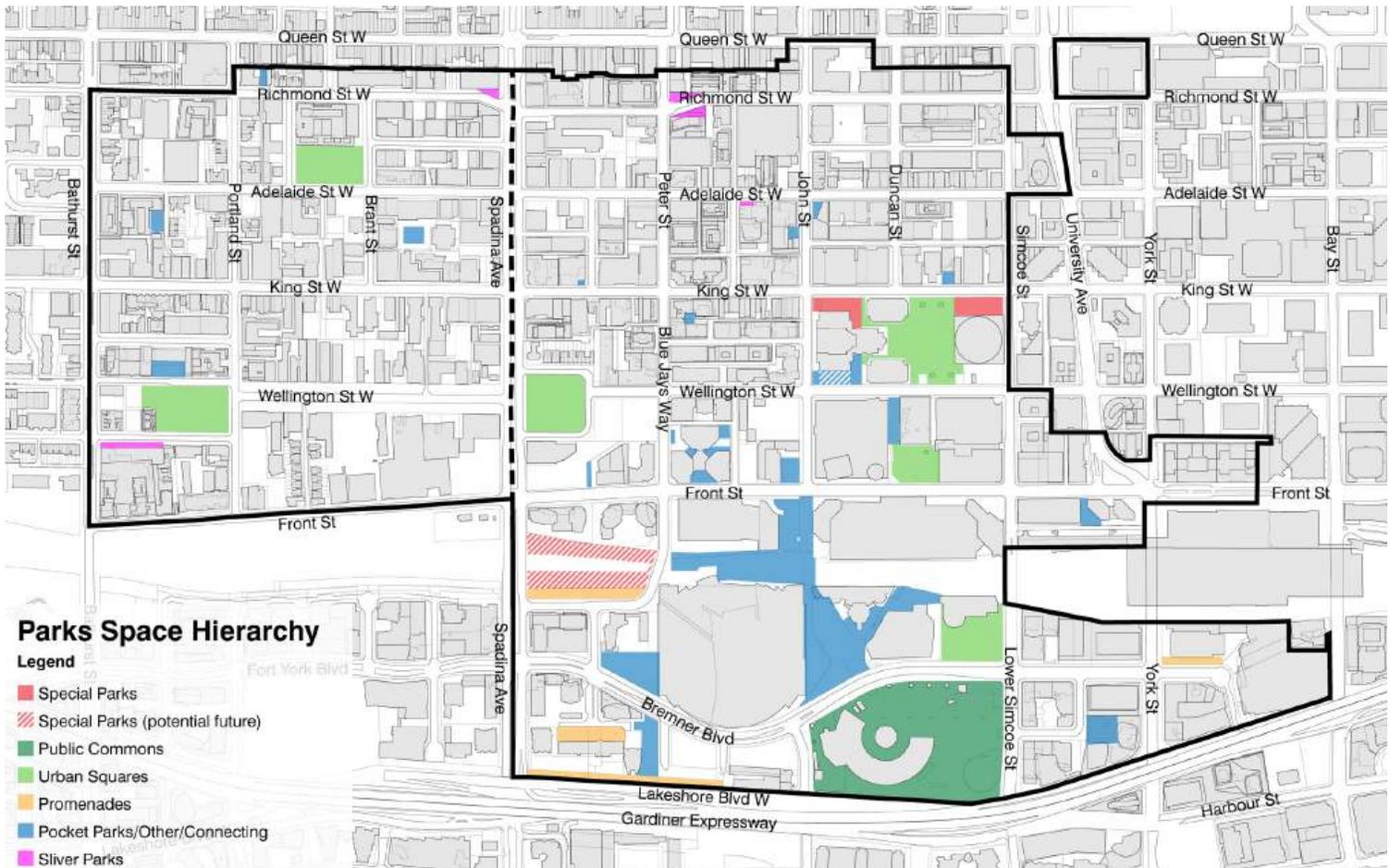
### 3.3.1 A Park Space Hierarchy

The park space hierarchy appropriate for the Downtown West BIA is comprised of the following components:

- Special Parks;
- Public Commons;
- Urban Squares;
- Promenades;
- Pocket Parks;
- Sliver Parks; and,
- Connecting Links.

All of these park space components will play vital roles in animating the Downtown West BIA. Specific planning, design and maintenance considerations are required to ensure the vitality and longevity of these spaces.

A comprehensive understanding of how these park spaces work together and complement each other, and integrate with their adjacent uses, will lead to a more connected, accessible and logical Pedestrian Realm Network. Moving people through the Downtown West BIA easily and safely, and providing a variety of spaces for socializing, special events and recreation, is a priority.



Map of Parks Space Hierarchy in the Downtown West BIA

## The following policies apply to all park spaces in the Downtown West BIA:



Park spaces may be publicly or privately owned:

- Park space that is dedicated to the City through the development approval process shall be counted toward the parkland dedication requirements of the Planning Act, or the City of Toronto Official Plan; and/or,
- Privately owned park spaces will only be considered as part of the required parkland dedication where the City is satisfied that the component is accessible to the public, has been designed to City standards, and is to be maintained to City standards. Legal agreements to ensure the long-term adherence to these requirements shall be appropriately executed.



All public park spaces, will be safe, secure and accessible to the public, as per City policy.



All privately owned, publicly accessible park spaces will be a safe, secure and accessible to the public for a minimum of 14 hours per day, unless otherwise established through required legal agreements. These park spaces will include adequate signage that indicates when it is open and accessible to the public.



All park spaces, including existing and new, will include a signed Park Manifesto that outlines appropriate conduct for park space users and encourages respect for the park and all users and adjacent spaces.



Comprehensive maintenance schedules will be developed for all park spaces, including existing and new, to ensure safe, accessible and healthy landscapes.



All new park spaces will achieve a minimum of 40 percent tree canopy cover by the end of the 10th year after it is developed, or redesigned, unless otherwise stated. Trees, shrubs and groundcovers will be included in the landscape design to achieve this objective.



The design of new outdoor park spaces will prioritize pedestrian comfort. Maximized daily sunlight and protection from wind and other elements will be considered to support year-round use of the park space.



Pedestrian amenities, such as backed seating, tables, washrooms, water fountains and waste receptacles shall be of a high quality and readily available within park spaces.



New park spaces will be designed to the highest standards. Top quality building materials, informed planting choices and environmental sustainability are priorities in the design of new park spaces.



New park spaces will include public art.



New park spaces will include high quality, barrier free, programmable space that can accommodate the needs of park space users and facilitate socializing, special events and recreation.



New park spaces will create and enhance opportunities for greening, and shall be appropriately linked with other elements of the Pedestrian Realm Network.

### 3.3.2 Special Parks

The Downtown West BIA includes a number of existing and planned Special Parks which are parks that don't easily fit within a typical urban park hierarchy.

This Plan identifies Festival Plaza and the Roy Thompson Hall Reflecting Pool as Special Parks. The potential proposed public open space over the rail corridor will also ultimately be included within this category - however and whenever it becomes achieved/designed in the future.

#### **Festival Plaza**

The current underutilized space at the southeast corner of King and John Street presents a tremendous opportunity to create a permanent public gathering space that marks the intersection of the BIA's two most important spines. The subject of a design ideas competition held by the BIA in 2009, the transformation of this space will be an important long-term initiative to complement the transformation of both streets and to serve as a central focus for the BIA, supporting areas for sitting, public art and festivals. Key design recommendations include:



*Looking southeast at the site of Festival Plaza in its current condition*

- As an initial phase and to begin to better utilize the space, the current landscaping area should be cleared except for the trees where possible;
- The design of the space should complement the John Street transformation and paving treatments should extend over King Street;
- Permanent fixtures should be minimal to enable a flexible space for a variety of programming possibilities and to accommodate large number of people;
- Unique lighting should be incorporated including the integration of multi-media technology; and,
- Complementary uses such as restaurants should be encouraged within the ground level of Metro Hall to animate the space.

Illustrations from the five finalists of the ideas competition are provided on the following page.



*'The Urban Ballroom' (winning design)*



*'The Oracle'*



*'Terrace'*



*'Entertain Me'*



*'King Street Staircase'*

## Roy Thomson Hall Reflecting Pool

Inspired by comparable examples such as Rockefeller Centre in New York City and John Hancock Building Plaza in Chicago, in 2015 the reflecting pool was transformed into a major outdoor event space, the North Court Patio. The space is now home to a free summer concert series. Key improvements include:

- New public access walkway located off David Pecaut Square;
- Fully accessible and serviced event space capable of supporting concerts, BBQs, staff parties, team building events, cocktail receptions and sit-down dinners;
- Expanded patio with removable stone staging that increases capacity to more than 650;
- A new stage area in the centre off the pool that provides a variety of adaptable uses, such as summer concerts, outdoor theatre or musical productions;

Additional recommendations for further improvements include:

- Potential for greater interconnectedness between Roy Thomson Hall and David Pecaut Square;
- Lighting elements on the glass domed roof;
- Year-round activation over the reflecting pool, for example: winter skating; and,
- Waterfall feature.



*Rockefeller Center, New York City*



*An event in the renovated North Court Patio*



*Illustration of potential improvements and utilization of the space during the day in the winter months*

### Rail Deck District

Developers are bringing forward plans for decking over the rail corridor between Bathurst Street and Blue Jays Way that will incorporate new mixed-use development along with substantial public park space. The open space could be able to make connections across the rail corridor between entertainment and cultural facilities, retail, neighbourhoods, The Bentway, and the proposed Spadina-Front GO Station.



Existing conditions over the rail corridor



Revised Rail Deck District proposal renderings showing access from street level

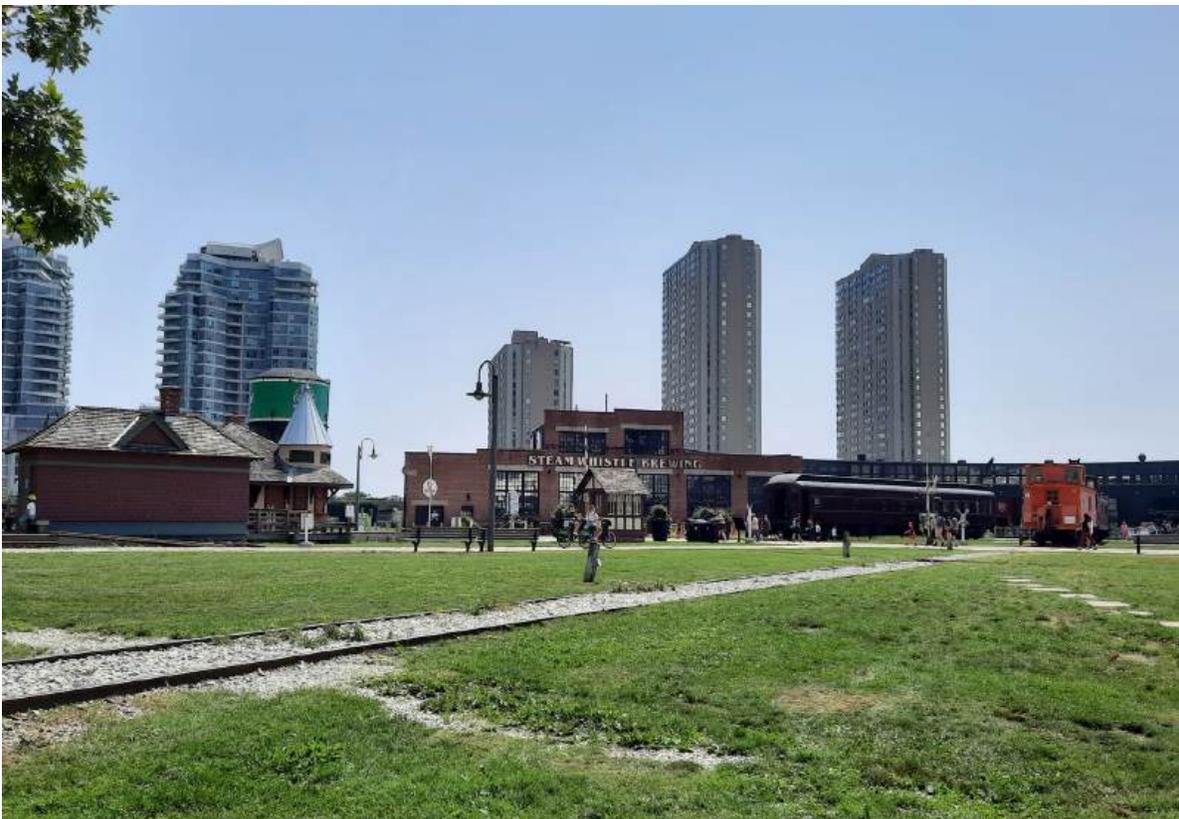


Revised Rail Deck District proposal showing a 1 hectare Statutory Park over the railway - remaining air rights over the rail corridor would be made available to the City for potential parkland

### 3.3.3 Public Commons

Public Commons are the largest urban park typology, and are intended to be social and recreational focal points of the Downtown West BIA. They typically meet the needs of the local community, and in some instances, accommodate City-wide 'destination' facilities. Public Commons support a balance of active and passive uses and should also accommodate special features that add visual interest and contribute to placemaking, including locations for public art. Public Commons may be coordinated with school sites, where possible. Public Commons are to be developed with the following criteria in mind:

- Be .75 to 2 ha, and support the needs of the community located within a 10-minute walk of the park space;
- Have frontage on at least 2 public streets, but may be surrounded by public streets where the scale of the park is appropriate;
- Be designed such that they provide a minimum of 40 percent of the area of the park in tree canopy cover by the end of the 10th year after its opening;
- Be primarily soft surfaced and green, but may include hardscape elements;
- Include substantial programmable spaces such as small sports fields, games courts, and performance venues, as well as play elements for children;
- Include seating and a full furniture program, such as lighting, facilities for dogs, facilities for seniors, children and youth, water features and public art; and,
- Provide sheltered areas/microclimate for comfortable spaces within larger site.

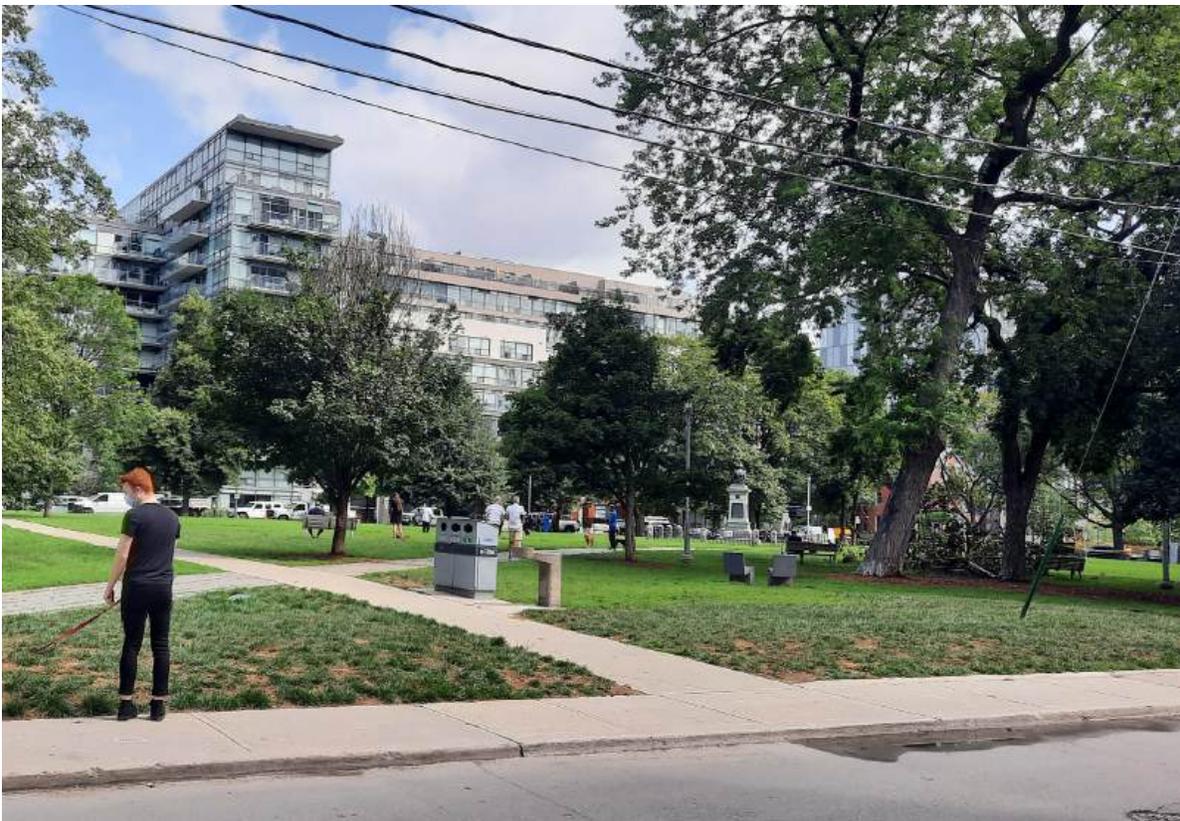


*Roundhouse Park*

### 3.3.4 Urban Squares

Urban Squares are a moderately scaled typology of the urban park hierarchy commonly associated with commercial and residential land uses. Urban Squares support neighbourhood-oriented social opportunities, as well as City-wide entertainment and cultural events depending on their size and location. Urban Squares may include public art, small outdoor game areas, seating areas and places to eat, as well as street-related activities such as vendor and exhibit space. Urban Squares are expected to develop with the following criteria in mind:

- Be between .25 to 1 ha in size, and support the needs of the community located within a 5-minute walk of the park space;
- Have frontage on at least 2 public streets, but may be surrounded by public streets where the scale of the square is appropriate;
- Generally follow a 1:1 proportion of length to width;
- Require that adjacent built form have primary and active frontages facing the Square;
- Be designed such that they provide between 25 and 40% of the area of the open space in tree canopy cover by the end of the 10th year after its opening;
- Be primarily hard surfaced, but may include soft surface elements;
- Include community and civic event spaces as well as performance venues and playful elements for children; and,
- Include ample seating and a full furniture program, such as lighting, opportunities for outdoor cafés and restaurants, facilities for seniors, children and youth, water features and public art.



*Victoria Memorial Square*

### 3.3.5 Promenades

Promenades are substantial linear open spaces that are located between adjacent building facades and the adjacent road right-of-way. They are typically only located along one side of the street, and are continuous along the length of the block. Promenades are typically used to enhance the pedestrian experience along with highly activated at-grade retail spaces. Promenades should be developed with the following criteria in mind:

- Are between 6 and 20 metres in width, abutting, and parallel with a public road right-of-way;
- Provide a clear, continuous pedestrian path of travel through the space;
- Include a repetition of elements, such as pavers, lights, seating, planters and trees; and,
- Incorporate public art, small outdoor game areas, seating areas and places to eat, as well as street-related activities such as vendor and exhibit space.



*Wide promenade next to Raptors Way forming part of the Jurassic Park plaza*

### 3.3.6 Pocket Parks

Pocket Parks are small, pedestrian friendly spaces that accommodate socializing in dense urban areas that are designed to a very high standard to support more intensified use. Pocket Parks are destinations unto themselves that are animated with outdoor seating, restaurant and retail frontages. They include primarily hard surface elements, but can also accommodate softer elements. Pocket Parks are expected to develop with the following criteria in mind:

- Be a minimum of 75 square metres in size, and intended to serve a local community where residents, visitors and businesses are generally within a 2.5 to 5-minute walk;
- Be connected to, and have at least 7.5 metres of direct frontage along the public sidewalk system;
- Require that adjacent built form have primary and active frontages facing the park;
- Be designed such that they provide up to 50 percent of the area of the park in tree canopy cover by the end of the 10th year after its opening;
- Be primarily hard surfaced, with limited soft surface elements; and,
- Include seating and a full furniture program, such as lighting, opportunities for outdoor cafés and restaurants, facilities that promote a passive, relaxing atmosphere, water features and public art.

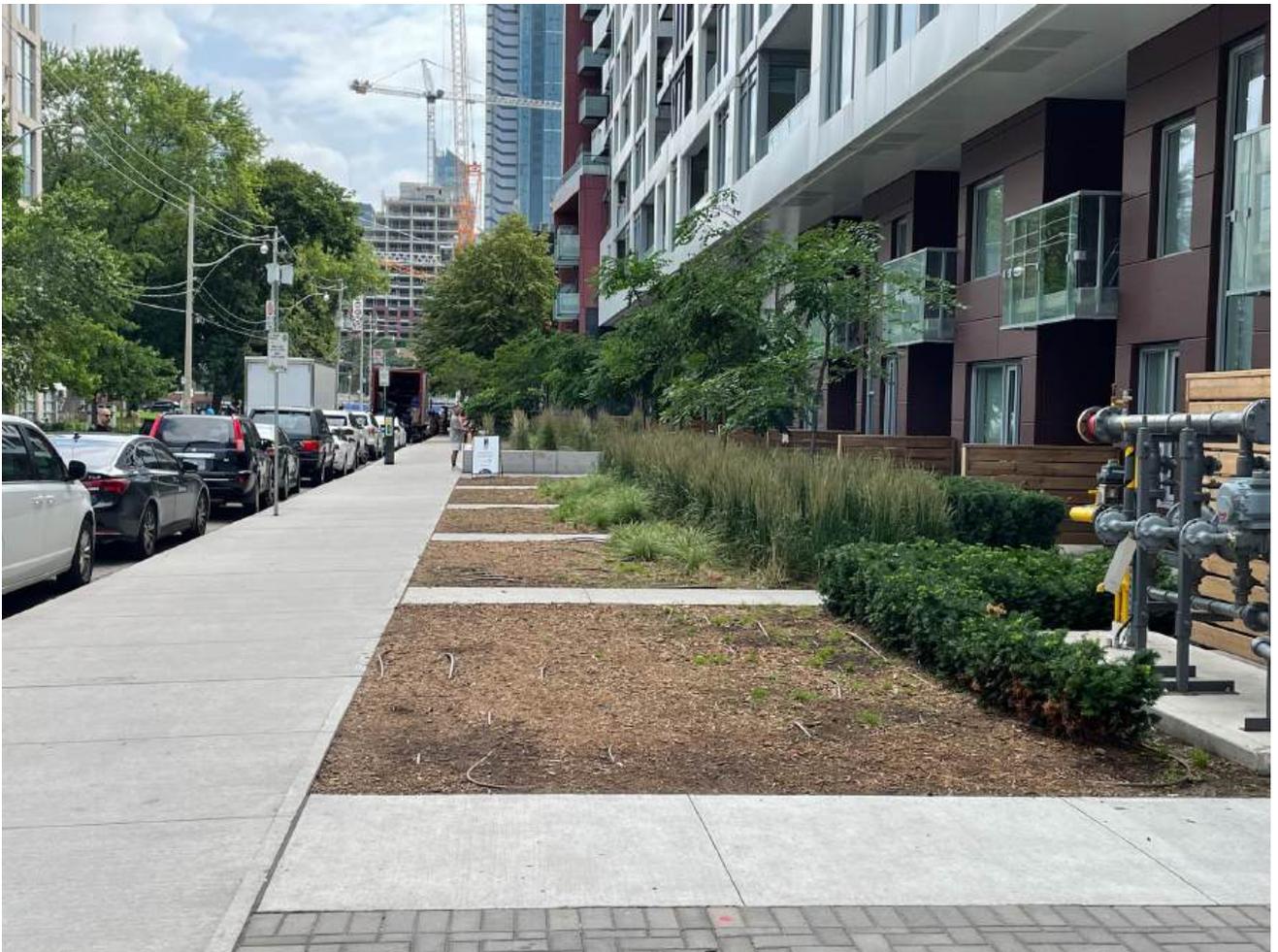


*Pocket park (POPS) at Pinnacle on Adelaide (along John Street)*

### 3.3.7 Sliver Parks

Sliver Parks are small scale, linear components of the parkland network that add to the width of the public sidewalk system, create plazas or forecourts between the face of the adjacent building and the street, and provide a transition between public and private realms. Sliver Parks are appropriate adjacent to active building frontages, with transparent and accessible at-grade uses that animate the space, improve safety and encourage use. Sliver Parks are expected to develop with the following criteria in mind:

- Be primarily hard surfaced, with edge-defining planting and other soft surface landscape elements; and,
- Be flexible to accommodate spill out retail space, and/or outdoor cafés and restaurants.

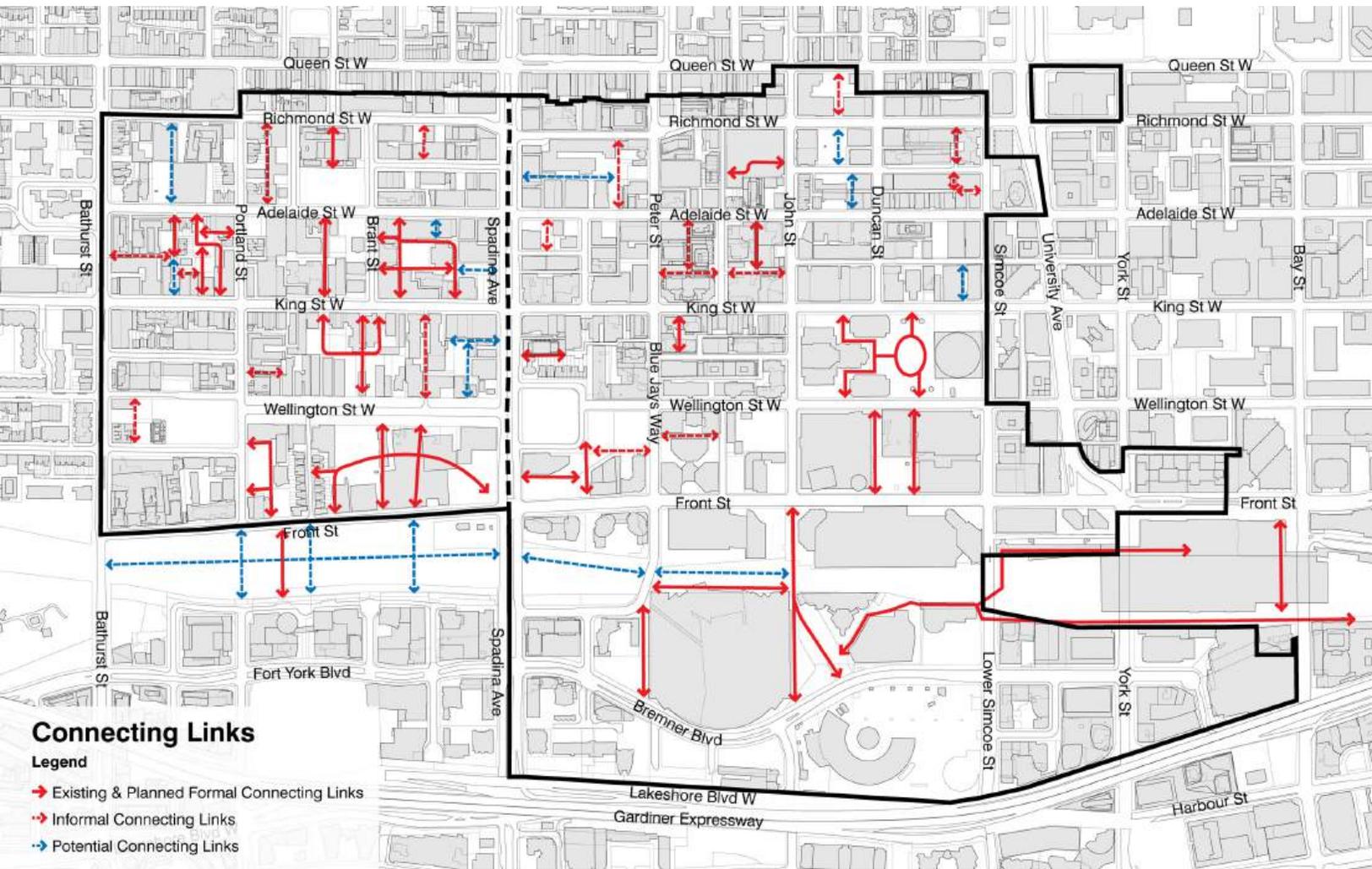


*Sliver park on south side of Niagara Street, east of Bathurst Street*

### 3.3.8 Connecting Links

Connecting Links enable pedestrians in high pedestrian volume areas to travel through the community quickly and easily. Connecting Links are outdoor or indoor walkways through a development site, connecting two streets together. They promote a high standard of quality and pedestrian comfort, and can be publicly owned, or privately owned and publicly accessible. Many are destinations unto themselves with seating, restaurant and retail frontages, and unique public art.

Connecting Links are key components of the Pedestrian Realm Network that promote the success of Toronto Downtown West’s image as a high quality and pedestrian oriented community, and should contribute to the logical wayfinding system. Further, they help to establish a well-connected park space network within a highly urban environment. The development community should leverage this unique quality by building upon the existing network of Connecting Links.



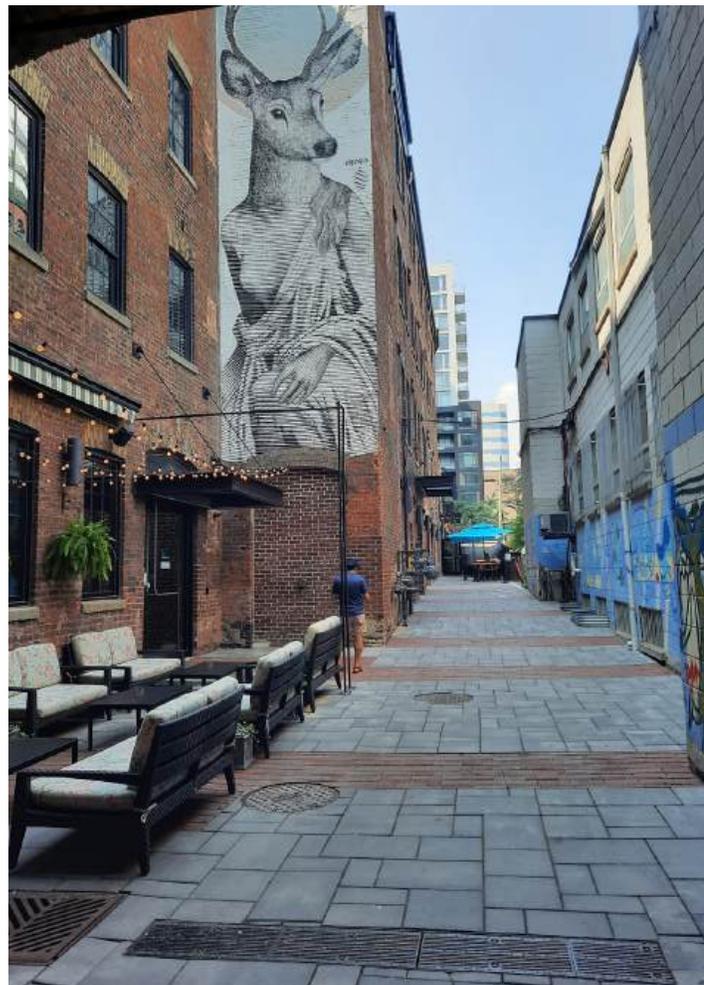
Map of Connecting Links in the Downtown West BIA

## Intent

It is the intent of this Plan that Connecting Links be accessible and inviting to all pedestrians, and of a size appropriate to the scale of adjacent development. They provide valuable opportunities to improve functional and visual connections between the public sidewalk system and the other components of the Pedestrian Realm Network. They will play an important role in the quality of the existing and new park spaces throughout the Downtown West BIA, creating a logical wayfinding system, and assist in the establishment of a more beautiful and inviting place. The provision of publicly accessible Connecting Links is to be highly encouraged on individual sites throughout the Downtown West BIA.

Connecting Links are expected to develop with the following criteria in mind:

- Be a minimum of 4 metres in width, taking into account the scale of adjacent buildings;
- Shall be provided in high pedestrian-volume areas, for ease of movement as well as contributing to the creation of unique urban spaces;
- Shall include several egress opportunities for the public sidewalk system;
- When enclosed, the floor-to-ceiling height shall be a minimum of 7 metres;
- Be primarily hardscaped, with softscape and seating elements providing amenity and visual interest, and potential opportunities for retail along their length;
- Be well lit, promoting pedestrian comfort and safety; and,
- Include signage to identify adjacent buildings.



*Connecting Link between King Street West and Adelaide Street West*

### 3.4 Streetscapes as Community Open Space

Collectively, the streetscapes in the Downtown West BIA comprise the largest percentage of community open space - which solidifies their importance as a defining feature of the Pedestrian Realm Network. Streets and lanes can be engaging and safe outdoor places with beautiful trees and plants, seating, shade and public art for everyone to enjoy.

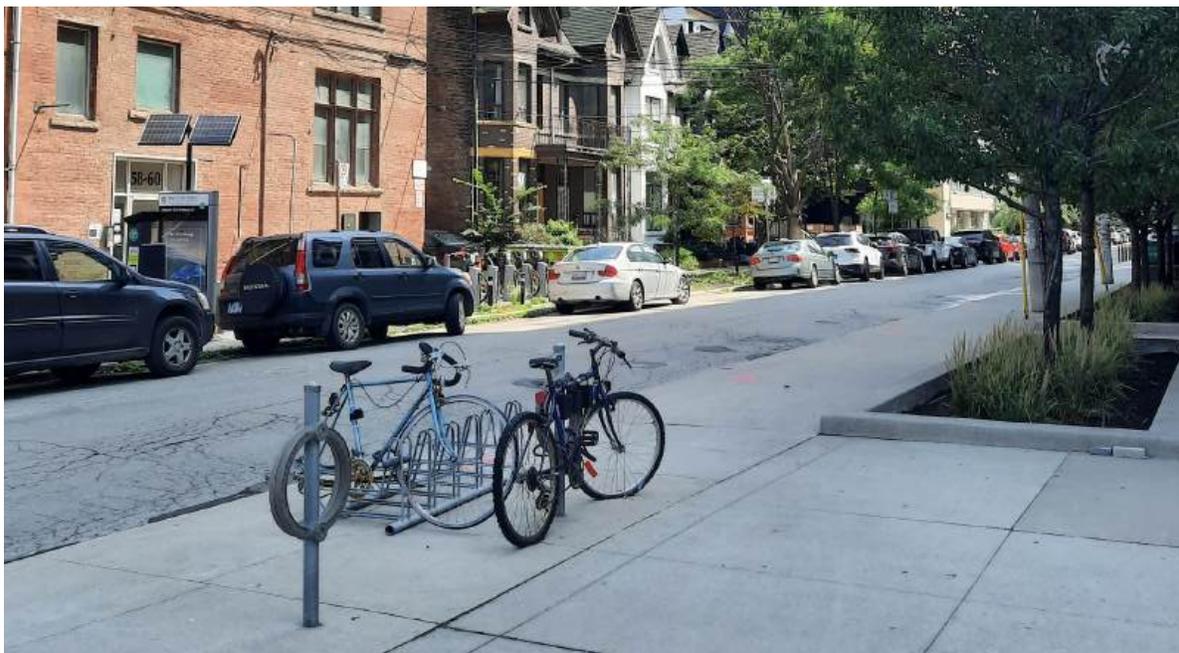
The Downtown West area is well known as a pedestrian-friendly community. With a broad mix of residences, retail, services, commercial uses and restaurants, both visitors and residents can walk to easily access amenities. Additionally, the wide sidewalks along major Boulevards such as University Avenue, Spadina Avenue and Bathurst Street accommodate a large volume of pedestrian traffic.

How built form interfaces with the streetscape is important to animating the street and creating a safe, welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists. This crucial interface of streetscape and built form is dependent upon the scale of the buildings, the width and function of the street, and the size of the building setbacks. Active frontages generally correspond to existing at-grade uses, and the level of animation also define the type of streetscape that is appropriate.

The Downtown West BIA is home to a wide variety of pavement widths and street rights-of-way, which requires a flexible approach to streetscapes, including narrowed pavement widths, expanded pedestrian realm elements, trees/planting programs, street furniture and lighting. Inherent to this design flexibility, programming strategies are also a key element of street life activation.

It is the intent of this Plan:

- That the design and maintenance of the range of streetscapes in the Downtown West BIA reflect its high quality character; and,
- To create an enhanced Pedestrian Realm Network and support pedestrian movement by expanding the sidewalk width, and by employing mid-block accessible, well-designed Promenades and intersections, and potential new Connecting Links.



Stewart Street

## 3.5 Park Space Initiatives

### **New Park at 229 Richmond Street West**

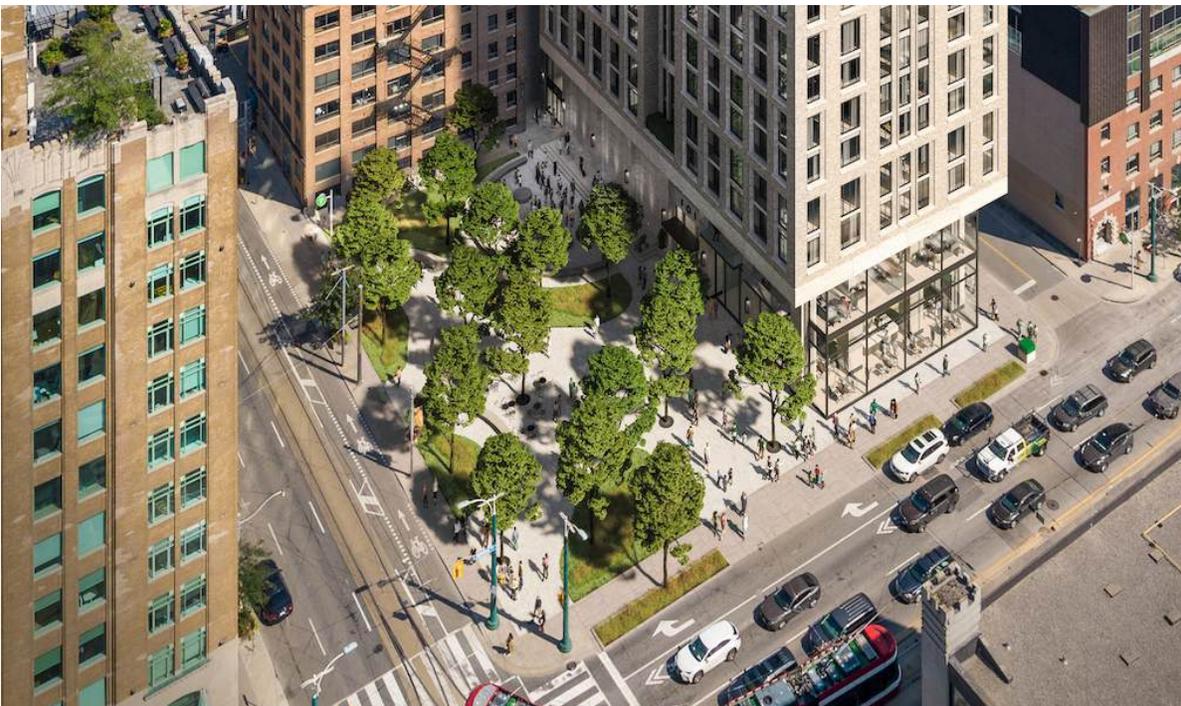
CreateTO has finalized a land swap and purchase that will allow for the creation of a new 0.22 hectare public park at 229 Richmond Street West. The land swap involves the City-owned property at 260 Adelaide Street West, now home to Toronto Fire Station 332, which will be moved to a renovated part of Metro Hall. The Toronto Parking Authority will construct a below-grade parking garage under the park with 144 parking spaces.



*Hypothetical rendering of public park on 229 Richmond Street West property*

### **New Park at 101 Spadina Avenue**

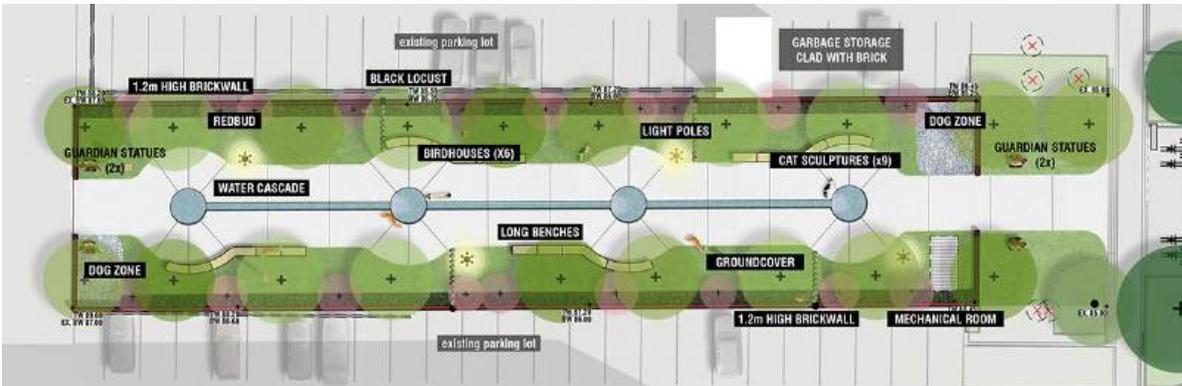
As part of a development proposal at 101 Spadina Avenue, between Adelaide Street West and Oxley Street, a new 0.1 hectare public park has been proposed on the adjacent 105 Spadina Avenue, currently occupied by a parking lot.



*Rendering of proposed public park on 105 Spadina Avenue property*

## New Park at 456 Wellington Street West (Cat Promenade)

As part of The Well development, a new 0.1 hectare public park is being created at 456 Wellington Street West, with a cat-themed design by Claude Cormier et associés, that relates to the design of other public spaces on the Well site. The public park will allow for mid-block pedestrian connections north to King Street through the KING Toronto development. The park is expected to be completed by 2022.



Designs for 456 Wellington Street West by Claude Cormier et associés



## 4 Streetscapes

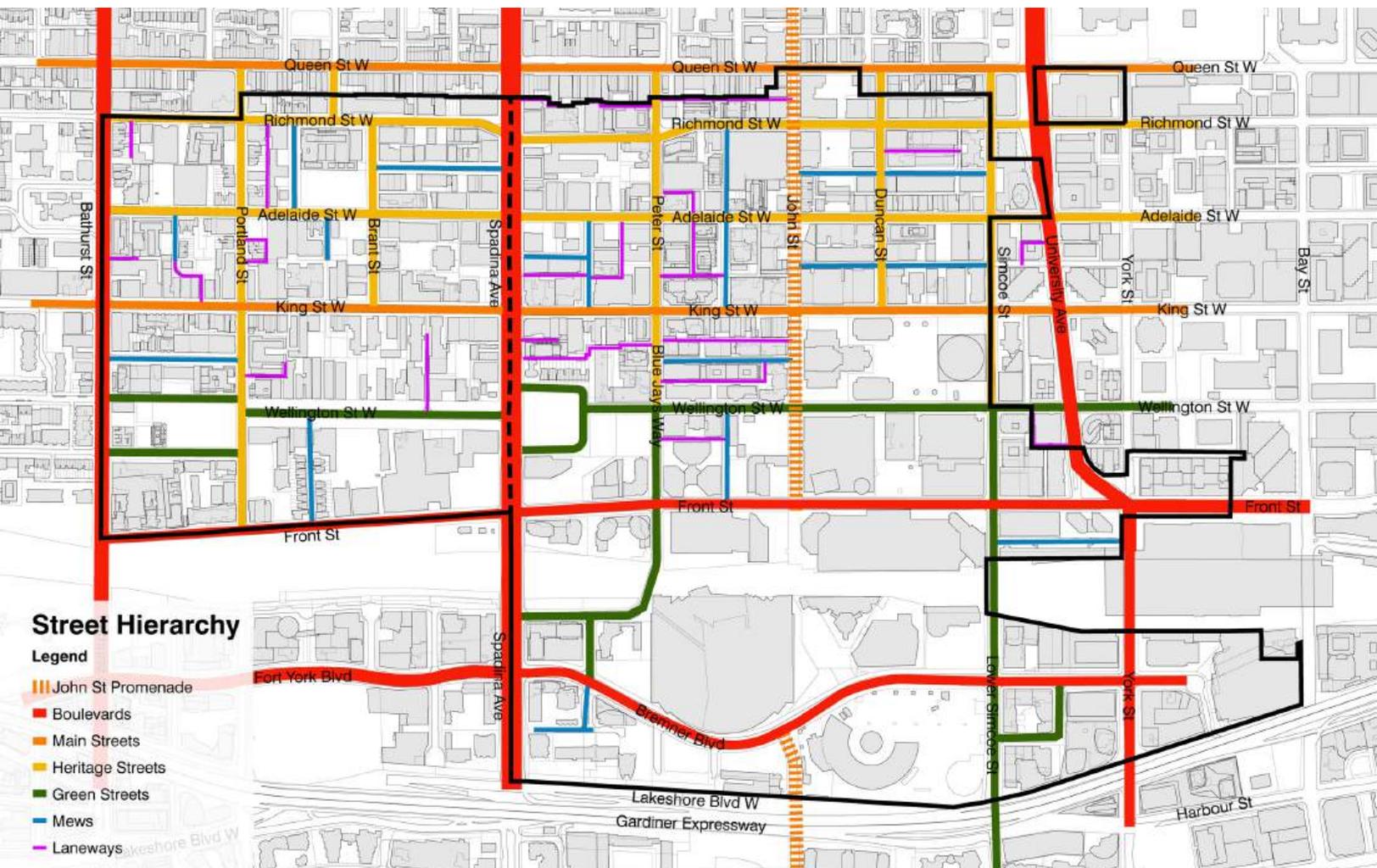
Central to most BIAs is the streetscape strategy, which can most profoundly define the quality and character of the built environment. As streets comprise the most significant land area in public ownership, and because they are the primary means by which we move about, they shape how we experience a given place. More than just a 'roadway', a 'streetscape' defines and considers all the elements that together create the quality and character of the 'urban room'. The streetscape is defined by roadway, sidewalks, trees and landscaping, lighting and furnishing, signage, and especially, the character and quality of the buildings that define the 'street wall'.

Given that a culture of walking is so fundamental to achieving a successful downtown commercial area, streetscapes ought to be designed to balance their pedestrian, transit, land use and civic functions, in addition to their vehicular function. Accordingly, a shift in conventional thinking about road design must take place, which considers their 'character' as important as their traffic 'capacity'.

## 4.1 Streetscape Hierarchy

The Streetscape Hierarchy identifies the key design objectives for a variety of street types in the Downtown West BIA. The objective of this section is to guide subsequent detailed studies for streetscaping. The Hierarchy serves to provide consistency across the BIA, while reinforcing distinctive streets, enhancing the quality of the pedestrian environment and defining appropriate built form and land use relationships. The proposed categories of Downtown West streetscapes include: John Street Promenade; Boulevards; Main Streets; Heritage Streets; Green Streets; Mews; and, Laneways.

On the following pages, these streetscapes are further described and in some instances accompanied by prototypical cross-sections to illustrate the general intended character and design options where applicable. These plans and sections are intended to serve as a general guide for informing detailed design development when a given street is considered for improvement and/or reconstruction. Where more detailed design strategies have been undertaken, they can be found in the following section - 4.2 Streetscape Design Strategies.



Map of Street Hierarchy in the Downtown West BIA

## General objectives applicable to all streetscapes include:

- 👍 All streets should be lined with trees in spacing increments of no more than 8 - 10 metres to enhance visual quality, provide shade, and to serve as wind breaks.
- 👍 Wherever possible, sidewalks should ‘bump-out’ at intersections to define on-street parking areas, lessen pedestrian crossing distances, and to provide ample sidewalk widths at intersections for features such as public art, sidewalk café patios, concession stands and transit stops.
- 👍 On-street parking should be distinguished in its paving from the roadway to perceptively extend the pedestrian realm and visually mitigate the width of the roadway.
- 👍 Pedestrian convenience and amenities should be of paramount consideration with respect to ensuring adequate sidewalk widths for the desired volume of use and in the siting, design and quality of furnishings, lighting, transit stops and shelters.
- 👍 Bike lanes are desirable but should only be considered at the expense of vehicular lanes and only after sidewalks are adequately widened with street trees.
- 👍 All crosswalks should be clearly identified with special paving treatments.
- 👍 Patios are highly encouraged, particularly along John Street Promenade, Main Streets and Heritage Streets.
- 👍 Visual clutter and unnecessary obstructions on sidewalks should be avoided and streetscape improvements should integrate lighting, furnishings, newspaper boxes, trash bins, signage, bike storage, etc. within a unified design vocabulary.
- 👍 Access to loading and parking should be provided via rear lanes where they exist. Otherwise, driveway accesses should be carefully located, consolidated where possible and well designed to ensure pedestrian safety and to not detract from the quality of the streetscape.

## John Street Promenade

(John Street; Rees Street)

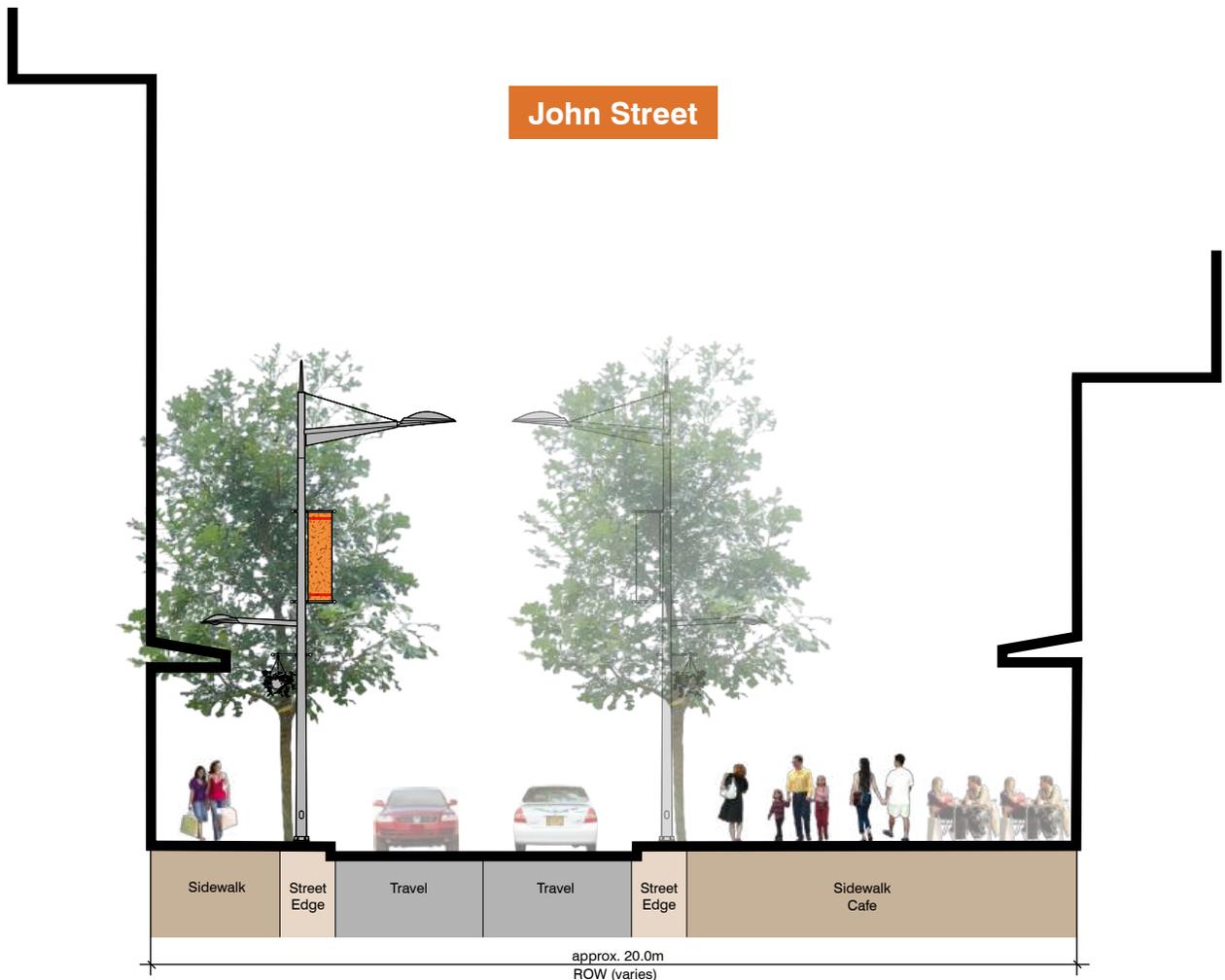
### Intended District Role and Function

- A central, north-south pedestrian-oriented spine connecting the Art Gallery of Ontario to the Waterfront; and,
- A cultural corridor visually and physically linking major cultural attractions across the District.

### Defining Design Characteristics

- Generally 20-metre right-of-way;
- Two travel lanes;
- Widened sidewalks with significant tree planting;
- Special paving treatments from building face to building face;
- Roll curbs and/or bollards are preferred to conventional curbs ;
- Street furnishing related to street closures should be integrated into its design; and,
- Continuous at-grade uses such as shops and restaurants.

See 4.2.1 for Proposed Streetscape Improvements



*John Street Promenade Cross-section with two travel lanes and a wide promenade created on east side*

## Main Streets

(King Street West; Queen Street West)

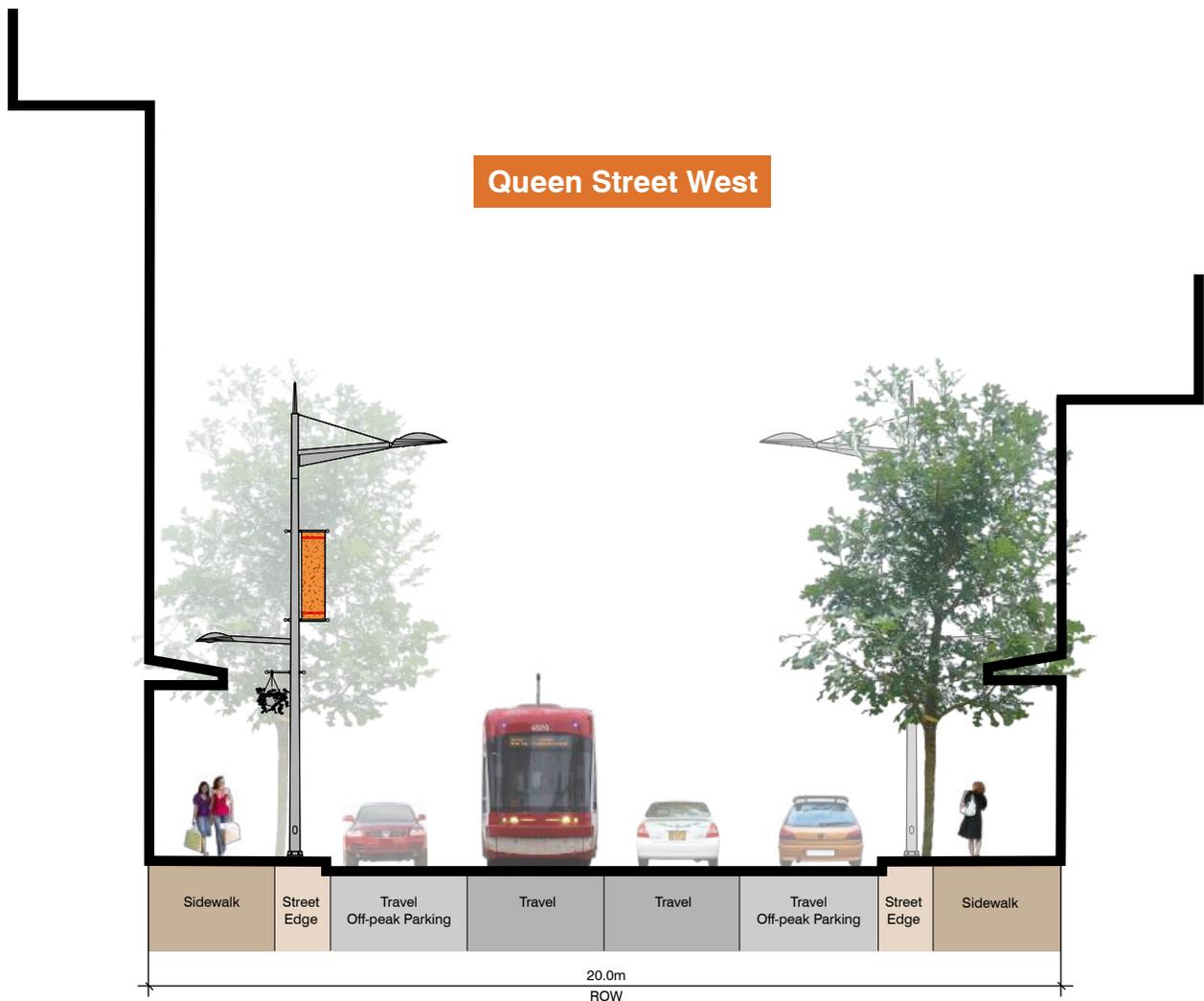
### Intended District Role and Function

- Primary traditional 'Main Street' that has a city-wide function and role; and,
- Generally key streetcar lines that accommodate high volumes of all modes of transportation — cars, bikes, pedestrians.

### Defining Design Characteristics

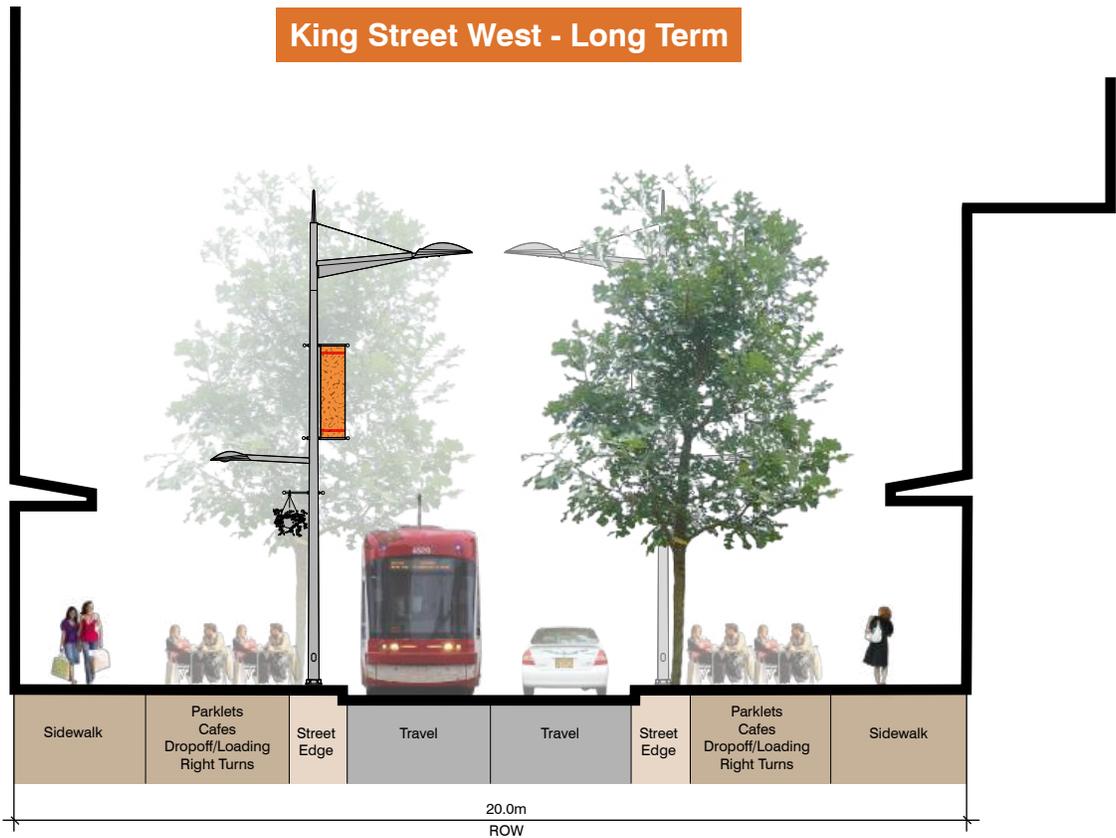
- Generally 20-metre right-of-way with central, aligned streetcar rails;
- **Queen Street West:** Four travel lanes including two off-peak on-street parking lanes;
- **King Street West:** Two travel lanes with some right turn lanes, no on-street parking, no through traffic permitted;
- Wide sidewalks with as much tree planting as possible;
- Special paving treatments; and,
- Continuous at-grade retail commercial uses are required.

See 4.2.1 for Proposed Streetscape Improvements on King Street West



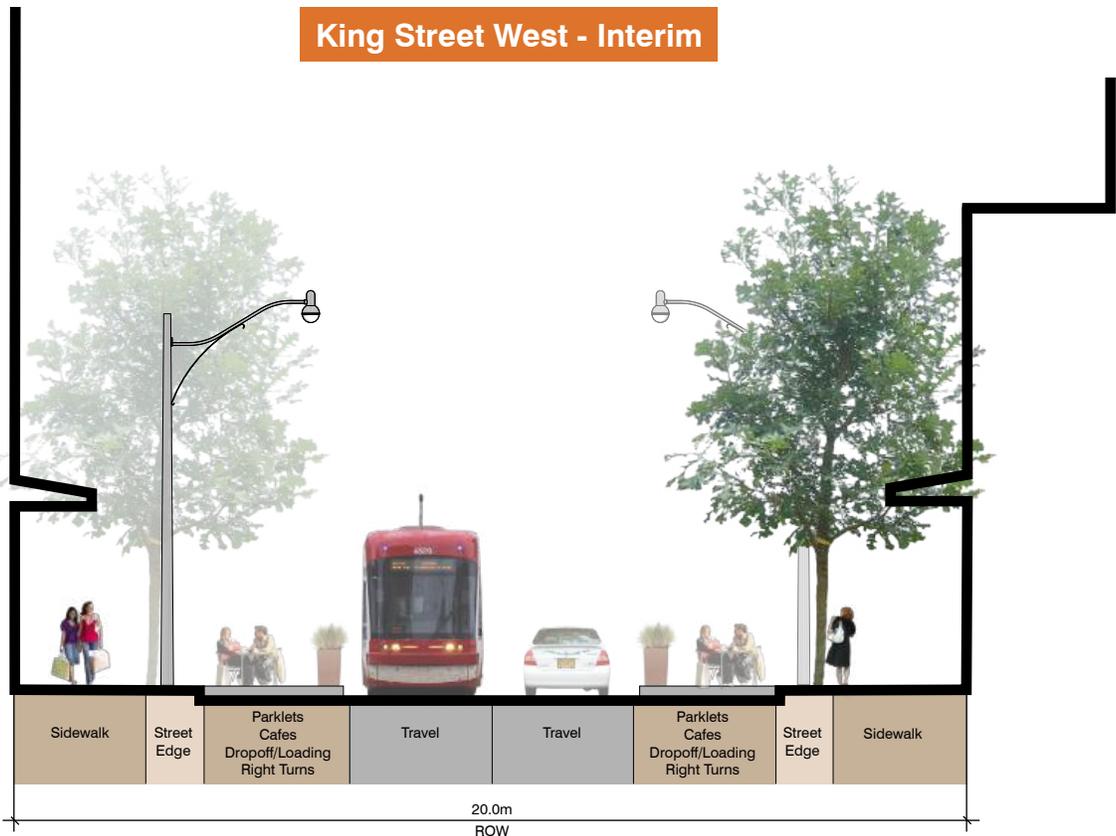
Queen Street West with four travel lanes including two off-peak on-street parking lanes

### King Street West - Long Term



Long term vision for King Street West with two travel/streetcar lanes and expanded parklet/cafe/sidewalk areas

### King Street West - Interim



Interim vision for King Street West with two travel/streetcar lanes and parklet/cafes/dropoff/loading areas in former off-peak parking area

## Heritage Streets

(Richmond Street West; Adelaide Street West; Peter Street; Duncan Street; Ed Mirvish Way; Portland Street; Brant Street; and the northern segments of Blue Jays Way and Simcoe Street)

### Intended District Role and Function

- Secondary commercial/mixed-use streets that have either a local or city-wide function and role; and,
- Generally serving vehicular and pedestrian movement with some instances of auxiliary streetcar lines.

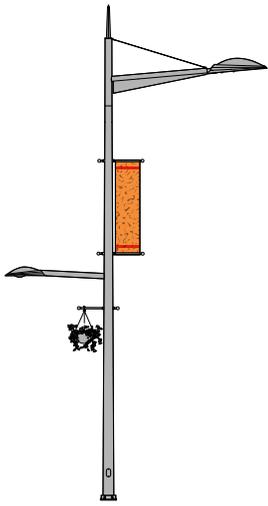
### Defining Design Characteristics

- Distinguished by prominence of 'brick and beam' building and complementary streetscape feature such as paving, furnishing or landscaping;
- Generally 20-metre right-of-way;
- Two travel lanes and one (Option B) or two permanent on-street parking lanes (Option A);
- Wide sidewalks and bump-outs at corners where a permanent on-street parking lane is provided;
- As much tree planting as possible;
- Special paving treatments to distinguish on-street parking lanes;
- At-grade retail commercial uses are encouraged where possible; and,
- Adelaide Street West and Richmond Street West have been proposed to be converted back to two-way operation on several occasions. An option that retains a one-way cycle track on each street and two-way vehicular operation has been included.

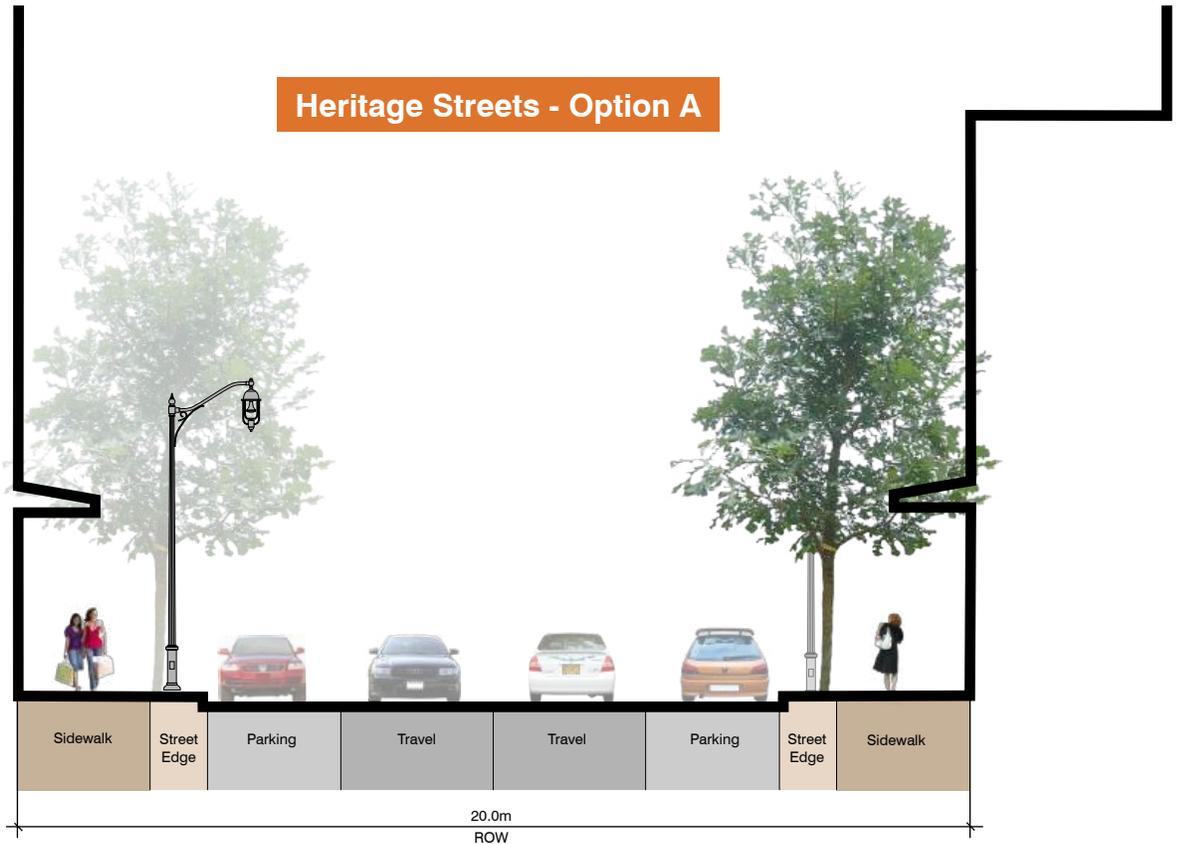


*Duncan Street*

## Heritage Streets - Option A

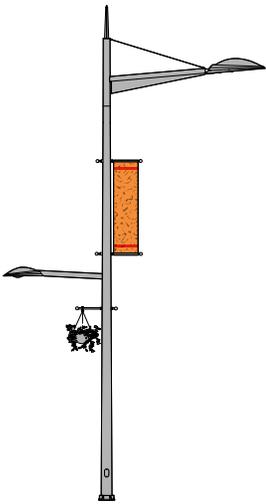


Option:  
L-s34  
Street Light

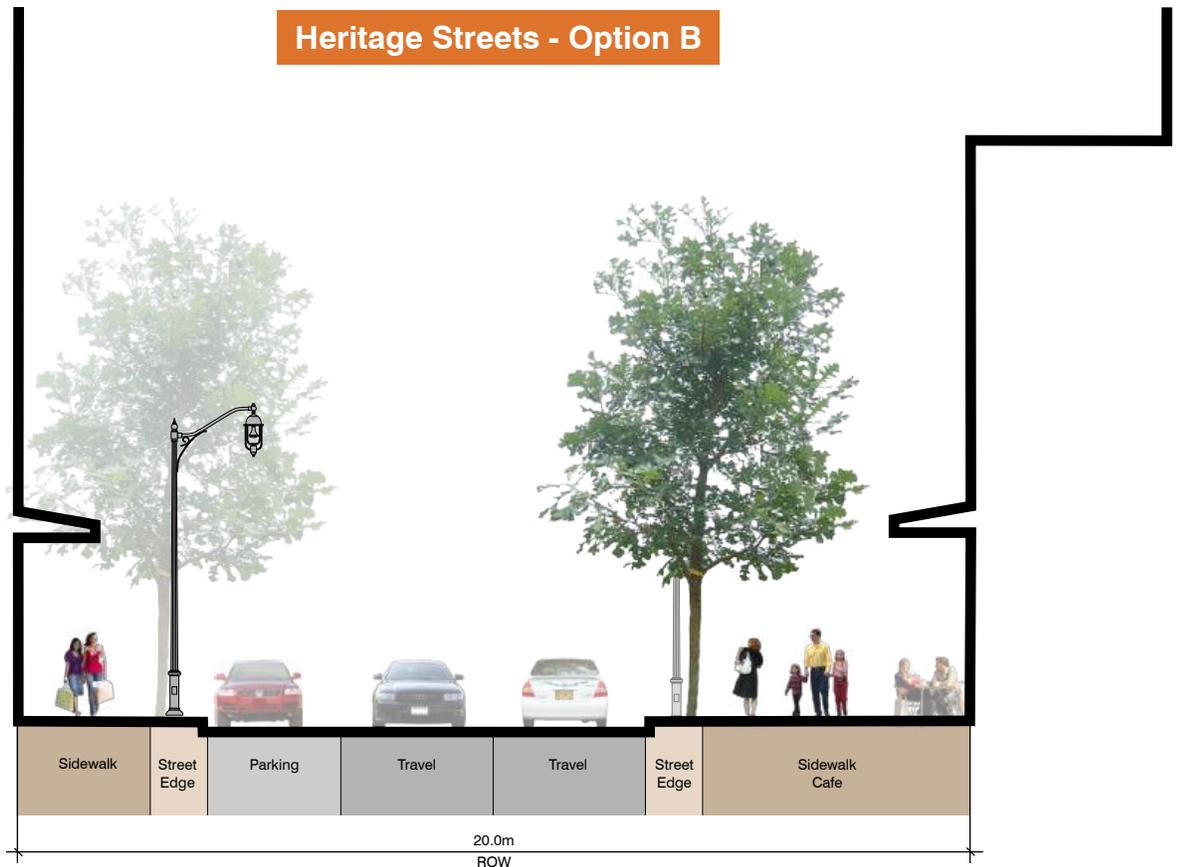


*Heritage Streets Option A with permanent on-street parking provided on both sides*

## Heritage Streets - Option B

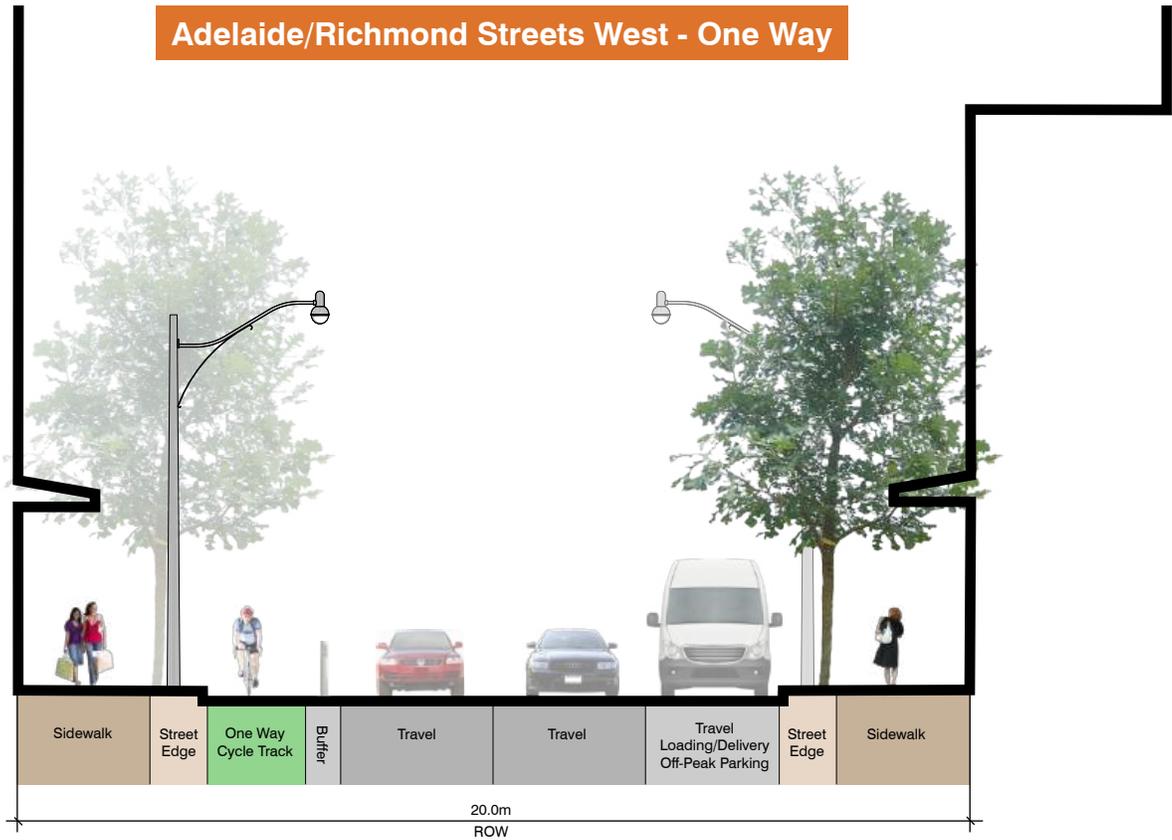
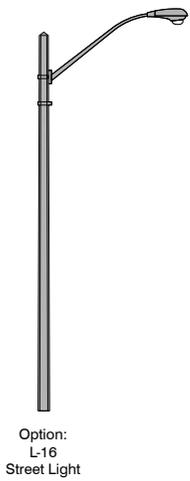


Option:  
L-s34  
Street Light



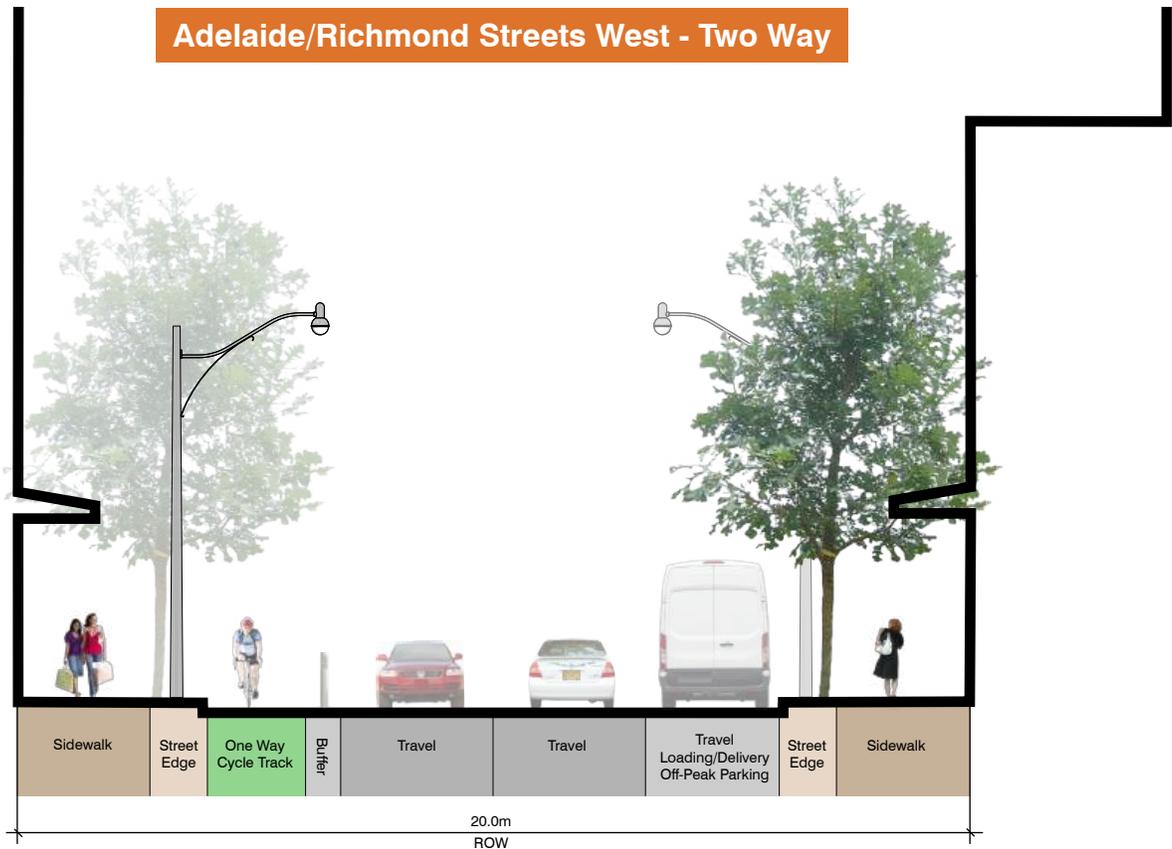
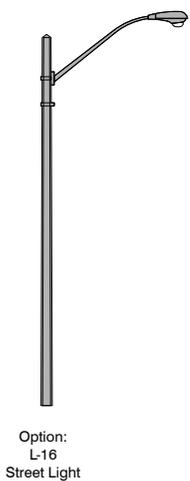
*Heritage Streets Option B with permanent on-street parking on one side to enable a promenade on the opposite side*

## Adelaide/Richmond Streets West - One Way



*Adelaide/Richmond Streets West with one-way cycle track, two one-way travel lanes, and a travel/loading/delivery/off-peak parking lane*

## Adelaide/Richmond Streets West - Two Way



*Adelaide/Richmond Streets West with one-way cycle track, two two-way travel lanes, and a travel/loading/delivery/off-peak parking lane*

## Boulevards

(University Avenue; Spadina Avenue; Front Street; Bremner Boulevard; York Street)

### Intended District Role and Function

- Major arteries that have a city-wide function and role; and,
- Generally key transit corridors that accommodate high volumes of all modes of transportation — cars, bikes, pedestrians.

### Defining Design Characteristics

- Generally greater than 20-metre right-of-way with central landscaped median sometimes in conjunction with an LRT;
- Minimum of four travel lanes with occasional lay-bys for loading with minimal on-street parking, if any;
- Wide sidewalks with significant tree planting;
- Special paving treatments where on-street parking is provided; and,
- Continuous at-grade uses should be encouraged.



*Spadina Avenue*

## Green Streets

(Wellington Street; and the southern segments of Blue Jays Way and Simcoe Street)

### Intended District Role and Function

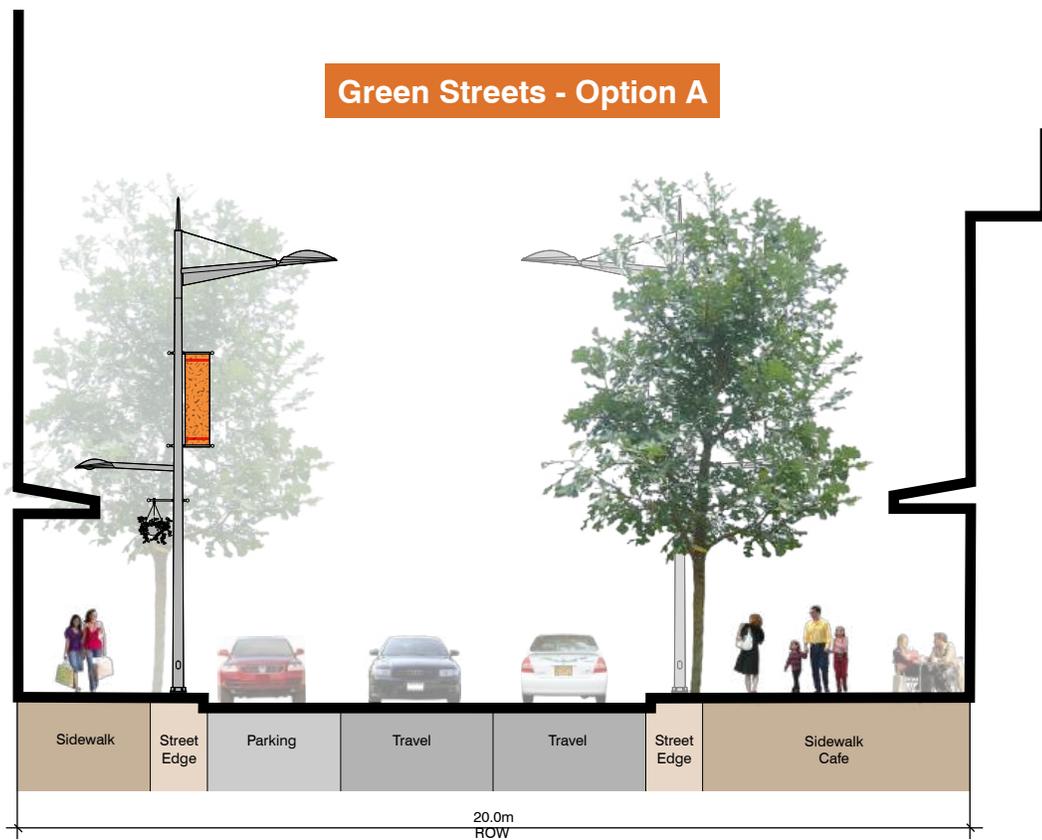
- Key local and city-wide streets that also serve as major connections between major open spaces; and,
- Generally serve higher density areas and accommodate higher volumes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic than counterpart Heritage Streets.

### Defining Design Characteristics

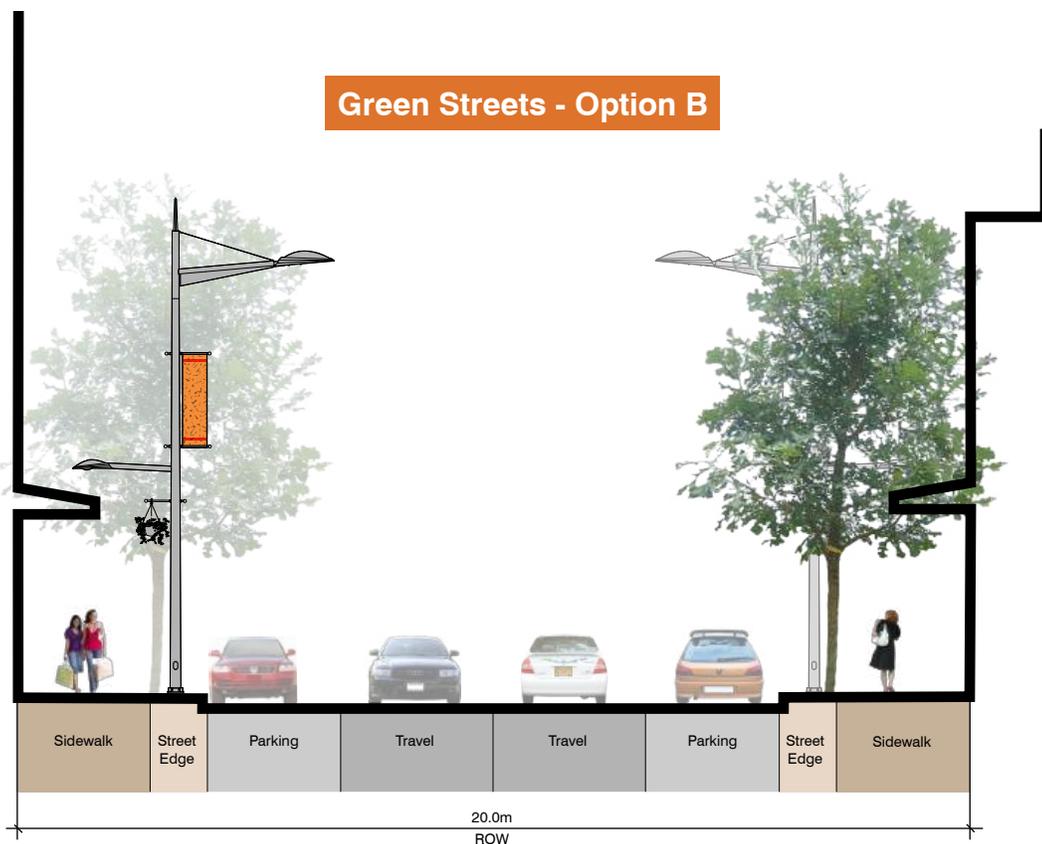
- Generally 20-metre right-of-way;
- Can be one- or two-way;
- Two travel lanes with either one (Option A) or two (Option B) permanent on-street parking lanes; otherwise four lanes (Option C) with two off-peak parking lanes;
- Wide sidewalks and bump-outs at corners where a permanent on-street parking lane is provided;
- As much tree planting as possible and a potential for a double row on the side where on-street parking is provided on only one side (Option A);
- Special paving treatments where on-street parking is provided; and,
- Continuous at-grade uses should be encouraged; otherwise, appropriate privacy setbacks or grade shifts and landscaping for residential uses.



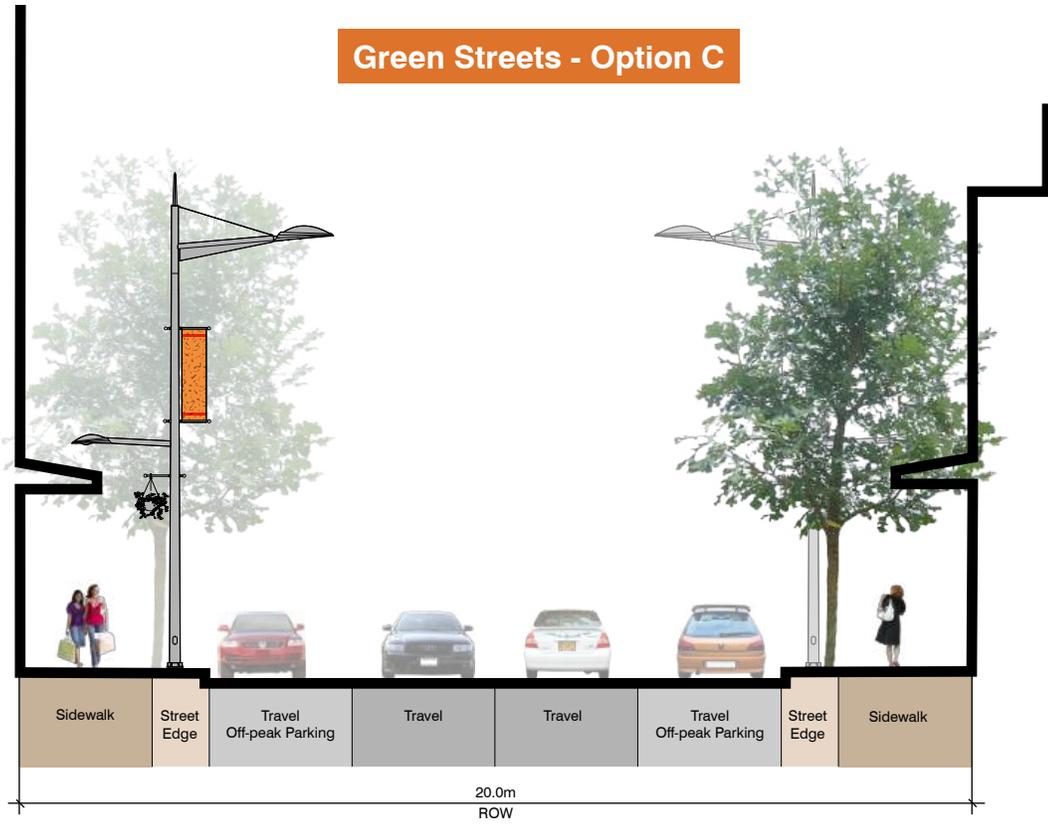
Wellington Street



*Green Streets Option A with permanent on-street parking on one side to enable a promenade on the opposite side*



*Green Streets Option B with permanent on-street parking provided on both sides*



*Green Streets Option C with off-peak on-street parking provided on both sides*



*Example of a widened sidewalk on one side of the street in Austin*

## Mews

(Nelson Street; Pearl Street; Charlotte Street; Widmer Street; Oxley Street; Mercer Street; Windsor Street; Station Street)

### Intended District Role and Function

- Tertiary commercial /mixed-use streets that have a very localized function and role; and,
- Generally serving broad-based pedestrian traffic but only local vehicular traffic.

### Defining Design Characteristics

- Generally 20-metre or less right-of-way with no more than two block lengths;
- One or two travel lanes with occasional inset lane for loading and/or permanent on-street parking lanes;
- Thematic streetscape dependent on purpose and land uses;
- Widened sidewalks with tree planting determined by street purpose and land uses;
- Special paving treatments from building face to building face;
- Roll curbs and/or bollards are preferred to conventional curbs;
- Street furnishing related to street closures could be integrated in its design; and,
- Continuous at-grade uses such as shops and restaurants are encouraged.



*Example of potential design treatment for Mews - Saskatoon*

## Laneways

### Intended District Role and Function

- Primarily for servicing retail and/or access for loading and parking with a very localized function and role; and,
- Generally serving local vehicular traffic but often can serve as informal pedestrian mid-block connections.

### Defining Design Characteristics

- Generally 9-metre or less right-of-way and often discontinuous from one block to the next;
- Concealed and/or consolidated garbage storage is encouraged;
- Thematic streetscape where pedestrian traffic is anticipated;
- No sidewalks or landscaping is required; and,
- May accommodate at-grade uses where pedestrian traffic is anticipated.



*Example of design treatment of activated laneway - Washington DC*

## Crosswalks

The success of commercial and mixed-use areas can hinge on how well they can accommodate and enhance the pedestrian experience. A sense of comfort and safety will be heightened when the speed of traffic is reduced. Crosswalks serve two functions: the clear demarcation of a safe route for a pedestrian to cross; and, as a traffic calming measure. Frequent stops will ensure slower traffic speeds and cautious driving.

### **Accordingly, the Growth & Development Framework encourages the following objectives for crosswalks:**

- As much as possible, every intersection should have crosswalks, particularly where pedestrian traffic volumes are high or desired;
- Mid-block crosswalks should be provided at King, Wellington and Front Streets to create a continuous mid block pedestrian route through David Pecaut Square and Simcoe Park;
- As streetscape improvements get implemented along King Street and the John Street Promenade, scrambled intersections should be considered at all key intersections for these two primary pedestrian routes; and,
- To enhance their visibility and quality, crosswalks should utilize distinctive feature paving and may be raised to act as effective traffic calming measures



*Example of articulated crosswalk - Quebec City*

## 4.2 Streetscape Initiatives

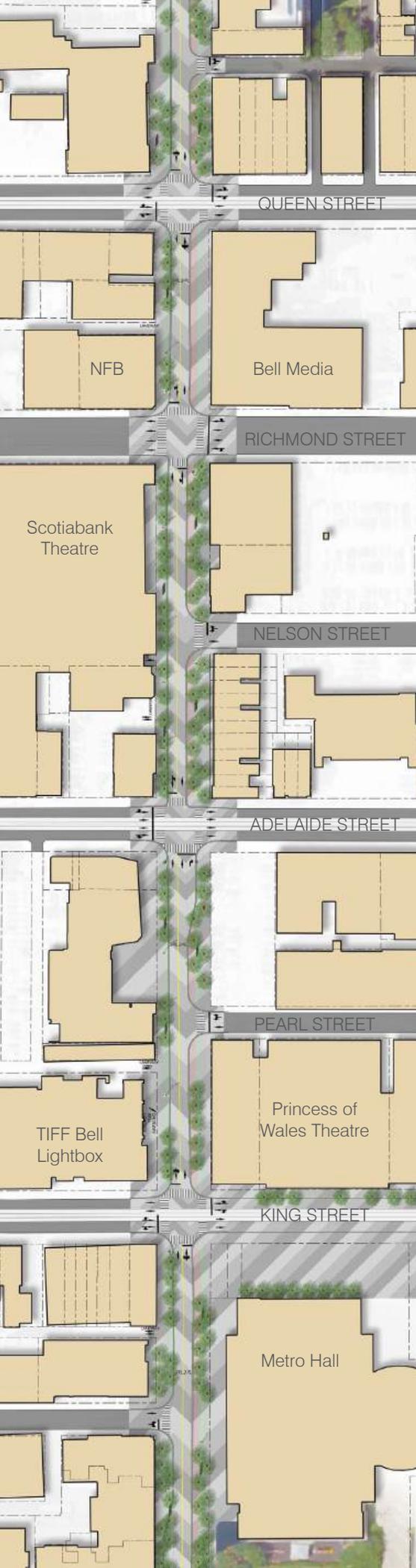
Informed by the public realm vision and consistent with the streetscape hierarchy, a number of streetscape initiatives for specific streets or elements were undertaken since the initial Master Plan was completed in 2009. The following section provides an overview of these streetscape initiatives. As future initiatives are undertaken they will also be consolidated in this section of the Growth and Development Framework. Where applicable, documents that contain greater detail that may be available are identified for reference.

### **Completed/Ongoing Streetscape Initiatives include:**

- John Street Corridor Improvements EA;
- John Street Pilot Project and Pedestrian Initiative;
- John Street Corridor Improvements Implementation;
- King Street Transit Pilot & Transit Priority Corridor;
- King Street Capital Improvement Plan;
- Union Station Front Street Plaza.

### **Potential Streetscape Initiatives that are under consideration or anticipated include:**

- King Street Squares;
- Mercer Street Mews;
- Nelson Street Mews;
- Peter Street/Blue Jays Way Improvements;
- Simcoe Street Improvements;
- Front Street Improvements;
- Duncan Street Improvements; and,
- Wellington Street Improvements.



Concept Plan of Proposed Improvements

## 4.2.1 Completed/Ongoing Streetscape Initiatives

### John Street Corridor Improvements EA

In September 2009, several months after the initial Master Plan was adopted by the BIA, City of Toronto Council made the John Street Cultural Corridor a priority, authorizing the General Manager of Transportation Services to undertake a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA). Undertaken in partnership with the BIA, the EA set out to review and recommend improvements to John Street to help implement the vision of the Master Plan for creating a vibrant and exciting destination that reinforces a pedestrian oriented north-south spine connecting some of the city’s most significant cultural landmarks.

The John Street Corridor Improvements Environmental Assessment Study resulted in the following Recommended Design:

- The narrowing of the road pavement in order to provide significantly wider sidewalks and boulevard areas as follows:
  - » From four to three lanes between Front Street West and Wellington Street West;
  - » From four to two lanes between Wellington Street West and Adelaide Street West; and,
  - » From three lanes to two lanes between Adelaide Street West and Queen Street West;
- Exclusive right turning lanes northbound at Adelaide Street West and at Wellington Street West and a southbound left turn lane at Wellington Street West in order to maintain an adequate level of traffic service;
- A continuous “mountable” curb on both sides of the street to enable a seamless transition into a pedestrian-only space for events, for vehicles to mount the flexible boulevard for deliveries or drop-offs, and to accommodate additional vehicular and cycling maneuvering on either side of the road in emergencies;
- The widening of the east side boulevard between Front Street West and Stephanie Street to provide a 2.5-metre wide flexible space (defined by bollards) to accommodate deliveries and, when not used for vehicular loading/unloading, for pedestrians or other programming; and,
- The provision of urban design elements which consist of a double row of trees where feasible, removable bollards, infrastructure to support special events and distinctive paving materials and patterns from building face to building face.

The EA was adopted by Council in February 2012 and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment in December 2012. With legislative approval of the EA, the City commenced with the Detailed Design and Tendering phase of work.

Refer to the **John Street Corridor Improvements Environmental Assessment Study** (January 2012) for further detailed analysis and descriptions.

## John Street Pilot Project and Pedestrian Initiative

In 2014 the Toronto Entertainment District BIA implemented a six-month pilot project on John Street that closed one lane to vehicular traffic between Queen and Adelaide, replacing the cars with a row of tables and custom painted Muskoka chairs.

The project returned for 5 months in 2015 dubbed the John Street Pedestrian Initiative and included improved separation of the roadway and an expanded pedestrian area delineated by new pavement traffic markings, signage, planters and armour stones. A variety of tables, chairs and umbrellas were placed to enhance and contribute to the vibrancy of the surrounding area.



*Photos by Andrew Louis/Torontoist*



### John Street Corridor Improvements Implementation

Continuing on from the completed EA, the City of Toronto is working to transform John Street into a “cultural corridor” by implementing a redesigned streetscape between Front Street West and Stephanie Street. The design will include the following features:

- Pedestrian priority street;
- Wider sidewalks;
- Flexible curbs;
- Special lighting;
- Special paving treatment;
- Artistic furniture features;
- Enhanced tree canopy;
- Public Wi-Fi;
- Underground utility improvements;
- Stormwater tree system; and,
- Event and festival-friendly elements for large scale and pop-up activities.

Detailed design has been completed, and underground utility work is to be completed in the Spring of 2023, followed by road reconstruction.



John Street Corridor renderings - (DTAH)

Proposed design for John Street - (DTAH)

## King Street Transit Pilot & King Street Transit Priority Corridor

The King Street Transit Pilot was implemented in 2017 between Bathurst Street and Jarvis Street to move people and transit more efficiently through improved placemaking and advanced transit reliability. The pilot project significantly restricted car through-traffic along King Street, dramatically improving streetcar speed and reliability through the corridor. Space freed up from traffic lanes and parking lanes provided the opportunity to explore innovative ideas about how curb lane public space can be used to encourage people to gather, shop, dine, and enjoy the surroundings. In 2018, 2019 and 2020, the City ran design/build competitions for temporary parklets in the King Street right-of-way. In April 2019, City Council made King Street a permanent Transit Priority Corridor.

Plans for the permanent redesign of the King Street streetscape, in its new 'Transit Priority Corridor' role, have not yet been prepared. The renderings on the opposite page were created by the BIA to inspire and encourage creativity in the development of the street plans for King Street. The map below was created by the BIA, identifying locations of public realm, transit stop platforms, delivery/drop-off zones, and other elements along King Street.

Refer to the City's **King Street Transit Priority Corridor** project for further information on current progress and initiatives.



Parklet Competition example (2020):  
'SUN + MOON' by WeatherstonBruer Associates



Parklet Competition example (2019):  
FLATPARK - Public City Architecture



### Legend

Block Land Area Existing Building Active Development Project

### Curb Lane Uses

Existing Patio/Public Realm/POPS Potential Patio/Public Realm/POPS Taxi Stand TTC Transit Stop Bike Share Accessible/Passenger/Commercial Loading



King Street Public Realm Rendering (Created by the BIA)



King Street Public Realm Rendering (Created by the BIA)



Map by the BIA identifying locations of public realm, transit stop platforms, delivery/drop-off zones, and other elements along King Street.



## King Street Capital Improvement Plan

Completed in December 2011, the King Street Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provides a streetscape revitalization strategy for the segment of King Street between Simcoe Street and Spadina Avenue. King Street is one of Downtown Toronto's key east-west transit and pedestrian corridors and the main east-west spine for the BIA.

Informed by the original BIA Master Plan, and in consultation with stakeholders, the CIP sets out a more detailed vision and strategy to enhance the streetscape and to bring to fruition King Street's unrealized potential over the short-, medium- and long-term.

### Key features of the proposed improvements include:

- The introduction of banners and Decorative Icons on new BIA poles along the entire corridor that accommodate flower baskets, as well as future pedestrian light fixtures;
- Enhanced wayfinding through the introduction of Directory Maps and Directional Signage;
- Distinctive paving treatments that will distinguish two character areas : Center Stage (between Simcoe and Widmer Streets) and Stage Left (between Widmer Street and Spadina Avenue);
- A distinctive treatment to the travel/on-street parking lanes;
- All existing poles and light fixtures replaced with a new and consistent standard that will complement the new BIA poles;
- Street tree planting in conjunction with new developments or sidewalk reconstruction and a consistent standard for steel tree grates and guards;
- Slender planters are proposed on the north side to balance the landscaping on either side of the street; and,
- Hanging flower baskets on all poles.

The initial stages of improvements were implemented, including the introduction the new BIA banner and icon poles, as well as hanging flower baskets and anti-poster wraps that are colour matched to visually unify existing poles with the new BIA poles as an interim measure.

Refer to the **King Street Capital Improvement Plan (December 2011)** for further detailed analysis and descriptions.



*Long-Term Vision for Stage Left Character Area*

## Union Station Front Street Plaza

Union Station is the busiest transportation hub in Canada, serving upwards of 200,000 passengers every business day. As GO Transit expands, this number is expected to double in the next 10-15 years. To accommodate the additional pedestrian traffic crossing Front Street and to enhance the historic Station's civic setting, the City of Toronto undertook a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) to explore options to reconfigure Front Street West from Bay Street to York Street. The EA was completed in April 2012 and the improvements were completed in time for the 2015 Pan American Games.

### Key features of the streetscape design include:

- A grand civic plaza with new lighting, additional seating and granite pavement treatment;
- A “table top” mid-block pedestrian crossing spanning the width of the plaza;
- Significant sidewalk expansion, with wider crosswalks at intersections and minimized crossing distances;
- Modified lay-by taxi, bus and private vehicle parking arrangements on both sides of the street;
- Vehicle lanes reduced from typical two travel lanes to one wider travel lane in each direction that can accommodate cyclists; and,
- Continuous street trees along the north side of the street.



*View of Union Station showing 'table-top' mid-block crossing and plaza. Photo by Jack Landau*

The Front Street Plaza design is currently under review to increase the level of security provided to prevent acts of terrorism.



*Plaza, bollards and roll and 'table-top' mid-block crossing in front of Union Station*

## 4.2.2 Potential Streetscape Initiatives

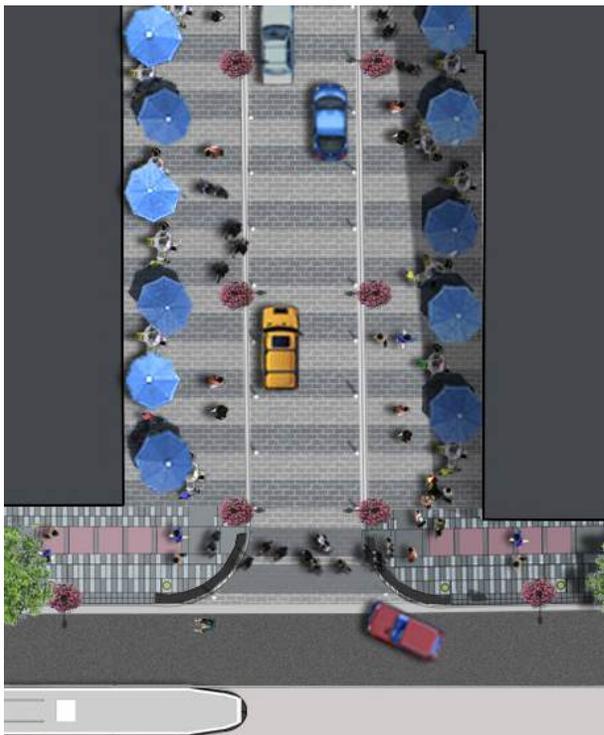
### King Street Squares

King Street Squares were identified as a unique streetscaping opportunity that emerged through the process of the King Street Capital Improvement Plan.

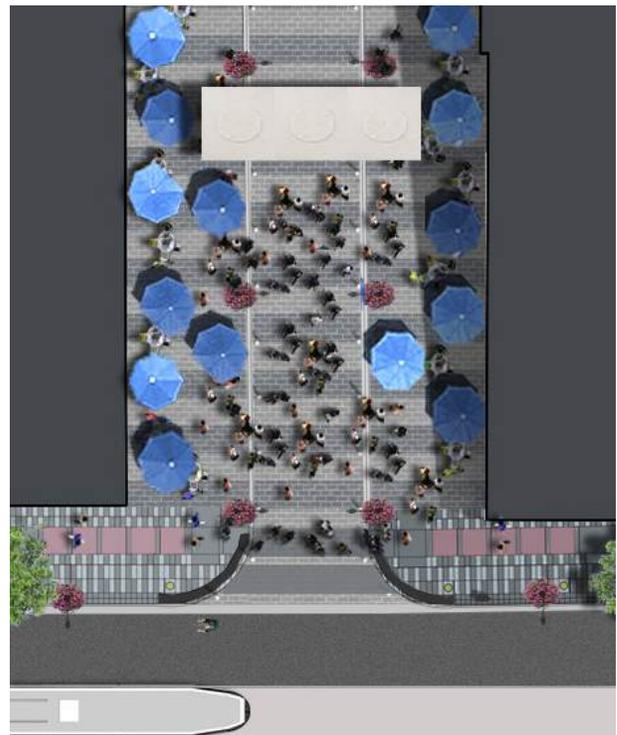
Where streets of lesser traffic importance such as 'Mews' and 'Heritage' streets terminate at King Street, a series of modest 'squares' are proposed: Ed Mirvish Square (at Ed Mirvish Way/ Duncan Street), Reitman Square (at Widmer Street) and Charlotte Square (at Charlotte Street). These Squares present an opportunity to provide additional pedestrian areas on the sunny side of the street with plaza treatments to accommodate outdoor patios, public art, as well as occasional festivals and events.

The King Street Squares are intended to serve as flexible spaces with the ability to support various programs, including markets, festivals and seasonal patios. Key design recommendations include:

- Extending these spaces from King Street to the closest lane or street to the north;
- Narrowing the roadway to accommodate one travel lane in each direction so as to widen the sidewalks to the greatest extent possible to allow for large patios and/or public art and street furnishing;
- Replacing the existing barrier curbs with a roll curb to enable a seamless transition into a pedestrian-only space for special events;
- Extending the distinctive paving treatments from building face to building face to create the sense of a square; and,
- Installing removable bollards at the street entry points for road closures.



*Plan of proposed improvements illustrating the typical use of the street*



*Plan of proposed improvements illustrating the typical use of the street*



*Existing condition of the potential 'Ed Mirivish Square'*



*Proposed improvements illustrating the typical use of the street*



*Proposed improvements illustrating the use of the street for a music performance*

### **Portland and Brant Streets**

Portland and Brant Streets are north-south corridors which have been identified by the City's *King-Spadina Public Realm Strategy* as important prime park connectors. These Streets will play a major role in connecting to important destinations including:

- Potential future open space decked over the Rail Corridor;
- The Well development;
- Wellington Street (Green Corridor); and,
- Other planned, existing and potential mid-block connections which will provide access to potential and planned open spaces.

The *King-Spadina Public Realm Strategy* has identified these streets as having great potential for wide sidewalks, outdoor patios and smaller open spaces, and that they can become main north-south spines similar to John Street. In 2021, Brant Street was converted to one-way northbound between Adelaide Street West and Richmond Street West with a contraflow southbound bike lane.

### **Peter Street/Blue Jays Way**

Peter Street was recommended for cycling tracks by the Downtown Transportation Operation Study (DTOS). As part of the Richmond-Adelaide Cycle Track pilot project, cycle tracks were installed on Peter Street between King Street West and Queen Street West, which have now been made permanent. Bike Lanes were installed on Blue Jays Way from Wellington Street West to Navy Court in 2019. Bike Lanes are planned to be installed on Blue Jays Way between King Street West and Wellington Street West. As a result of significant redevelopment occurring along Peter Street, the City has looked at opportunities to leverage significant streetscape improvements to be implemented in conjunction with the cycling tracks. These improvements include:

- Narrowing the paved roadway (2 lanes of traffic);
- Providing a cycling track;
- Extending sidewalks;
- Greening improvements; and,
- Providing some pick up/drop off areas.

### **Simcoe Street**

Simcoe Street was recommended for cycling tracks by the Downtown Transportation Operation Study (DTOS). As part of the Richmond-Adelaide Cycle Track pilot project, cycle tracks were installed on Simcoe Street between King Street West and Richmond Street West, which have now been made permanent. Northbound cycle tracks further extend from Wellington Street West to King Street West and from Richmond Street West to Queen Street West. Cycle tracks also extend south from Wellington Street West to Lakeshore Boulevard.

### **Duncan Street/Ed Mirvish Way**

Duncan Street/Ed Mirvish Way has potential for sidewalk widening, which could provide enough space for tree planting and street furniture, and may be able to also accommodate bicycle lanes for cyclists. The reduction in the width of traffic lanes can also provide space for bump-outs, more greenery, as well as some lay-by parking spaces in between.

## Mercer Street Mews

A number of active development applications front or back onto Mercer Street. The City has engaged with the developers to create a plan to transform the street into an active, pedestrian-oriented mews.

The design of this street is still in progress, but will include:

- Creating roll curbs;
- High quality pavement materials for paved roadway and the sidewalks;
- Use of removable bollards to delineate between the paved roadway and sidewalk; and,
- Extending sidewalk width during warmer seasons of the year by removing on-street parking and providing opportunities for outdoor activities and patios.

The proposed improvements for Mercer Street are similar to Market Street in the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood.

The City intends to study Nelson, Pearl and Stewart Streets for the potential to implement similar improvements.

*Existing Mercer Street with new developments (City of Toronto)*



*Proposed improvements to Mercer Street's streetscape in Fall & Winter (middle) and Spring & Summer (bottom) (City of Toronto)*



*Market Street redesigned as a mews (City of Toronto)*

## Wellington Street West

Wellington Street West, between Spadina Avenue and Portland Street has a very wide right-of-way. Several past studies have identified Wellington as an important green linkage between Clarence Square and Victoria Memorial Park. The City's *King-Spadina Public Realm Strategy* identifies the following requirements for Wellington:

- double rows of trees;
- places to sit;
- special lighting;
- special pavement treatment; and,
- outdoor cafes, if feasible.

Parts of the vision will be implemented through the construction of “The Well” which is located on the south side of Wellington Street West.

The City is currently exploring the implementation of protected bi-directional bike lanes on Wellington Street West, westward from Blue Jays Way, with intersection improvements at Spadina Avenue and Bathurst Street. The bike lanes would be on the south side from Blue Jays Way to Clarence Square, cut through Clarence Square and switch to the north side from Spadina Avenue to Portland Street, then switch back to the south side west of Portland Street. If approved, installation is expected in Summer 2022 as part of watermain reconstruction.



*Wellington Street streetscape improvements being implemented with The Well (Claude Cormier + associés)*



*Existing conditions on Wellington Street West*



Espita Mezcaleria outdoor patio (Washington, DC), Photo by Leah Judson

## 5 Uses at Grade

The Toronto Downtown West BIA includes a strong presence of established amenities, personal service businesses, cafés, restaurants, nightlife spots, and alternative food and retail shops. In the spring of 2021, the Toronto Downtown West BIA prepared a Retail Strategy to continue to support these important functions, identify trends and best practices for the store-front retail market and provide guidance on retail planning and public realm interfacing for various stakeholder groups. The Retail Strategy forms the basis for this section of the Growth and Development Framework.

### 5.1 Goals & Objectives

It is essential to maintain vibrant streets in a downtown mixed-use area to support its social and economic vitality, including recognizing store front tenancy as an integral part of what shapes the look and feel of neighbourhoods. This section is designed to inspire high quality, unique retail in the neighbourhood, creating destination streets for tourists, residents, and the local employment base.

The goal of this section is to create a strong retail presence along priority retail streets and inspire new ways of thinking about sustainable retail and its connection to the surrounding neighbourhood through:

#### **Unique Retail Experience**

Interesting concepts that support the development of individual retail cultural identities (e.g. local and made in Canada products)

#### **A Destination**

A destination hub for walking, dining, social get togethers and shopping for visitors, workers and local residents

#### **Neighbourhood Identity**

Strengthening the overarching identity of the neighbourhood through individual businesses

#### **Local**

Meeting the needs of area residents and businesses through grab and go lunch spots, dine-in cafés and restaurants, coffee shops, grocery, pharmacy, fashion and amenities

## 5.2 Priority Retail Streets

City Council adopted the Priority Retail Streets Zoning By-law Amendments in November 2019. Further, policies within the Downtown Secondary Plan require that the ground floor of development projects on Priority Retail Streets contain quality space for non-residential uses that:

- Encourage specific design to protect the street character;
- Animate the store frontage; and,
- Ensure that stores with larger square footage are wrapped by smaller stores or are located on the second floor or below grade of new development.

The restaurants, cafés, bars and small retail located on streets with commercial buildings serve the needs of local residents and the employment base, while destination shops attract visitors. These Priority Retail Streets should contribute to the area's vibrancy and walkability, improve streetscapes and support greater employment opportunities. The Downtown Secondary Plan has identified four streets as Priority Retail Streets within the BIA:

- King Street West;
- John Street;
- Spadina Avenue; and,
- Front Street West.

Unique retail can be supported by the City, property owners, tenants, developers and BIA working collaboratively on programs and solutions such as:

- Winter-friendly placemaking and rapid placemaking, such as live music;
- Reviewing street uses and identifying opportunities to create greater vibrancy and animation (e.g. converting lay-bys into patios, programs such as CaféTO, CurbTO and ActiveTO);
- POPS, patios and public realm animated with art, performance art, entertainment and music;
- Nighttime and weekend economy – changing streets and at-grade retail uses from day to night or from weekday to weekends. For example, transition streets to pedestrian, patio and event spaces for evenings or weekends (e.g. John Street Cultural Corridor, King Street);
- Developing a wholistic long-term funding strategy for solutions on street-related social issues; and,
- Planning and designing the public realm of a street in a coordinated manner to maximize patio and retail locations while working on development opportunities to support a completed street plan.



*Live Music on a patio, Toronto, Photo by Barrio*

### 5.2.1 King Street West

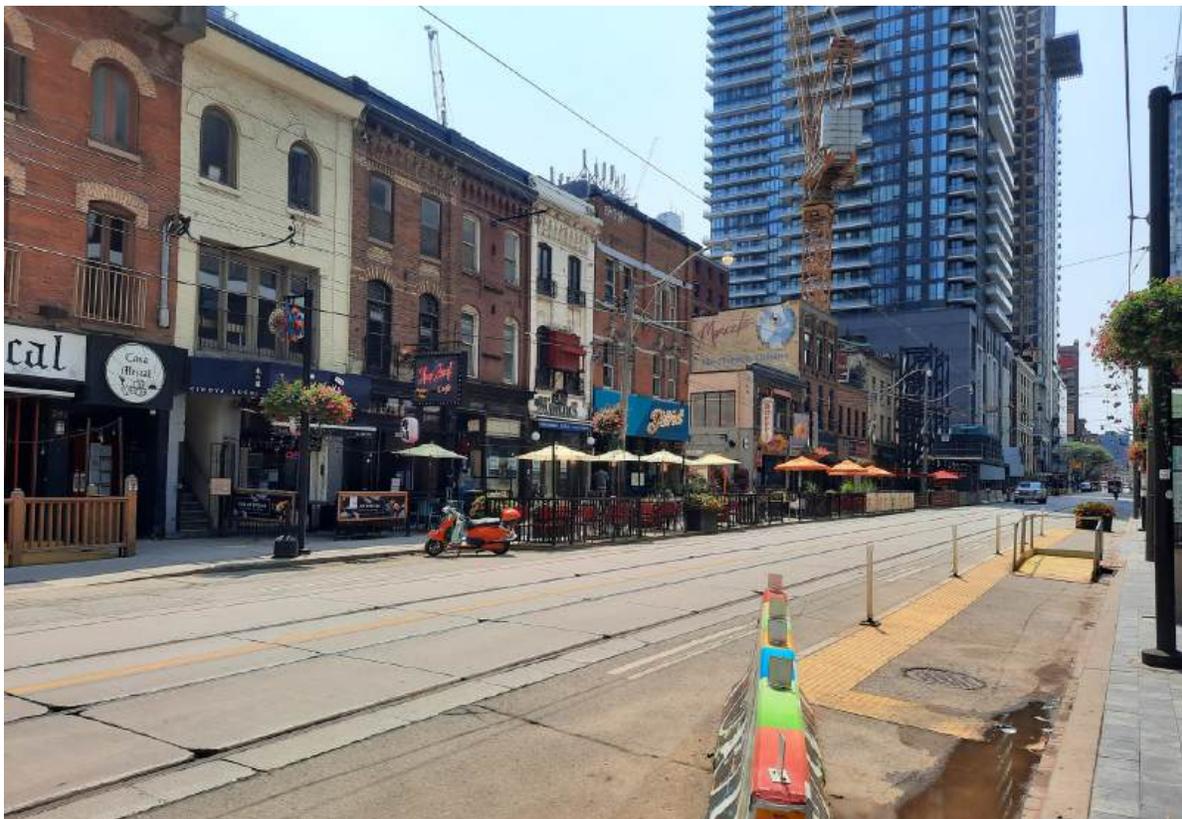
King Street is an important and historic east-west street in Toronto, and the main retail spine of the Downtown West BIA.

The King Street Transit Pilot and King Street Transit Priority Corridor projects have been implemented since 2017 between Bathurst Street and Jarvis Street to move people and transit more efficiently through improved placemaking and advanced transit reliability. The projects have provided the opportunity to explore innovative ideas about how curb lane public space can be used to encourage people to gather, shop, dine, and enjoy the surroundings.

The design for the King Street Transit Priority Corridor includes raised transit stop platforms that improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and streetcar users.

As a destination, King Street West has new opportunities for greater visual interest and active uses through POPS, street furniture and amenities in and around the new public realm spaces, creating a more desirable retail street.

Advancing the King Street Transit and Public Realm Plan will encourage and support opportunity for existing and new storefront businesses, while attracting investment and creating long-term economic vitality in the area.



*King Street conditions during the Pilot Project*

## 5.2.2 John Street

John Street plays an important role in the network of downtown streets, connecting many of Toronto's key cultural institutions along this pedestrian priority corridor.

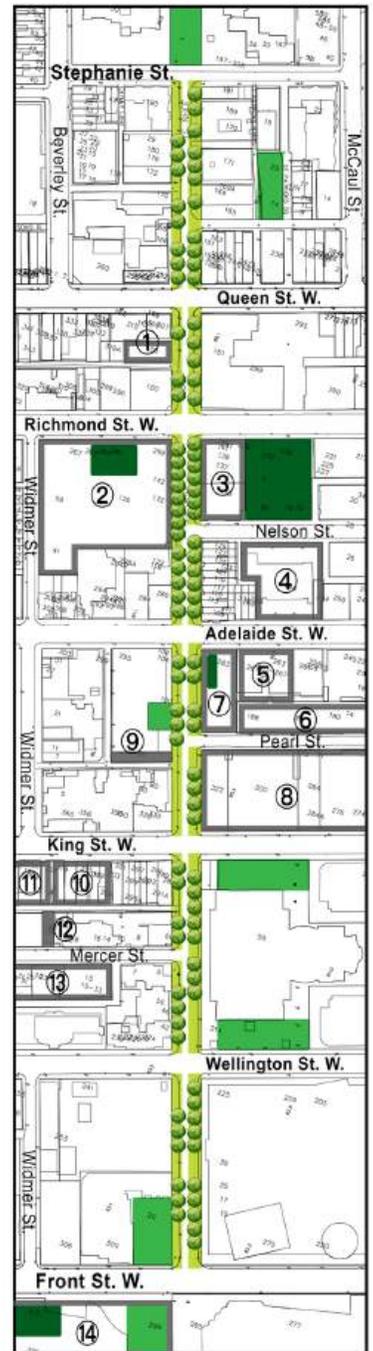
John Street is currently being redesigned from Stephanie Street to Front Street West. Underground utility work is planned to be completed in Spring 2022, followed by road reconstruction.



Existing conditions along John Street



John Street Corridor rendering, by DTAH



City of Toronto Base Map

### Legend

- Wider Sidewalks**
  - Stephanie St. to Queen St. W.:  
5.9m (west side) 8.8m (east side)
  - Queen St. W. to Richmond St. W.:  
5.8m (west side) 7.9m (east side)
  - Richmond St. W. to King St. W.:  
4.3m (west side) 9.4m (east side)
  - King St. W. to Front St. W.:  
4.5m (west side) 5.1m (east side)
- Street Trees**
- Existing POPS/Parks**
- Future POPS/Parks**

### 5.2.3 Spadina Avenue

Spadina Avenue is a main street that has a rich history of commercial, residential, and industrial buildings, located along the western edge of the District. Originally home to a large Jewish community, many members worked in the garment and fur industry as the street is situated along nearby warehouse factories. Increasing demand for garments and fur led to a thriving fashion and textile industry, establishing the Fashion District.

Post Second World War led to a number of changes in the area. In 1950s, the Greeks started to take over the fur industry. Jewish families began to move to the suburbs and Chinese residents had moved in – The Chinatown neighbourhood moved west to Dundas and Spadina as the residents were displaced during the construction of Toronto’s new City Hall and Nathan Phillips Square.

This demographic change resulted in a transformation from textile factories to smaller businesses and companies, including restaurants, groceries, gift shops, real estate and insurance brokers, travel bureaus, bakeries, banks, hotels, pharmacies, physicians, lawyers, architects, book shops, and more.

Spadina Avenue is identified as a Priority Retail Street in the City’s Downtown Secondary Plan, encouraging the intensification of creative retail on both sides along the Avenue. It is now known for its live/work buildings, retail stores and bustling nightlife. While many former warehouse buildings continue to operate as office spaces, preserved and maintained by the property owners, a number of development projects have been proposed along Spadina Avenue. The new developments will continue to maintain and enhance the vibrancy of the street with high quality retail and well-designed public realm at grade.



*Spadina Avenue and Adelaide Street in the 1921,  
Photo by City of Toronto Archives*



*The intersection of King Street and Spadina Avenue in the 1990s  
Photo by City of Toronto Archives*

Spadina Avenue also operates as a major arterial transit corridor. The 510 Streetcar provides easy access to retail and amenities, cultural attractions and landmarks, waterfront, parks, educational institutions, a number of neighbourhoods, and major transit connections:

- Spadina Station
- The 506 Streetcar along College Street
- The 505 Streetcar along Dundas Street
- The 501 Streetcar along Queen Street
- The 504 Streetcar along King Street
- Jack Layton Ferry Terminal
- Union Station
- Queen/Spadina Station on the Ontario Line (Upcoming)
- Spadina-Front Go Station (Upcoming)



Streetcar on Spadina Avenue, Photo by wyliepoon from BlogTO

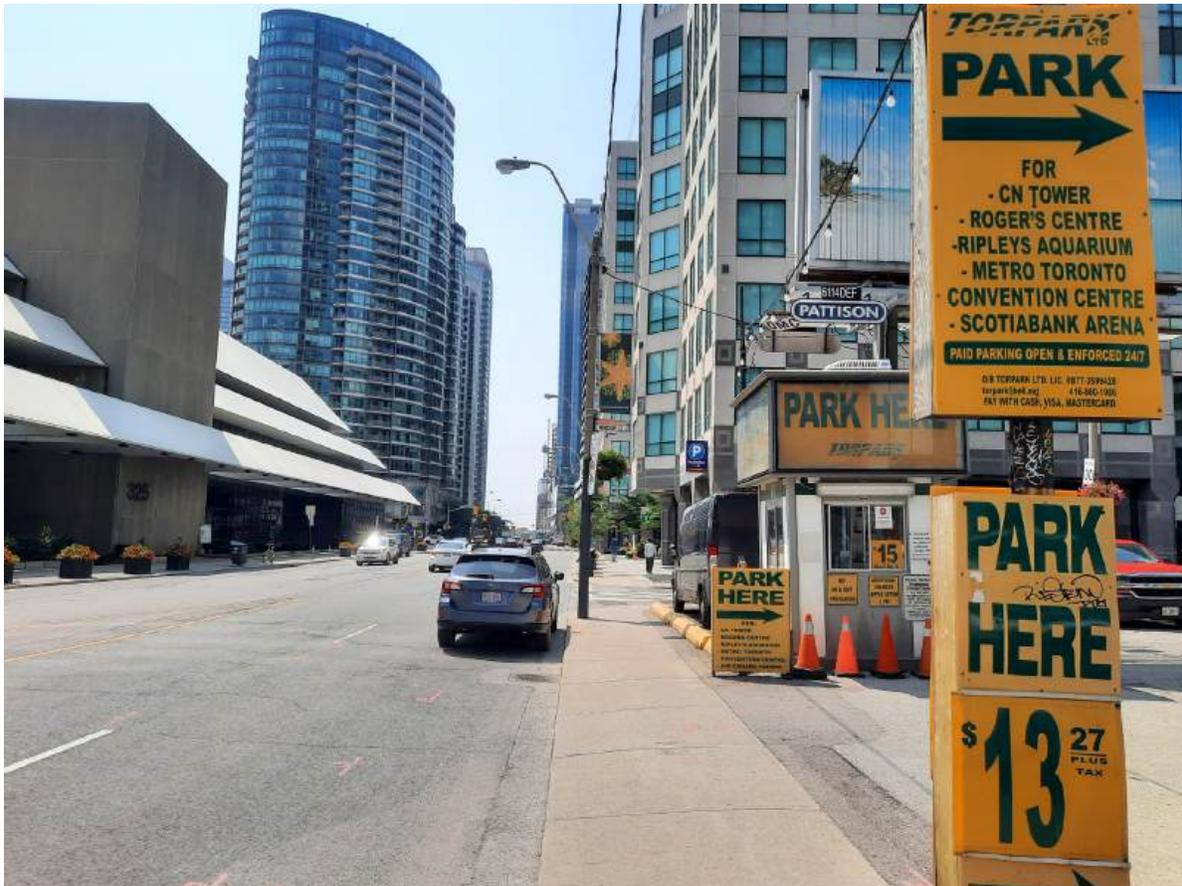
Sources for Spadina Avenue Section:

1. Donegan, Rosemary (1984) *Spadina Avenue: Historical development [Exhibition Pamphlet]*. Spadina Avenue Documentary Exhibition Committee. Available at <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/1856/>
2. Donegan, Rosemary (1985) *Spadina Avenue*. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, Canada. Available at <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/2121/>
3. *Spadina (1984) Documentary* – Archives of Ontario. Available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcikwFQ\\_drM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcikwFQ_drM)

## 5.2.4 Front Street West

Front Street West is identified as a Priority Retail Street under the City's Downtown Secondary Plan. The street plays a vital role in the neighbourhood as it provides connections to a number of significant landmarks, including the CN Tower, Rogers Centre, FlyOver Canada, Ripley's Aquarium, Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC), Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Scotiabank Arena, Union Station, The Well, and a number of hotels, retail stores, and commercial offices.

In addition to the existing landmarks, many development projects are proposed, approved, and under construction along Front Street West. These new projects will further enhance the vibrancy of the street with increased retail, parkland space, and streetscape improvements, meeting the needs of local residents, employees, visitors and tourists.



Front Street at Windsor Street

## 5.2.5 Considerations

### City of Toronto, The BIA, Developers and Property Owners

-  Coordination of services: City Transportation Services, City Planning, Urban Design, TTC, BIA
-  Coordination of street improvements with developers during the site plan process
-  Coordinate park and public realm plans along retail streets and surrounding area
-  Reinforce, where possible, the importance of public realm improvements
-  Property owners should consider retail as an opportunity to add amenities for their building tenants and surrounding residents

## 5.3 Retail Diversity

### Create Retail Diversity

Many existing businesses are developing new strategies to remain competitive. Streets should have a blend of amenity-based retail and alternative specialty concepts. For example, a retailer with an established online presence can provide a look and feel of a unique concept on the street.

#### 5.3.1 Pop-Up

Pop-up shops can be a form of alternative retail that act as temporary solutions along streets while introducing start-up concepts. They also help create buzz in the community, driving pedestrian traffic to the surrounding area, stimulating the local economy.

#### Stackt Market, Toronto

Stackt Market is a shipping container marketplace that is “temporarily” located at 28 Bathurst Street in Toronto, ON. It is composed of a variety of pop-up shops, creative spaces, hospitality vendors, and more. The Market is a great example of utilizing vacant space before a development is to occur, as the City of Toronto currently owns this property and has future plans to develop a public park. This concept has been so popular, exceeding the definition of “temporary”.



STACKT Courtesy Astound

### **Lessa Dream Gallery, New York City**

The Lessa Dream Gallery is a creative pop-up shop collaboration between online mattress retailer, Lessa, and ArtLifting, an online marketplace that offers creations by artists who were homeless or disabled. The temporary shop allowed customers to visit a gallery of art, while testing out the Lessa mattresses as well.



*Photo by Lessa*



*Photo by Alicia Esposito*

### **J.Hilburn, New York City**

J.Hilburn is an e-commerce business that provides custom menswear clothing for consumers. The company opened a pop-up shop at the Refinery Hotel (6th Ave & W 38th St.) in New York City. The pop-up store allowed customers to visit a physical location to experience the various selections of clothing and materials being offered. This form of marketing allows the business to test the market of operating a physical location.

### 5.3.2 Shared Space / Market Stall / Multiple Uses

Shared spaces and market stalls are a more affordable way for individual businesses to occupy a smaller footprint than a typical retail lease space. Multiple hospitality operators can share a commissary kitchen on-site while offering a diverse mix of food items through a market stall concept; or having a small downtown footprint with the commissary kitchen off-site. Shared spaces also allow for businesses to test the market in an area before expanding to a larger or permanent footprint. Additionally, a single operator or more than one operator can occupy a space generating revenue for multiple uses, such as a café that rents out space for virtual meetings, events, small conference space, and can change from a day-time café to night-time gallery or other activity.

#### **Assembly Chef's Hall, Toronto**

Assembly Chef's hall is a 18,000 square-foot food hall located in Toronto's Financial District. Comprised of 18 vendors and featuring some of the top restaurants in the City, the Chef's Hall is a great example of a successful shared space providing opportunity for smaller businesses to operate.



*Photo by Torontolife.com*

#### **Wellington Market, Toronto**

Wellington Market, at The Well, features restaurant fare from local and international chefs, go-to location for market fresh and artisan food.



*Photo by The Well*

### **French Market, Chicago**

Chicago, Illinois is home to a number of food halls; the Chicago French Market is a great example of a shared space that contains a variety of small business vendors, local grocery, kiosks and market stalls, housed within one location.



*Photo by Lessa*

### **Timeout Market, Chicago**

Time Out Market Chicago is a 50,000 square foot communal style shared space, comprised of various bars, eateries, and a roof top terrace.



*Photo by Alicia Esposito*

### 5.3.3 Online Shopping with Storefront Presence

Over the last decade the online market has grown immensely, disrupting traditional main street retailers. Buying behaviour has changed as more consumers shop online. In response to the growing online market, established online retailers may consider small square footage of storefront retail to test the bricks and mortar market. For example, an online clothing retailer may not have a full inventory at the physical location but allows consumers to have a shopping experience, though ultimately placing their order online.

The buy online pickup in store (BOPIS) model provides an option for consumers to simply purchase products online and pick them up at stores. This allows the consumer to have the convenience of online shopping while still participating in an in-store experience.

#### Clearly, Toronto

Clearly is an eyewear company that has a strong e-commerce presence, allowing customers to purchase prescription glasses online and either ship to their home or pick-up in store. Clearly has a physical location on Queen Street West, where customers can either pick-up their online orders, or try glasses on in-store and place an order; the physical location does not stock a large inventory, and instead places the order for the customer.



Photos by Clearly

### **Nordstrom Local, New York & Los Angeles**

Nordstrom Local is an example of a retail location that has no inventory in-store, where instead the customer can try items on, pick-up orders placed online, and return items. The smaller square footage is around the size of a coffee shop.



*Photos by Nordstrom*



### 5.3.4 Considerations

#### Developers and Property Owners

-  Review neighbourhood inventory to support a diverse mix of retail.
-  Create modular style layouts for easy conversion of retail spaces to allow for flexible options such as shared spaces/market stalls and pop-up shops.
-  Consider use of temporary pop-up shops for short-term lease gaps.
-  Seek out alternative retail with a strong online presence that will bring a unique offering to the area .
-  Retail at-grade creates opportunity to be an added-value amenity and enhancement to the building and surrounding area, therefore the type of retail should be taken under consideration in the context of building tenancy and neighbourhood .
-  Create at-grade spaces in the form of artisan studios/ maker spaces: uses include promoting arts such as painting, sculpture and photography where spaces are used to study the art and/or producing and selling artisan goods. These spaces could be pop-ups or permanent in nature.



## 5.4 Design Considerations for Retail Streets

Retail at-grade, or on the second, and even the third floor can play a key role in defining the character and identity of the area. Where possible, retail spaces should be designed to have exposure to the street-level, bringing attention to the retailer while adding vibrancy to the public realm and enhancing the pedestrian experience.

The nighttime economy plays an important role in the vibrancy of a retail street. Live music venues and outdoor music in the public realm and on patios can be strong contributors to a destination neighbourhood. Good planning and design for nighttime uses is key to creating a successful, inclusive and sustainable retail street in a mixed-use area.



*Photo by Markoxto on Instagram*

### 5.4.1 Façade, Signage and Lighting

The design of the podium or façade is an important component of how a building meets a street. Façade materials and design should support and enhance retail spaces. When new development occurs on a site with an existing heritage building, setbacks and development features should enhance and showcase the heritage attributes of the existing building making for a highly desirable retail space. Building and retail signage and lighting should be designed to complement the heritage elements.



Photo by Markoxto on Instagram

#### Marvelous by Fred, Toronto

Marvelous by Fred is an elegant pastry shop. It has various locations including Toronto, ON and London, UK. The storefront is a great example of contrasting materials that help the business stand out at-grade. Use of large, clear transparent glass allows the interior light to glow the sidewalks at night. It allows pedestrians walking by to observe the bakers at work, bringing the experience to the street.



Photo by lennard.com

#### Diesel Store, Toronto

The façade of 100 Yorkville Avenue showcases the Diesel store with large transparent glass and contrasting building materials.



Photo by Loewe

#### Loewe Store, London, UK

The Loewe store in London, UK utilizes large transparent glazing, interior lighting, and a banner signage that showcases the store, allowing it to stand out amongst the other retailers.

Signage is a vital part in retail design as it not only provides marketing to the business but contributes to the overall character of the area. Unique signage should be promoted where possible, such as in designated Special Sign Districts. Signage should be designed in a manner that complements the building, promotes the business, while avoiding visual clutter along the street.

Distinguished as a 24hr neighbourhood with major attractions, theatres and hospitality, the use of lighting is also essential in the design of retail in the Downtown West BIA as it not only promotes the retailer, it can showcase the building, and add to walkability, visibility, and overall safety. Lighting elements should be considered beyond the hours of operation. For example, leaving the theatre marquee lights on.

While keeping the integrity of existing heritage, new developments should provide opportunity for display windows to allow retailers to promote their goods and services to the public as a form of marketing and branding.



Photo by Tutti Matti

### **Tutti Matti, Toronto**

Tutti Matti utilizes signage at their restaurant by orienting it in way that pedestrians walking by will notice it, adding character to the storefront without cluttering the building or public realm.



Royal Alexandra Theatre - Exterior, Photo by Mirvish Productions

## 5.4.2 Public Realm Interface

Successful retail streets should have a vibrant public realm. Retail should interface and compliment the street through patios, ambient music, seating, programming, and other elements to enhance the retail and pedestrian experience. Locations should be identified for off-hour use as patios or public realm space, such as curb lanes and building fronts without retail. CafeTO is a great example of use of curb lane space during a time of quiet downtown traffic.

### Sidewalk Space

Sidewalk space is the area in between building façade and the edge of the sidewalk, including pedestrian clearway, retail frontage (marketing zone) and curbside (furnishing zone). It may consist of building setback (private property as well as public right of way).

A generous sidewalk width for high quality streetscaping and active uses is fundamental. Building setbacks to provide open spaces, patios, market stalls, and other uses should be encouraged.

Curbside (furnishing zone) is the area close to the edge of the sidewalk. It provides space for trees, benches, and other enhancement features. This area can be distinguished by decorative paving treatments, planters, patios or seating, and provide a buffer between vehicular zone and pedestrian clearway.

Sustainability and environmental issues should be taken into consideration in the design of street furniture. The use of sustainable materials and energy saving/efficient design is highly recommended. For example, solar panels and energy efficient lighting should be used for elements that require electricity. New solar solutions should be explored for lighting up street trees and other elements.

#### A Sidewalk in NYC, New York

This example in NYC demonstrates the use of a wide sidewalk, allowing the operations of patios, public seating for pedestrians, bike parking and trees.



*A Sidewalk in NYC, Photo by Department of City Planning, NYC*

### **Curb Lane, Laneway and Other Locations**

CaféTO was introduced during COVID-19 to provide safe curb lane patios to support restaurants, while bringing life and vibrancy to the streets. All curb lane, laneway and other potential locations during off-peak times should be considered for new, flexible retail or patio use.



*CaféTO patio along King Street*



*Oretta Curb Lane Patio, Photo by Hector Vasquez*

## Lead with Culture

Rich with creativity in architecture, industrial design, planning, film, theatre, arts, live music, sports, attractions, hospitality, media, technology, environmental sustainability, education, this area celebrates and showcases its attributes, while keeping our culture in the forefront of planning how we design and build our parks, public realm, POPS, and patio spaces.



*Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO), Roy Thomson Hall, Photo by TSO*



*Roy Thomson Hall Reflecting Pool and Live Music, Photo by Roy Thomson Hall*

## Art Walk

The Downtown West BIA has created a virtual [Art Walk](#), a curation of all the public art in the area that features self-guided tours and fosters connections with public art through education about the art works and the artists. The tour displays fun facts while generating awareness of the area and helping promote local business.



Zhang Huan, 'Rising', Shangri-La Toronto



Yong Phaophanit and Claire Oboussier 'Dream House', 16 York Street



James Carl, 'Things End', 80 John Street



Anish Kapoor, 'Mountain', Simcoe Park

## TIFF, Toronto

Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) is one of the largest publicly attended film festivals in the world, attracting over 480,000 people annually. Since its founding in 1976, TIFF has grown to become an internationally renowned destination for film culture.



Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), Photo by Tijana Martin and Tribute.ca

## Walkability

One of the key features of the Downtown West BIA is the walkability - within a walking distance, residents, employees, visitors, and tourists are able to access everything they would need. This includes Canada's largest attractions, arts & culture, conferences and conventions, festivals and events, major sports venues, theatres, restaurants, hotels, nightlife and shopping, and many amenities.



CityMarket on Peter Street, Photo by Crown Realty Partners



Metro Toronto Convention Centre



Toronto Maple Leafs,  
Photo by Toronto Maple Leafs Instagram



Fit Fitness Factory at 373 King Street West, Photo by BlogTO



Strange Love Coffee at 101 Spadina Avenue, Photo by BlogTO

The PATH is an underground pedestrian network, connecting people to major transit hubs, places of work, local amenities, and pop-up exits and entrances to street-level access points. The PATH is filled with quick service, food outlets, and other amenities to cater to the working and local residential population. PATH connections are vital routes for many employees, residents, and visitors entering and exiting the area.



Bay-Adelaide Centre PATH, Photo by Tanja-Tiziana



PATH Amenity Retail, Photo by Cadillac Fairview

### 5.4.3 Pedestrian Comfort

Pedestrian comfort in the public realm is important to the overall health of a retail district. Comfortable pedestrians will spend more time on the street, and be more likely to pay repeat visits. Shadows cast by tall buildings and winds amplified by large built forms can combine to create extremely uncomfortable microclimate conditions in streets and open spaces, severely limiting the useability of exterior pedestrian space during large parts of the year.

In the Downtown Secondary Plan area, key parks and open spaces are protected by shadowing rules that limit net-new shadows. Development is also meant to “adequately limit” shadows on sidewalks and other public spaces “as necessary to preserve their utility”.

While tall new development proposals in Toronto generally require pedestrian level wind studies, there is concern that in many cases adequate mitigations have not been undertaken, whether through flawed methodologies or by failing to take into account future development proposals that will create problematic conditions. Improvements to the wind study process, such as peer review of the studies, and alternate modelling of potential impacts of other future development proposals is encouraged. Requiring developers to provide a financial security deposit to fix mitigations that do not perform adequately would also encourage more serious compliance.

On retail streets where any outdoor seating or eating areas exist or are considered desirous, wind studies should ensure the street remains comfortable for seated pedestrians. Every effort should be made to mitigate excessive wind impacts through identification of more suitable built form massing or mitigation measures such as canopies, projections or landscape elements that may reduce adverse wind effects to acceptable levels.

#### 5.4.4 Complete Community

As an established retail district that has experienced an explosive growth of new residents, the Downtown West BIA's positioning is both as a destination retail area and a local retail area serving the daily needs of 150,000 residents and workers. In many ways, the Downtown West BIA area is already a complete community, with a wide mix of uses, amenities and services available. The area is highly walkable and very well connected to transit and cycling networks. Moving forward, an important focus will be on maintaining the diversity, vibrancy and inclusivity of the neighbourhood, ensuring it remains a place people both want to live, work and play, and are able to live, work and play.

##### **Mixed Uses**

Mixed uses are an essential part of a complete community, providing vibrancy and activity. Too much of any one use, and too homogeneous a concentration of any one use can be detrimental. The Downtown West BIA is home to a wide variety of uses, but the massive amount of new primarily condominium development has been largely homogenous. Keeping a mix of workplaces and residential is as important as the retail and service mix, making sure that restaurants, shops, services and amenities, continue to find a place in the Downtown West BIA. Uses at grade play a huge role in the overall feel of the BIA and the vibrancy of the streets and retail environment. Regardless of the uses above grade, the BIA should always work to ensure a strong mix of uses at grade.

##### **Affordable Housing**

The affordability of housing options is an issue across Toronto, but can be particularly acute in areas such as the Downtown West BIA that have experienced extremely intense redevelopment. A wide variety of people with a wide range of incomes, is one of the keys to a vibrant and inclusive community. The BIA should work to support and include affordable housing in new development proposals and protect existing affordable housing where it may be threatened. The City's *HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan* aims to approve 40,000 new affordable rental homes, including 18,000 deeply affordable homes with supports, as well as 4,000 affordable ownership homes by 2030. In addition, Toronto's new Inclusionary Zoning policy requires (in the Downtown West BIA area) 10 per cent of the GFA of proposed condominium developments to be affordable ownership housing or 7 per cent to be affordable rental housing. The percentages will increase by 1.5 per cent per year from 2025 to 2030.

### 5.4.5 Loading and Delivery Zone

Continued growth and density in the downtown core creates greater challenges for on-street deliveries and laneway access for deliveries, particularly when there are multiple buildings connected to one laneway. The number of deliveries into the core has accelerated due to increased online shopping and food delivery orders. Future planning should take into account that this trend of convenience will increase with the population growth. Well-designed loading and delivery zones should be included within the development site and should take into account surrounding projects, future projects, as well as current and future traffic and delivery flow.

Toronto City Council approved the City’s Freight and Goods Movement Strategy in October 2020. The Strategy will help make the transport of freight and goods more safe, reliable, and sustainable for the City. Improvements include reducing the negative impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on neighbourhoods that are caused by shipments. One of the recommendations from the Strategy includes introducing regulatory changes to make off-peak delivery a permanent program. Off-peak deliveries are a viable solution that addresses issues such as traffic congestion, and reducing travel times and greenhouse gas emissions. The Strategy recommends that the City make a request to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to introduce necessary legislative and regulatory changes in order to make off-peak delivery a permanent program.



Delivery Truck in Downtown Toronto, Photo by EYBusman from flickr.com



PenguinPickUp at 93 Peter Street, Toronto  
Photo by foxconltd.com

## 5.4.5 Considerations

### **Developers, Architects and Landscape Architects, City of Toronto, Property Owners, The BIA**

-  Design at-grade storefronts to accommodate flexible retail opportunities
-  In the case of heritage buildings, the integrity of heritage façades can be maintained while adding attractive lighting, signage, and window treatment that compliments the heritage while marketing the retail inside
-  For new developments, design high quality, unique façades that emphasize the connection to the public realm and the retail
-  Considerations for material types to maximize the look of display windows, showcase the retail space, while complementing the building style
-  Considerations for exterior building lighting and interior retail space lighting to enhance the building as well as the public realm
-  In areas where nightlife and music venues currently exist, new residential developments need to take noise mitigation designs and materials into consideration
-  Work with the City and BIA on opportunities for new curb-lane, bump outs to extend sidewalks for patio for transitional use to patios and public realm
-  Where possible, create setbacks for POPs and additional pedestrian, patio, public realm and plaza space
-  Where possible, design outdoor spaces including public realm with sufficient electrical conduits for tree lighting, patio heaters, and other uses
-  Revise zoning by-laws to make accommodations for flexible at-grade uses (e.g. creating a live-work experience through cafés with virtual meeting spaces)
-  Conduct quarterly meetings with the BIA to review all developments, along with circulation of development applications and site plans
-  Transit and traffic plans, along with taxi and ridesharing wait areas should be designed into a nighttime economy plan
-  City Report October 2020: Request Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to introduce the necessary legislative and regulatory changes to make off-peak delivery a permanent program
-  Music venues coming into a mixed-use area should design space with the expertise of an acoustic engineer to mitigate noise issues
-  Meet with developers, architects and landscape architects at the early stages of a development proposal, providing input on at-grade elements including façade design, lighting, materials, signage and public and private elements of site plan
-  Provide a development review report and checklist for circulation during the development process

## **Lead with Culture**

### **Developers, Architects, Landscape Architects, The City, The BIA**

-  BIA curating all art installations to create an Art Walk to showcase all of the development art contributions in the area
-  Promote arts and cultural partners by animating public spaces (e.g. OCAD-U, Mirvish Productions, 401 Richmond, Maple Leafs Sports & Entertainment, Rogers Centre, Ripley's Aquarium, CN Tower, FlyOver Canada, Steam Whistle Brewing, Toronto Railway Museum, TIFF Bell Lightbox, Canada's Walk of Fame, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Roy Thomson Hall, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Canadian Opera Company, National Ballet of Canada, Factory Theatre, Theatre Museum Canada, Canadian Broadcast Corporation, Bell Media, etc.)
-  Engage with local industry partners for new concepts for public realm design and installations



## 6 Development Review Checklist

The Development Review Checklist is an aid to assist in the evaluation of the benefits inherent in a proposed development. The criteria listed is not meant to replicate the City's own criteria when reviewing applications; rather, the area of interest is on a proposed development's potential to contribute to the Framework's Key Areas of Focus: the pedestrian realm and open space, streetscapes, and uses at grade. As such, the checklist focuses on the ground level and lower floors of the subject development as well as its relationship to the surrounding context.

# Development Review Checklist

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of existing public realm and site conditions

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Developer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of application

Application No.: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 1 Contribution to a Complete Community

- Providing a contribution to the experience, diversity and viability of uses that make up Downtown West's overall character

## 2 Street-level Activation

- Inclusion of contiguous/continuous retail/commercial uses
- Maximization of building transparency/visual porosity as viewed from the public right-of-way
- Supportive of potential uses that engage pedestrians
- Provision of a flexible structural layout that accommodates non-residential adaptive re-use over the building's lifespan
- With respect to commercial spaces: provision of an exterior lighting plan
- With respect to commercial spaces: provision of a signage plan/guidelines

## 3 Public Realm Contribution

- Streetscape enhancement elements/Contribution to the public realm consistent with DWBIA's vision and design principles
- Provision of Public Open Space (i.e. park or square)
- Provision of Privately Owned Public Space
- Art/Cultural Heritage contribution
- Building setbacks at-grade that accommodate flexible outdoor uses
- Inclusion of mitigating measures that provide for pedestrian comfort (canopies, wind screens, building setbacks and setbacks)

## 4 Technical

- Discrete locating/Screening of at-grade utilities (gas, hydro, electrical, and other public or privately owned utilities)
- Convenient and safe access to bicycle facilities
- Discrete siting and screening of loading/garbage areas
- Loading, pick-up, drop-off, and parking access facilities do not impact on character or potential use along primary building/streetscape frontages







toronto  
**downtown west**  
Business Improvement Area

