

WELLINGTON PLACE

*PUBLIC REALM PLAN

The quality of the public realm contributes immeasurably to the quality of life in an urban environment. It's the place where the community meets, gathers, shops, works and recreates. The public realm consists of those places that people have unlimited and direct access to. This includes the streets, sidewalks, lanes, parks and publicly accessible open spaces. The King-Spadina Secondary Plan outlined a number of objectives for improving the public realm as the area changes over time. The Community Improvement Plan also identified improvements to be implemented as the area redevelops. The recommendations in this section reinforce the directions of the original plans. The demographic and physical changes that have occurred since adoption of the original King-Spadina Plan underscore the importance of updating the Community Improvement Plan and creating a new Public Realm Plan for the area bounded by King, Spadina, Wellington and Bathurst Streets.

* This document is an edited version of the Public Realm Plan prepared by The Planning Partnership for the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Review, June 27, 2006.





1.0 Public Realm Plan

The physical character of King-Spadina is distinct on each side of Spadina Avenue and the new Public Realm Plan responds to the differences between the east and west sides of Spadina. Specifically, the urban form on the east side is more concentrated with higher buildings compared to the west. Spadina itself is distinct, having been the source of study and significant improvements over the past decade. King-Spadina is also unique as an urban area, having a wide variety of uses and users.

From a public realm perspective the urban form of King-Spadina is comprised of an earlier generation of buildings that line the City streets, limiting opportunities to expand the public realm, and placing even more importance on streets as public spaces. In addition, the King-Spadina Plan encourages development to the lot lines to reinforce the historic built form, while making no provision for the creation of at grade amenity space. Although the King-Spadina Plan does speak to the provision of light and the provision of interest at the street level, this has resulted in a highly concentrated built form pattern. As well, because the King-Spadina Plan encourages a simple planning approval process via site plan approval and possibly minor variances, there is potentially little access to Section 37 monies to fund capital improvements to the public realm and/or other public amenities.

The proposed Public Realm Plan builds on the existing network of open spaces, identifying opportunities for existing parks and streetscape improvements, as well as new public spaces. The Public Realm Plan also introduces urban design guidelines and built form elements that improve the conditions between buildings and the street.

1.1 Existing Parks

Contextually there are a number of significant parks in the surrounding neighbourhoods, which are an important resource for the King-Spadina community. They include Grange Park, Alexandra Park, Stanley Park, Trinity Bellwoods Park and Roundhouse Park to name a few. Within the study area there are two parks that provide for a variety of community uses: Victoria Memorial (0.82 ha) and Clarence Square (0.76 ha). These existing parks are cherished and intensively used by the community. The pressure on these parks has been steadily increasing over the past decade and will continue to increase as the residential population increases. This has been acknowledged by the City and Victoria Memorial Square has been the focus of considerable



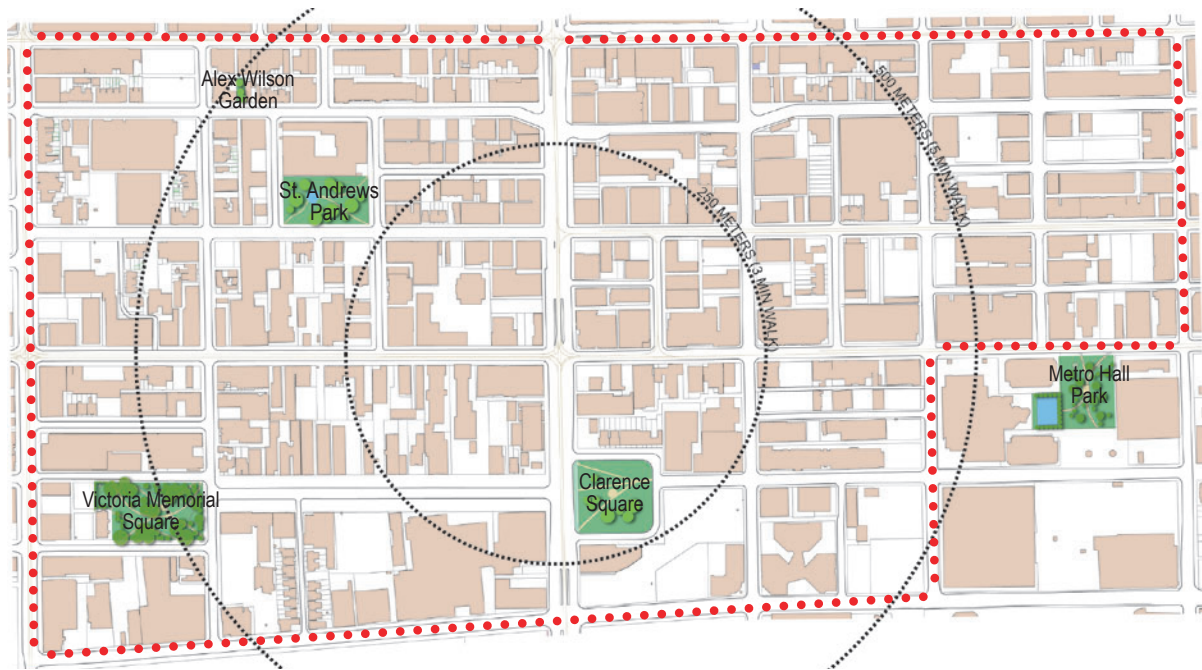
Camden Street today.



St. John's Gardens, London.



Landscape concept for Victoria Memorial.



Existing parks in King-Spadina.

study and is currently being revitalized with significant community support and direction. A master plan for Clarence Square will be developed this year and improvements made to it through the City's Parks Department. The revitalization of these parks involves protecting existing amenities, revealing and interpreting the historic context and providing for social interaction including seating, gathering areas and year round interest.

The parks strategy for the study area is based on six principles:

- Restore the two existing parks (Victoria Memorial is underway);
- Manage and maintain the parks to a high standard;
- Use a palette of materials and furnishings that reflect the unique character of the area;
- Create horticultural interest in all parks year round;
- Refer to the Parks Forestry and Recreation Dog's off leash strategy to provide a management approach for dogs and children's play areas for the neighbourhood parks; and,
- Ensure that the parks are safe and well lit.

1.2 Increasing Open Space

As an old manufacturing district the acquisition of lands in King Spadina to develop additional traditional park space will be a challenge for the City. The revitalization and location/distribution of parks within the Plan area is generally equally distributed however there is a lack of park space in the northeast quadrant. The following are potential park opportunities:



Clarence Square today.

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Establishing Wellington Street Park

Wellington Street and the two parks (Victoria Memorial and Clarence Square) are identified in the King-Spadina Plan and Urban Design Guidelines as an area of special identity. The Community Improvement Plan also sets out a proposal to implement improvements to this resource. From a public realm perspective this street and park composition is a unique feature and a rare example of Georgian Town Planning in the City. Wellington Street's significance is apparent in its grand proportions. With a right-of-way of 45 metres it is as wide as the south end of Spadina within the study area. Although the street has the potential to be one of the City's greatest streets, it has deteriorated over time. Today it is lined with parking lots where once large trees stood. Recently, there has been a shift - especially along the north side - with parking areas being removed and replaced



Wellington Street looking east, west of Spadina.



Portion of landscape concept for Wellington Street between Portland and Spadina.

with gardens and cafes. The Plan recommends removing the parking in the public boulevard incrementally over time and replacing it with planted boulevards, gardens, public art and cafes. The street is currently under the jurisdiction of the City's Technical Services Division. Although the street is not managed by Parks Forestry and Recreation, as the boulevards are transformed into a rich pedestrian amenity, like University Avenue, they would benefit significantly if they were managed as enhanced boulevard spaces. The plan recommends creating linear park spaces on either side of the street, permitting only cafes and publicly accessible gardens in the public right of way adjacent to the buildings and transferring management responsibility of the boulevards to the City Park's Division.



Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

The Acquisition of Private Squares and Parks

Private squares that are publicly accessible provide a valuable open space resource. They are part of the public realm but are owned and managed by the landowners. They exist in many areas of the city and are enjoyed by everyone. The Bank Tower plazas are prime examples of this land use. King Spadina would be well served by additional parkland as well as smaller open spaces that could offer respite and relief from the urban condition. Parks and publicly accessible open spaces are very important to improving the quality of the neighbourhood. Both could be owned and/or managed publicly, privately or in some combination thereof as long as these spaces ensure an appropriate amount of public access.

public realm



Acquisition of parkland in the northeast quadrant would greatly benefit the residents in this area.

2.0 STREETSCAPES

Collectively, the streets in the King-Spadina area comprise the largest percentage of neighbourhood open space. They are a vitally important aspect of the public realm. When they function well, they are lively places where cafes, corner flower shops, public art, and gardens create vibrant outdoor rooms. They are the place where the eyes of the community are on the activities of the street and where the addresses of the businesses can be found. As King-Spadina has evolved to accommodate more retail, commercial and residential uses the transformation of the streetscape to a condition typically associated with these types of uses has not happened. At the same time it has not necessarily been appropriate to make changes to the streetscape that result in the loss of the historic character of the area as a manufacturing district. The challenge in King-Spadina like many other areas in the core is that development activity in general has increased traffic on the streets and the expectations of new residents and retailers regarding the quality of the public realm.

Improvements to the public realm will generally seek to improve sidewalk conditions, ensuring that both streets and lanes are safe and well lit. Where possible streets trees will be added, acknowledging that due to the location of underground services and width of sidewalks, not all streets can accommodate them. In these circumstances opportunities for public art, hanging baskets, banners, awnings and other amenities should be explored.

Protecting for sunlight on sidewalks is also an important consideration and is discussed in further detail in the Built Form section of the report. Lanes are also an important part of the network of connections through the study area and need to be considered in the improvement plan.

The key principles of the streetscape strategy are:

- Create tree lined streets with growing conditions that support a long term greening strategy for the study area;
- Create safe well lit sidewalks;
- Develop a palette of street amenities and furnishings that reflects the unique character of the area;
- Eliminate parking in the public boulevards such as on Wellington west of Spadina;
- Preserve special places such as the cafes of King Street; and,
- Create a standardized paving treatment that organizes the elements of the streetscape and is both attractive and practical from a maintenance perspective.



Portland Street today.



Chicago Streetscape.



Chicago Streetscape.

3.0 A Strategy for the Hierarchy of Streets

Character streets

Spadina, King, Wellington (west of Spadina), John and Draper.

Primary streets:

King, Spadina, Bathurst and Front.

Secondary streets:

Richmond, Adelaide, Duncan, Peter, John, Wellington and Portland.

Tertiary streets:

Nelson, Pearl, Windsor, Mercer, Widmer, Charlotte, Clarence Square, Brant, Camden, Morrison, Simcoe, Augusta, Maud, Stewart, Draper and Niagara.

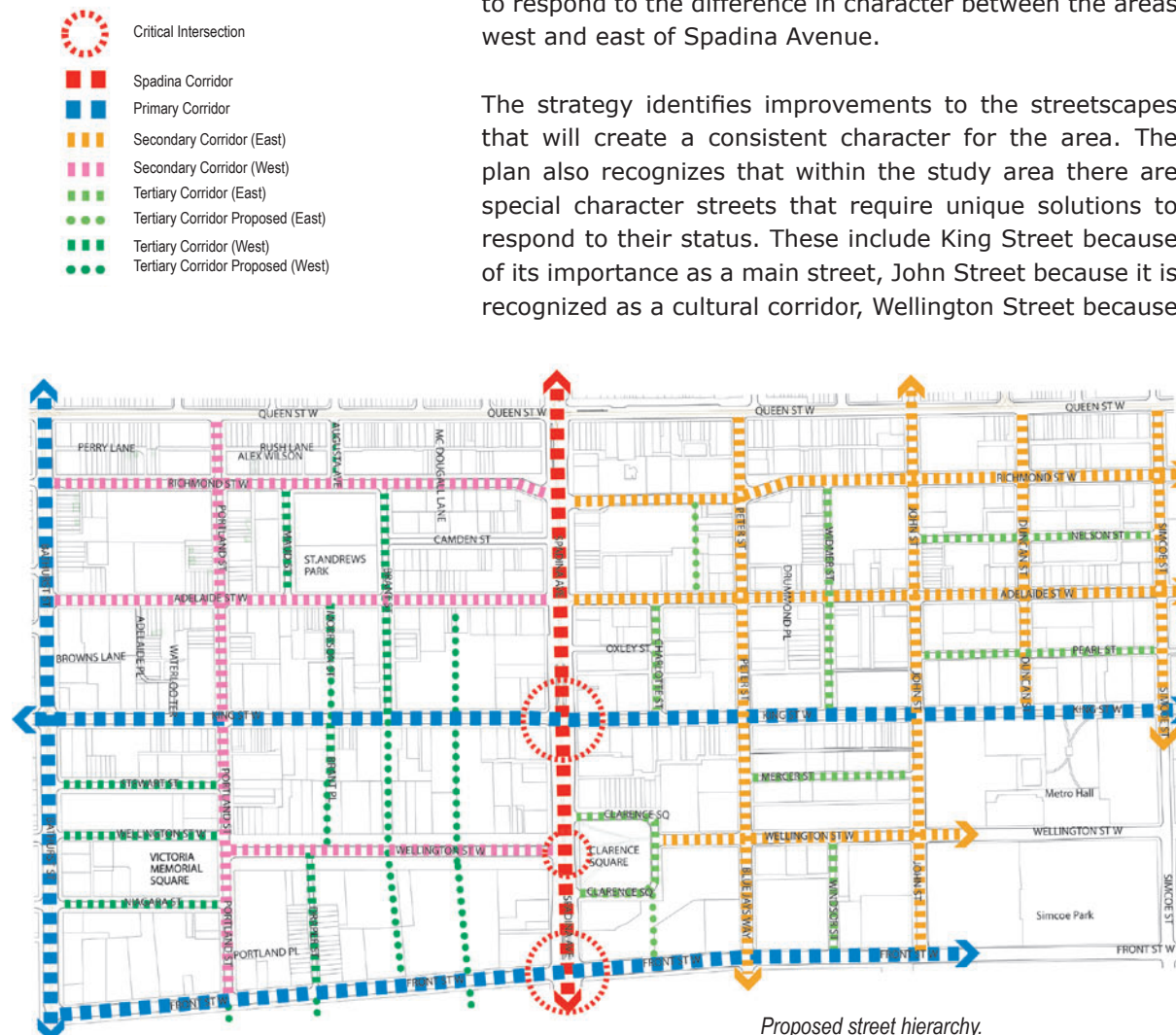
Lanes

Pedestrian Connections

The streets within King-Spadina serve a variety of functions in addition to moving traffic. To clarify their roles, they have been codified, emphasizing their importance within a hierarchy of public spaces. The resulting hierarchy begins with Spadina Avenue, Bathurst Street, King Street and Front Street as primary streets. Secondary streets include Richmond, Adelaide, Wellington, Duncan, John, Peter and Portland. Tertiary streets include Nelson, Pearl, Windsor, Mercer, Widmer, Charlotte, Clarence Square, Brant, Morrison, Maud, Stewart, Draper and Niagara. Lanes provide service and parking access as well as pedestrian linkages. Finally, mid-block pedestrian connections provide convenient pedestrian routes.

The objective of the streetscape hierarchy strategy is for the design and organization of the street to identify its role and function in the area's overall public realm. Additionally, the streetscape recommendations vary for the same streets to respond to the difference in character between the areas west and east of Spadina Avenue.

The strategy identifies improvements to the streetscapes that will create a consistent character for the area. The plan also recognizes that within the study area there are special character streets that require unique solutions to respond to their status. These include King Street because of its importance as a main street, John Street because it is recognized as a cultural corridor, Wellington Street because



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of its history and wide boulevards and Draper Street because of its history and unique residential character.

When possible the City should focus on special character streets as a first priority for budgeting improvement projects. As well, the location of underground services and other technical considerations such as the presence of overhead wires may restrict what can be achieved on each of these streets in terms of adding street trees, street lights and reorganization of the right-of-way. Where reconstruction of the street is proposed, such as on Wellington, John, and King, improvements should be achieved over time by identifying interim conditions and the order of priority for implementation.

3.1 The Hierarchy of Streets

Primary Streets

The primary streets connect the King-Spadina study area to other areas of the City. They are the transit corridors and recognized major city streets. The streetscape treatment for these streets extends through neighbouring districts. They are the main streets of the City and provide for a wide range of activities. They are walkable, accessible and connect major citywide destinations.

Secondary Streets

These are important local streets that link to adjacent neighbourhoods but are not main streets. They do not necessarily support transit but are still important real estate addresses and contribute significantly to the quality of the public realm. They comprise the largest area of streetscape development. They are walkable, accessible and connect destinations within the study area with those in the surrounding neighbourhoods

Tertiary Streets

These are the smaller local streets that are one or two city blocks long with narrower cross sections and used by local traffic. In some cases the rights-of-way are quite narrow with only enough available space for a narrow sidewalk. They have limited opportunities for street tree planting but the pedestrian realm could be improved with the addition of public art, hanging baskets, banners and enhanced paving and lighting.

Lanes

Lanes are important pedestrian spaces that connect through the middle of the blocks. They are intended for servicing and parking access. However, they also provide pedestrian



Front Street is one of the Primary Streets in King-Spadina.



Adelaide Street is one of the Secondary Streets in King-Spadina.



Mercer Street is a Tertiary Street in King-Spadina.



Pedestrian Bridge in Millennium Park, Chicago.



JFK Park Cambridge Massachusetts.

short cuts. They make mid block open spaces accessible and connect with mid block real-estate addresses. The City's policy objective is to use the lanes to accommodate vehicular functions for developments in the area. Some lanes in the Plan area are also used by businesses – particularly nightclubs – as 'front doors'. It is important that the City work with Toronto Hydro and property owners that have lane access to improve lighting and safety.

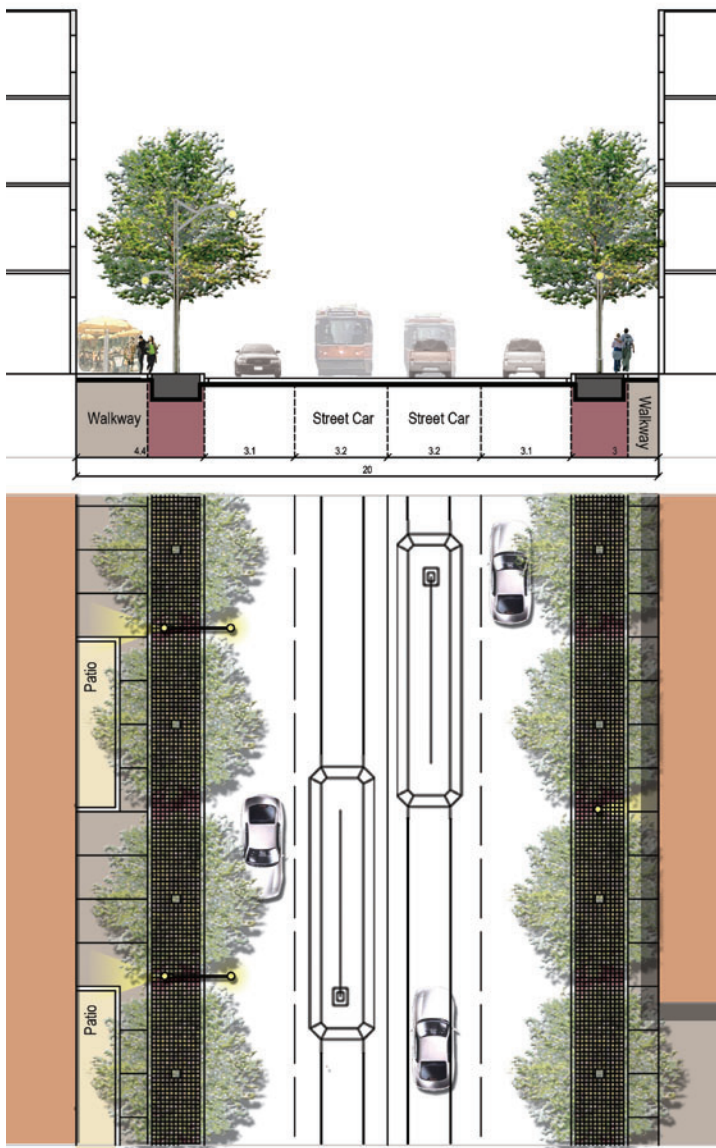
3.2 Pedestrian Connections

Pedestrian connections are important because they link neighbourhoods. They create safe access across major streets or servicing corridors such as railway lines. At Spadina and Wellington an at grade pedestrian and bicycle crossing is proposed to establish a formal crossing at this location, where there is currently a lot of informal crossing activity. This crossing will reestablish the historical connection of the two parks and Wellington Street. A pedestrian and bicycle bridge is proposed across the railway line at the foot of Portland Street to Railway Lands West. This bridge will provide an important functional connection to the Railway Lands West community centre, park, library and school sites, the linear park system and to the waterfront. Every effort should be made to ensure that where the pedestrian bridge meets the Plan area, a smooth transition into a pedestrian and bicycle system is created.

3.3 Special Character Streets

King Street

King Street east of Spadina is a special character street. It is recognized as one of the City's most important main streets. Between John and Spadina it has a vibrant stretch of outdoor cafes and restaurants. This has occurred in part because the sidewalk on the south side of King is wide enough to accommodate street trees and there is ample room for outdoor eating areas. The north side of King Street is limited in sidewalk width and requires careful consideration to ensure adequate space for trees and other public realm amenities. On such a busy street, the walkway



Michigan Avenue, Chicago.



King Street today.



Madison Avenue, Boston.



King Street west of Spadina today.



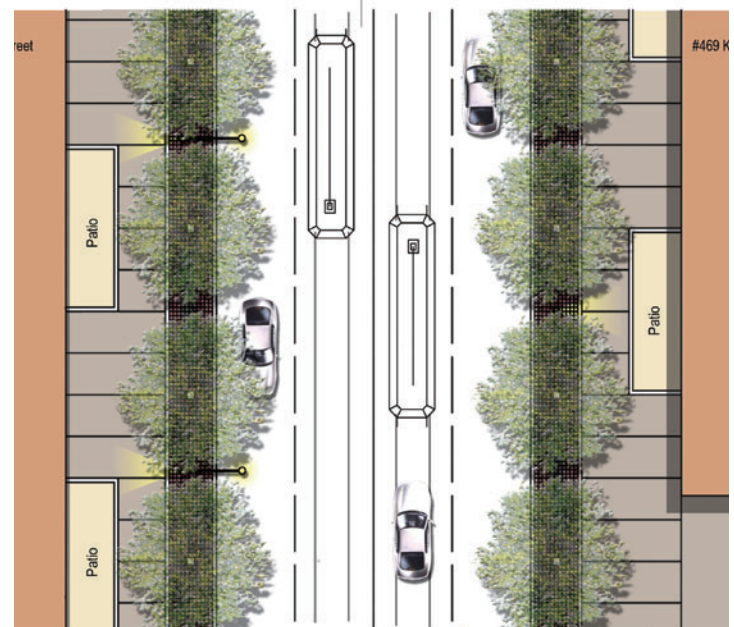
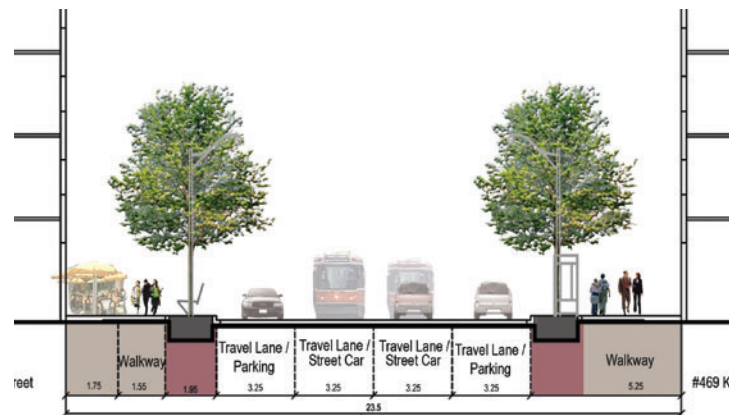
Newspaper boxes, Chicago.



Stephen Avenue, Calgary.

width should be maximized to provide a comfortable space for pedestrians. The south side of the street should continue to be developed to encourage outdoor use of the sidewalk by adjacent restaurants and shops. Street tree planting lighting and organized street furnishings should be added to improve the aesthetic of the street. On the north side of King Street, trees and pedestrian lighting should be added to reinforce the human scale and create seasonal and nighttime interest.

As King Street continues west of Spadina its significance as a main street continues but its physical characteristics change. West of Spadina the street is lined with historic brick warehouses that are a similar scale on both sides of the street. The street is also lined with trees on both sides. Due to the increased right-of-way west of Spadina to 25 metres, the north and south sidewalks can comfortably accommodate tree planting, outdoor cafes and merchandise displays associated with the adjacent shops and restaurants. In this area great care should be taken to preserve the character and function of the public realm. A



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coordinated street furnishing program and improvements to the growing conditions of the trees would complement the existing conditions.

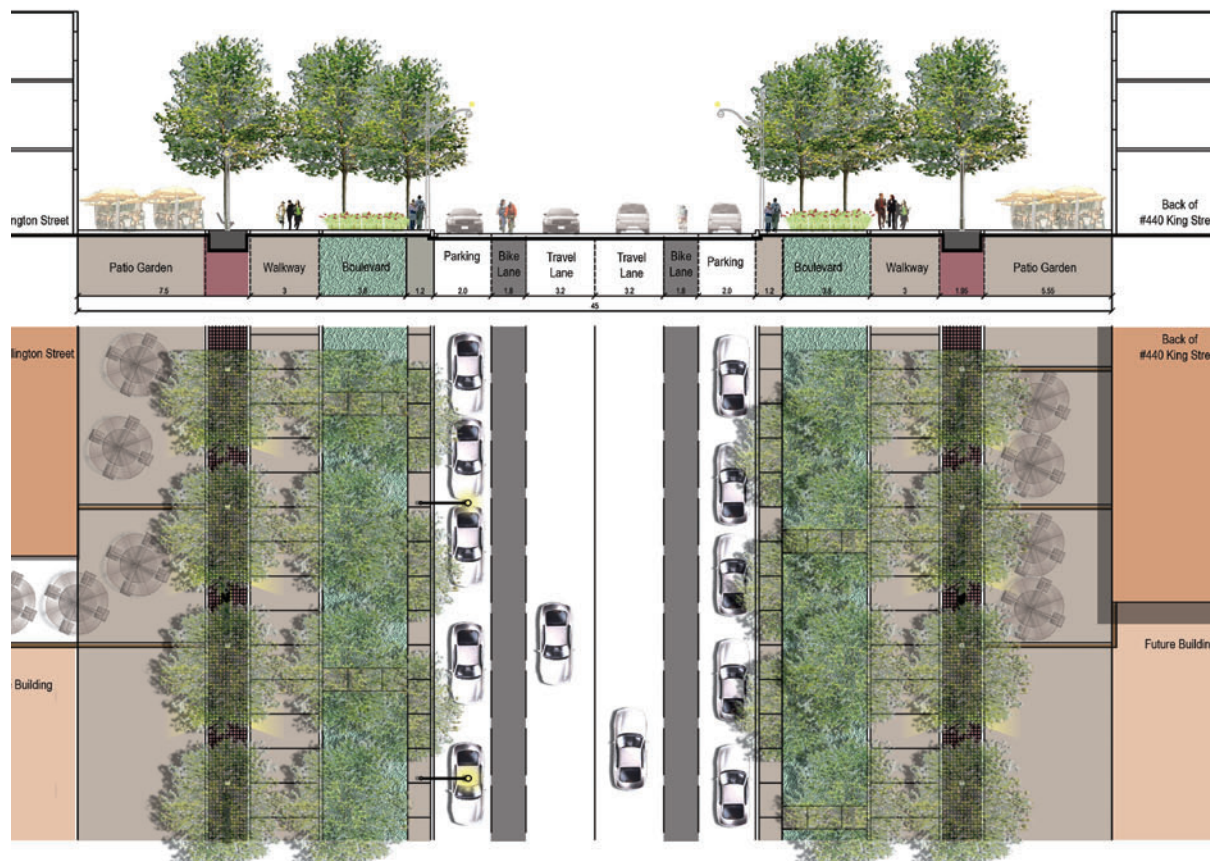
Wellington Street

Wellington Street is identified as a special character street because of its history and wide right-of-way, which provides opportunities for a park-like boulevard. The Wellington Street Revitalization Report, which was received by Council in 2005, identifies strategies for restoring the streetscape overtime, by removing boulevard parking and replacing it with trees, gardens, cafes, generous sidewalks and public art. The objective is to develop a 'Park Street' that serves the multiple needs of the community, and is a destination for residents and tourists.



Wellington Street, today.

Wellington Street east of Spadina has an important relationship to Clarence Square elevating its status to a special street. For the most part however, Wellington to the east serves primarily as a transportation corridor with one-way traffic flowing west. Similar to Richmond and Adelaide,



Proposed streetscape improvements, Wellington Street.

it is dominated by traffic, with narrow sidewalks that are, for the most part, without trees. The proposal to provide a pedestrian connection at Spadina provides a strong case for adding bicycle lanes on Wellington both east and west of Spadina. Street trees should be added along the street edge and the current sidewalk width protected if bicycle lanes are added to the street.



Michigan Avenue, Chicago.



Information kiosk, Madison Avenue, Boston.



Victoria Square, Montreal.

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Draper Street is identified as one of the character streets in King-Spadina.

Draper Street

As one of the few remnant residential streets in the neighbourhood Draper Street is widely recognized as one of the most charming streets in the downtown core. Lined with Georgian row houses and small gardens it is a reminder of the rich history of the area. The street also plays an important role as a mid block connection between historic Wellington Street and Front Street. The character of the street and its associated streetscape should be protected, including the narrow road cross-section, front gardens and the narrow curb edge sidewalk.

11.4 Public Art

The City's Public Art Programs and Official Plan emphasize the importance of public art in elevating the human spirit and interpreting the City's history and culture. With many good examples of public art in the surrounding areas including Metro Hall, the Spadina LRT and several of the new Hotels. There is opportunity in King-Spadina to continue to enhance the public realm with installations associated with new development in the area.



The children's water park in Millennium Park, Chicago.

4.0 Public Realm Recommendations

PR-1. Prioritize implementation of the recommended public realm improvement plan:

- a) Implement streetscape improvements on all streets in the study area and where possible coordinate the timing of these improvements with other Capital Programs;
- b) Implement streetscape improvements to coincide with private development projects that impact on the public realm;
- c) Make the special character streets a top priority for improvements beginning with Wellington Street west of Spadina;
- d) Continue discussions with Toronto Hydro regarding lighting inventory and assessment; and,
- e) Complete restoration efforts on the existing parks including completing Victoria Memorial and initiating Clarence Square.

PR-2. Identify actions that should be taken to ensure additional open space:

- a) Redesignate Wellington street as a linear park to be managed by the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division;
- b) Negotiate public access lanes and private open space connections through large development parcels;
- c) Coordinate streetscape furniture discussions with the city wide initiative currently underway;
- d) Make small improvements to meet the City's Clean and Beautiful program and/or other small scale programs; and,
- e) Investigate the potential for purchasing additional park space in the study area.

PR-3. Incorporate policies in the Secondary Plan to clearly identify the expectations:

- a) Direct any Section 37 and Section 45 monies to a WPNA's specific schedule of public realm improvements. (See Priorities Map)



- 1 Victoria Memorial Square
- 2 Clarence Square
- 3 Wellington Street
- 4a Connection between Wellington Street and Clarence Square
- 4b Crossing connections between Wellington St. and Bathurst St.
- 5 Portland Street
- 6 Front Street
- 7 King Street
- 8 Bathurst Street
- 9 Draper Street
- 10 Proposed Pedestrian Bridge over Railroad Tracks
- 11 Proposed Mid Block Pedestrian Connections
- Historic Wellington Place

Public Realm Improvement Priorities

Street Hierarchy Priority Comment

Wellington Place

King	special character	1st.	Main Street: enhanced tree planting,
Wellington	special character	1st.	Historic: designate as linear park, remove blvd. parking, trees, lighting, wide sidewalks, bike lanes, public art
Draper	secondary	3rd.	Historic: protect existing
Bathurst	primary	2nd.	Main Street: plant trees, lighting, enhanced walkways, public art
Front	primary	3rd.	Will occur with new development
Richmond	secondary	2nd.	Will occur with new development/street tree planting, pedestrian lighting
Adelaide	secondary	2nd.	Street tree planting/pedestrian lighting
Portland	secondary	2nd.	Street tree planting/pedestrian lighting
McDougall Lane	tertiary	3rd.	Paving and lighting improvement
Brant	tertiary	2nd.	Connection to mid-block lanes, linking to Wellington
Augusta	tertiary	3rd.	Paving and lighting improvement
Morrison	tertiary	3rd.	Coordinated with north/south development
Maude	tertiary	3rd.	Paving and lighting improvement
Camden	tertiary	3rd.	Paving and lighting improvement
Lanes		1st.	development
Pedestrian Connections		1st.	Link to City Place, completed in association with new development

Spadina

	special character	1st.	Pedestrian crossing at Wellington
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