

SICK KIDS EXPANDS

New Bay St. research facility

The Hospital for Sick Children is planning a large expansion on Bay Street a block north of Dundas Street West. The proposal, currently being considered by city planning staff, would see a 24-storey research and education building developed on the northwest corner of Bay and Elm streets.

“We have grown substantially over the past 10 years,” Anne Marie Christian told NRU. “We now have 2,000 people that are working in research and they’re currently spread over six buildings between College and Dundas streets. What we’re trying to achieve here is to get all of our researchers in one place.”

Christian cited the distance between Sick Kids’ current research facilities and the resulting difficulties in integrating research, as well as the fact that much of that space is leased, as the central issues that would be addressed by the development of a new facility.

While a rezoning application was submitted in the summer and is still in the preliminary stages of consideration, the proposal has been in the works for some time.

“The first iteration of [the project] was in 2000,” Christian said. “This has been a strategic direction of ours for a very long time. All of the pieces started coming together about 18 months ago.”

The building is being designed by **Diamond + Schmitt Architects Inc.** in partnership with **HDR Inc.**, an American firm specializing in academic research buildings. The new facility will connect to the existing hospital through a bridge and retail space will be included along Bay Street.

Existing zoning permissions for the site restrict building height to 46 metres on the west side and 61 metres on the east side, while density is capped at six times the lot area on the west side and 7.8 times the lot area on the east. The proposal is for a building that would be nearly 130 metres tall, with a density 16.4 times the lot area.

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• Anne Marie Christian

While the federal government has provided the hospital with a \$91-million grant to develop the facility, more funding still needs to be secured. Sick Kids will look to partnerships with all levels of government, as well as philanthropy to fund the project. A new fundraising campaign is expected to go public soon.

“This has been a dream that we’ve had for many years,” Christian said. “What we’re going to gain by having everybody in a state-of-the-art building together is going to benefit children’s health immensely.”

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