

Public Health Implications of the Woodbine Live Development

Date:	September 4, 2007
To:	Board of Health
From:	Medical Officer of Health
Wards:	Ward 2 – Etobicoke North
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

At its April 16, 2007 meeting, the Board of Health referred the motion from the Etobicoke/York Local Health Committee to the Medical Officer of Health to investigate and report back to the September 19, 2007 Board of Health on implications with respect to the proposed Woodbine Live Development.

At its meeting on July 17, 2007, City Council approved the \$750 million development at the Woodbine racetrack, located in the city's northwest corner, including a hotel, shopping and skating rink.

The project has addressed at a high level a number of determinants of health such as local employment, transit access and green planning. The residential component of the proposal is still in development and will be reported in the future for Council approval. The Medical Officer of Health, through the Etobicoke/York Local Health Committee and City Planning, will monitor this development and report when appropriate to the Board of Health on healthy public policy issues as well as service implications.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

At its April 16, 2007 meeting, the Board of Health requested that the Medical Officer of Health investigate and report back to the September meeting of the Board:

1. investigate the extent of the impact of the Woodbine Live Development on Toronto Public Health Services;
2. investigate the possibility of stakeholder status in the project and avenues for consultation on the impact of public health programs and services; and
3. request that the Woodbine Entertainment Complex endow amenities for the community in the overall official plan.

Phase I of the development project was approved by the Etobicoke/York Community Council on June 26, 2007 and by City Council on July 17, 2007 with the inclusion of a local employment strategy. Phase II will be reported for approval in the future.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Phase I of the proposal is the establishment of a regional entertainment tourism destination. It has a mix of uses, including: offices, retail stores, a hotel, restaurants, theatres, a live performance facility and associated amenities (the Commercial District). These uses are effectively an expansion to the existing racetrack operation and gaming facility. Phase II will provide approximately 2,500 residential units and supporting commercial uses in a new community (the Residential District).

COMMENTS

City Planning circulated information with respect to Phase I to all interested parties, including Toronto Public Health (TPH). As there were no concerns in Phase I regarding remediation of brownfields or health hazards, TPH staff made no formal comments at that time.

At this early stage of the development it is not possible to estimate implications for increased TPH service requirements for either the commercial or residential components. Potential public health service impacts include:

- Commercial District – Food Safety program, Tobacco Enforcement
- Residential District – Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Immunization, Communicable Disease Control, Dental and Oral Health services

The nature and extent of public health service needs created by the new development will depend on the details of commercial uses and the population of new residents. Service impacts will be mentioned as the development progresses and will be reported to the Board of Health through the budget process if they cannot be accommodated within existing resources.

As the Phase I proposal has been approved by City Council, stakeholder input will be recruited for the Phase II aspect of the proposal. Toronto Public Health will be included in the circulation of this phase. As Rexdale Community Health Centre is an important partner, as well as provider of primary care and health promotion services, it too needs to

be included in Phase II consultations. Resources to conduct more extensive health impact assessments may be required.

The development has already addressed a number of amenities for the community including transit access, local employment, mixed housing, recreation. TPH staff will continue to link with City Planning to ensure public health input.

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SIGNATURE

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