

Downsview Area Secondary Plan Review

Date:	March 6, 2008
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, North York District
Wards:	Ward No. 8 – York West Ward No. 9 - York Centre Ward No. 10 – York Centre
Reference Number:	File No. 08 101113 NPS 00 TM

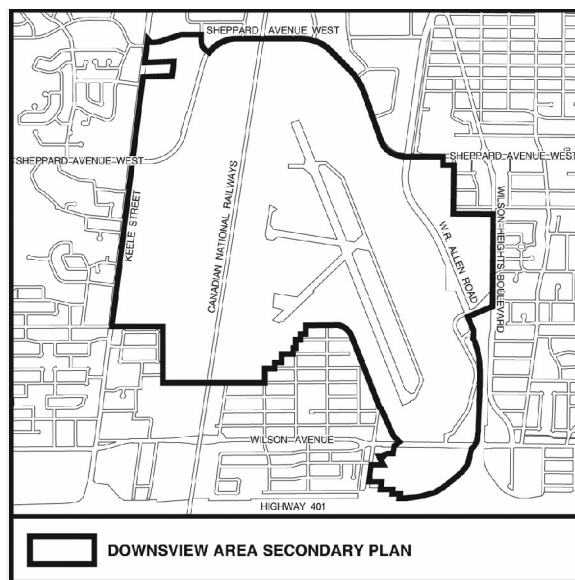
SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s direction to undertake a review and update of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. staff be directed to undertake a review and update of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan;
2. prior to initiating the review, a Memorandum of Understanding be entered into between the City of Toronto and Parc Downsview Park Inc. to establish the respective roles and responsibilities for the Secondary Plan review including the scope of the review, financing, administration, deliverables and timing;
3. the review include a consultation program comprised of both broad



- community wide forums and smaller working groups which will include area residents and businesses, local community associations, property owners within the Secondary Plan area, the local Councillors, and representatives of City Divisions and external agencies as necessary and appropriate; and
4. a report providing proposed revisions to the Downsview Area Secondary Plan be targeted for the first quarter of 2009.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Federal government announced the closure of former Canadian Forces Base Downsview in 1993 and their intention that the lands be held in perpetuity and in trust as a unique urban recreational space. Management of the lands was originally assumed by Canada Lands Corporation (CLC). In 1996 a crown corporation, Parc Downsview Park Inc. (PDPI) was established and given the mandate to manage the lands. PDPI reports to the Parliament of Canada through the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. The Department of National Defence (DND) continues to retain some lands to accommodate ongoing military needs and Bombardier Aerospace continues to maintain jurisdiction of their manufacturing plant and associated runways.

Between 1994 and 1999, the City together first with CLC and then with PDPI engaged in a planning process for the lands which ultimately resulted in the Downsview Area Secondary Plan (Attachment 1). The planning process included the completion of a number of background studies and significant public consultation. This process was funded by grants from the Government of Canada. The resulting Downsview Area Secondary Plan was approved by City Council in 1999 (OPA 464) as an amendment to the former City of North York Official Plan. A subsequent City initiated amendment was approved in 2001 (OPA 504) which approved a mix of uses for the lands at the southwest and southeast corners of the Allen Road and Sheppard Avenue West intersection and residential uses on the east side of Allen Road south of Sheppard Avenue. The new City of Toronto Official Plan approved by the Ontario Municipal Board in July 2006 contains the Downsview Area Secondary Plan substantially in the form originally approved.

The Downsview Area Secondary Plan area comprises approximately 534 hectares (1,320 acres) and is located in the north central part of Toronto, north of Highway 401 between Allen Road and Keele Street. PDPI, on behalf of the Federal government, is the majority landowner in the Plan area (approximately 231 hectares (572 acres)). Other landowners in the Plan area are:

- Bombardier Aerospace;
- the City of Toronto which owns lands on behalf of the TTC including the Wilson station and associated rail yards and Downsview Station and the associated commuter parking lot;
- the Department of National Defence;
- Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO) which is in the process of assuming ownership of the majority of the lands in the southeast quadrant of Allen Road and Sheppard Avenue West;
- Canadian National Railway (CN) which operates the CN rail Bradford Line that runs through the Secondary Plan area;
- the Federal government which retains ownership of the lands under Allen Road; and
- the ‘Block H’ lands south of Wilson Avenue and west of Allen Road which are in private ownership and have been developed with retail uses.

COMMENTS

In the more than eight years since the original Downsview Area Secondary Plan was approved, a number of changes have occurred which support reviewing and updating the Plan at this time.

In 2000 PDPI undertook an international design competition and selected the “Tree City” development vision for their lands. In 2005, PDPI issued draft Sustainable Community Development Guidelines which describe how it would like to implement development on their lands. These initiatives have not been formally evaluated by the City with respect to their appropriateness or their compliance with the approved planning framework for the lands.

In 2005 the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) initiated an update of the environmental assessment for the Spadina subway extension north from Downsview Station at the Allen-Sheppard intersection up to York University and the City of Vaughan. In February 2007, the federal government announced their commitment to contribute funds to the extension and background technical work for this project is now underway. At their meeting of February 27, 2007, the TTC passed a motion requesting that the City consider requiring minimum densities along the subway line and that the Commission seek opportunities to integrate station development with related development for the purpose of achieving financial savings. This motion was forwarded to and considered by the Planning and Growth Management Committee at their meeting of March 29, 2007 (Item PG3.16). The new City of Toronto Official Plan contains transit supportive development policies including the potential for establishing minimum densities at transit stations and along major transit routes.

Although the PDPI crown corporation was established in 1996 and the Board of Directors appointed in 1999, it was not until August 2006 that the Federal government transferred administrative authority of the lands to PDPI. With that authority in place, PDPI is now

in a position to move forward with implementation of development of the lands based on the self-financing model established by the Federal government.

At its meeting of March 5 and 6, 2007, City Council approved a motion from North York Community Council advising of the City's willingness to revisit the Downsview Area Secondary Plan in light of changes that have taken place since the approval of the Plan in 1999: the Spadina subway extension, the policy direction of the new Official Plan and the significant opportunities and implications of development of these lands for the City.

In August 2007, City Council authorized transferring ownership of and responsibility for lands at the southeast corner of Allen Road and Sheppard Avenue West which are not used for the Downsview TTC Station and related commuter parking lot, to the Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO). TEDCO is currently examining development opportunities for these lands and, as part of this exercise, is analyzing the existing planning framework and the merits of any amendments thereto. This analysis will include discussions with the Federal government and PDPI regarding the restrictive covenants that continue to apply to the lands.

A review of the Secondary Plan provides an opportunity to revisit the planning policy framework for the area and to update and clarify the goals, objectives and priorities of the Plan and set out expectations and requirements to implement the Plan.

Funding:

PDPI requested this review as a result of the recent assumption of authority for their lands and the broader changes and initiatives underway in the area, in particular the extension of the Spadina subway and the proposed location of a subway station on their lands at the CN rail line and Sheppard Avenue West. City Planning recognizes the need for a review of the Secondary Plan but does not have the funding or resources to undertake the initiative at this time. At their meeting of August 28, 2007, the Board of Directors of PDPI agreed to contribute funds toward the cost of the City retaining a Project Manager to complete a report to City Council to obtain endorsement of the review of the Secondary Plan. In discussions with the City, PDPI has also indicated a willingness to fund the Secondary Plan review in its entirety provided it can be completed in 2008. TEDCO has also indicated their willingness to participate in the Secondary Plan review and to provide limited funding for the review relative to the transportation component.

City Planning has established a Project Manager position to lead the Downsview Area Secondary Plan review. Should City Council endorse the recommendations of this report, the Project Manager's first task will be to work with PDPI to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and PDPI. This MOU will include an identification of the scope of the review, agreement on necessary background studies and analysis required to complete the review, funding obligations including study cost estimates and upset limits, and timelines.

Timelines:

PDPI has indicated a desire for the Secondary Plan review to be completed in 2008 in order to advance the development of their lands. PDPI also expressed an interest in concurrently preparing implementing zoning for the lands. At this point, the extent of additional study and analysis required to update the Secondary Plan needs to be determined. Of particular concern is the extent of analysis that will be required as part of a transportation study. The Downsview Transportation Master Plan forms part of the existing Secondary Plan. The Spadina subway extension and changes to the operation of Allen Road such as the establishment of bus-only lanes and additional traffic signals, along with potential changes to the type of land use and level of development within the Secondary Plan area necessitates a comprehensive transportation study. Further review of existing planning regulations and discussion with PDPI and other landowners within the Plan area will be required before a timeline can be finalized. This report recommends that a report on proposed revisions to the Secondary Plan be targeted for the first quarter of 2009.

Community Consultation:

The existing Secondary Plan was developed with extensive community consultation. A community consultation program will be developed for this review and is proposed to contain broad forums to share information and obtain general input as well as area and/or issue specific working groups for more detailed discussions. Area residents, businesses, community associations, landowners within the Secondary Plan area and relevant City Divisions and external agencies will be consulted. The community consultation program will be finalized in consultation with the three local Councillors for the Secondary Plan area. The City Planning Division also expects to utilize the services and expertise of the City's Public Consultation office.

Other Matters

Future development within the Secondary Plan area will be subject to the municipal planning process as set out in the *Planning Act* and the environmental process as set out in the *Environmental Assessment Act*. As PDPI is a crown corporation, it will be necessary for the City and PDPI to enter into an operating protocol agreement to confirm the land use planning process for their lands including dispute resolution, set out matters related to the provision and ownership of public infrastructure and other issues, including payments-in-lieu of taxes. Discussions in this regard will run concurrently with the Secondary Plan review.

Conclusion:

The review and update of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan provides an opportunity for a comprehensive analysis of land use conditions and characteristics to update the planning policy framework for the Plan area. Community Planning will lead the review and costs of the review are to be funded by PDPI. The parameters and obligations for the

review will be established in a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and PDPI prior to undertaking any substantial work on the review. PDPI has requested that the review be completed in twelve months. The review will include community consultation with area residents and businesses, affected landowners and relevant City Divisions and external agencies.

CONTACT

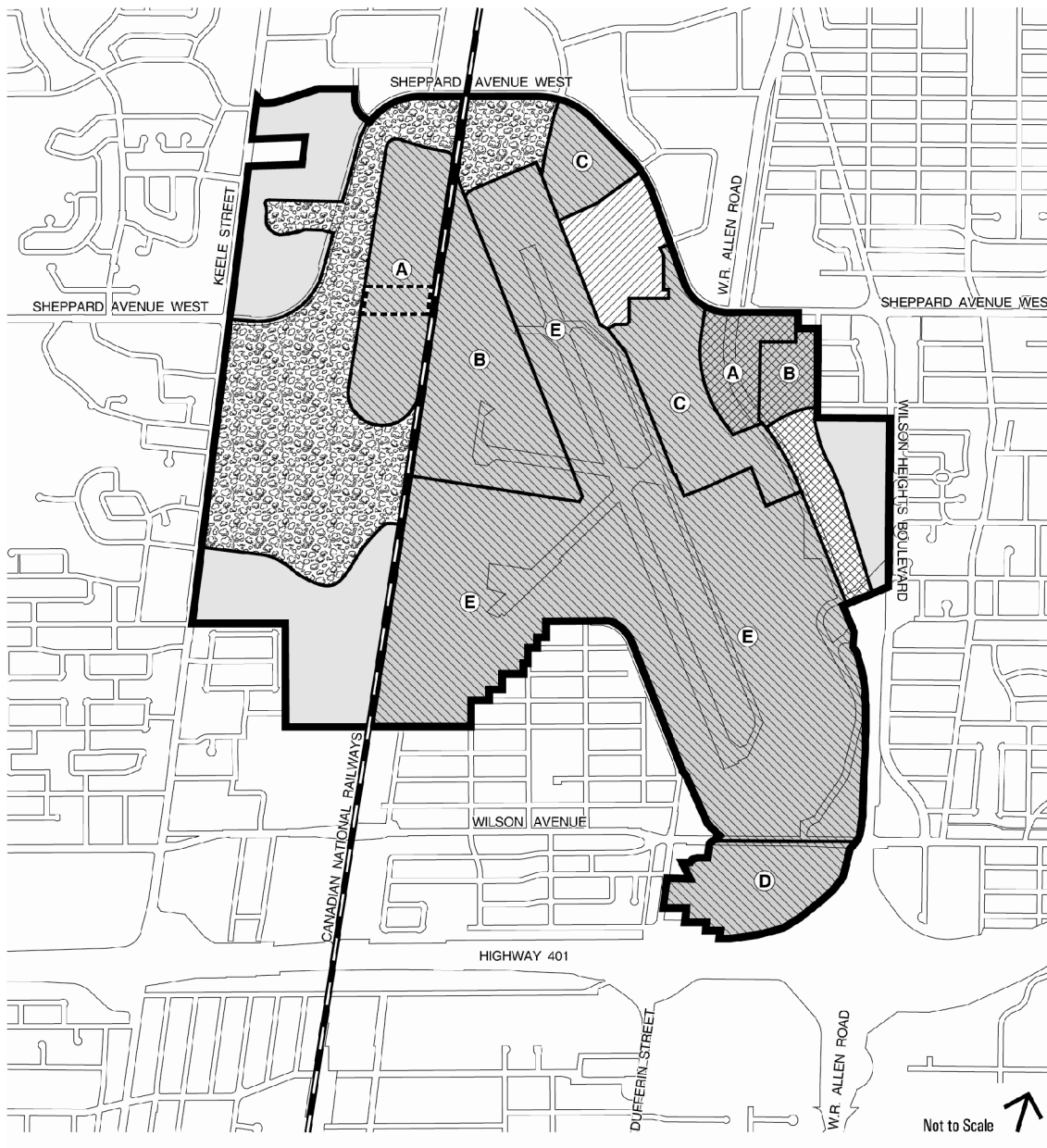
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SIGNATURE

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Attachment 1: Current Downsview Area Secondary Plan

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Downsview Area Secondary Plan

MAP 7-1 Land Use Areas

- Secondary Plan Boundary
- Neighbourhoods
- Apartment Neighbourhoods
- Mixed Use Areas
- Parks and Open Space Areas
- Institutional Areas
- Employment Areas
- See Policy 10.4.2(b)

June 2006