

## 555 Rexdale Boulevard (Phase II) – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications – Preliminary Report

<b>Date:</b>	April 1, 2009
<b>To:</b>	Etobicoke York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 2 – Etobicoke North
<b>Reference Number:</b>	08 232436 WET 02 OZ

### SUMMARY

This application was made on or after January 1, 2007 and is subject to the new provisions of the Planning Act and the City of Toronto Act, 2006.

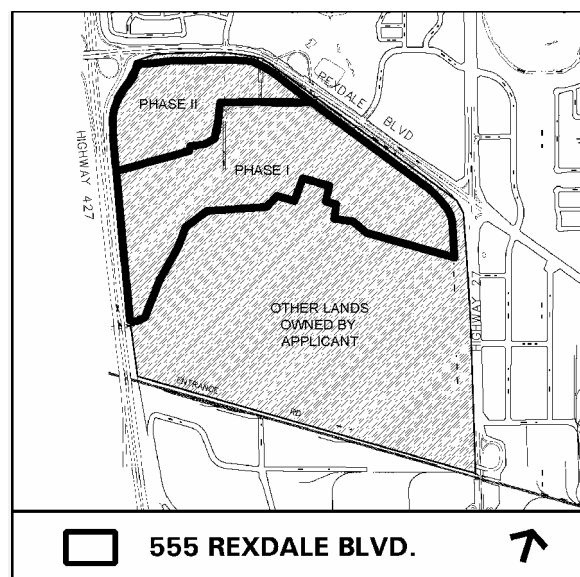
This application proposes an Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment to permit a Mixed Use development in the northwest quadrant of the Woodbine Racetrack lands (hereinafter referred to as Phase II).

This report provides preliminary information on the above-noted application and seeks Community Council's directions on further processing of the application and on the community consultation process.

It is recommended that a community meeting be scheduled by staff, in consultation with the Ward Councillor.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:



1. Staff be directed to schedule a community consultation meeting together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within a minimum of 120 metres of the site.
3. Notice for the public meeting under the Planning Act be given according to the regulations under the Planning Act.

## **Financial Impact**

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

The proposed residential and/or retail uses are not eligible for financial incentives. However, office uses and ancillary retail in office buildings, if developed, may be eligible for base grants as already provided through the Woodbine Community Improvement Plan as adopted by Council in October 2008.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

The former Ontario Jockey Club, now known as the Woodbine Entertainment Group, has operated a racetrack and associated stables on the site since 1956. The lands have become the hub of the thoroughbred industry in Canada and the home of the Queen's Plate, one of the "triple crown" of the thoroughbred racing circuit. The company is identified as a key economic driver in horse breeding and racing which is the second largest agricultural industry in the province of Ontario.

A portion of the original racetrack holdings was conveyed to Cadillac Fairview in 1983 for the Woodbine Shopping Centre, located on the north side of Rexdale Boulevard. A subsequent application for the development of a vacant portion of the racetrack lands for the purposes of retail, hotel, office and prestige industrial uses was submitted to the former City of Etobicoke in October of 1992. However, the proposal did not proceed for economic reasons.

In 1998, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing permitted the operation of slot machines on the lands through Zoning Order 688/98. The slot machines are managed by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, and have coexisted with the racetrack since March of 2000.

In 2005/2006 Woodbine Entertainment Group entered into a joint venture arrangement with the Cordish Company, for the development of an urban entertainment centre on the lands. The Cordish Company is a major developer of urban entertainment centres in the United States. The partnership, known as Woodbine Live! GP Inc., submitted

applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments and a Draft Plan of Subdivision, in mid 2006 and early 2007.

At its July 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 meeting, City Council approved Official Plan Amendment No. 30, Zoning By-law 864-2007 and the Draft Plan of Subdivision with respect to the Woodbine Live! development (herein identified as Phase I). The approvals built on the Site and Area Specific Policy No. 29 of the Official Plan while affirming and clarifying land use permissions on the Woodbine Racetrack to incorporate a live performance venue, retail uses in a pedestrian-friendly street layout, outdoor amenity areas, restaurants, bars, night clubs and a hotel.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/cc/decisions/2007-07-16-cc11-dd.pdf>

With the approval of the amendments, Council provided direction to staff to consider the provision of financial incentives for the development. In response to a submission by Woodbine Live!, City Staff investigated options and at its October 29<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008 meeting, City Council approved a Community Improvement Plan through the enactment of By-law 1159-2008 which provides for a “Tax Increment Equivalent Grant” for specific uses within the whole of the site including the Phase II lands.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cc/decisions/2008-10-29-cc25-dd.pdf>

In addition a development application for site plan control was filed by the applicant on August 7, 2008 and has recently completed its first circulation. The remainder of the studies and plans required as conditions of the aforementioned approvals are presently in circulation or awaiting revision.

## **Pre-Application Consultation**

Pre-application consultation meetings were held with the applicant during 2008 to discuss the nature of the materials necessary to fulfill the requirements of a complete application. In view of the materials filed in the initial applications which addressed overall policy considerations and infrastructure requirements, all of which have continued to be refined during the review process, direction has been provided to Woodbine Live! to address the Phase II application requirements. In addition, the applicant has been attending meetings with City staff having specific regard to plans and studies associated with the fulfillment of conditions for existing approvals and the completion of the Site Plan Control application.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

### **Proposal**

The Official Plan policies in respect of the Phase I and Phase II lands have been initially outlined in the 2007 approvals by City Council, and at that time, it was mutually agreed with the applicant to postpone consideration of zoning amendments for the Phase II lands, due to the magnitude of the applications and to the additional materials required to

support the zoning request for Phase II. This application proposes a further refined policy framework in the Official Plan as well as a Zoning By-law amendment for the Phase II residential and mixed use component. The Phase II lands are located generally north and west of the Phase I lands.

On December 31, 2008 the applicant submitted an application for a site specific amendment to the Toronto Official Plan and former City of Etobicoke Zoning Code.

The applicant is requesting an amendment to the Official Plan to further refine the recently approved framework for the formation of a mixed use community for residential, retail and employment uses including offices on the Phase II lands. The applicant's intention is to integrate the proposed community into the Phase I commercial/entertainment site and incorporate new urbanism principals such as the creation of a public street and block system that focus on the enhancement of the pedestrian experience.

The Zoning By-law amendment application as received in 2006 proposed the Phase II lands as residential and supporting uses. However, since that time, the applicant has undertaken further analysis of the potential of the property and is interested in pursuing the potential for additional non-residential uses that are presently permitted within the existing IC.2 (Class Two Industrial) zone. The applicant advises that the success of such non-residential development will be dependent in large part upon the success of the Phase I commercial/entertainment site and accordingly, the precise mix of residential and non-residential uses cannot be identified as of the time of application.

At the time of application, the applicant is requesting permission for a broad range of uses that will enable the owners to respond to market conditions as they evolve over time. At this time, the applicant has indicated that a total of up to 3,900 units or fewer dwellings of which 25% are estimated to be one bedroom dwellings and the remainder containing two or more bedrooms, depending on the extent of office and other non-residential uses. Coverage of 5.0 times the lot area is contemplated by the applicant, but is dependant on a number of factors, including: transportation capacity; airport height limitation; servicing infrastructure capacity; and potential transit expansions in the area.

The proposal is for the development of a mixed use community consisting of residential, community, office and other employment uses and ancillary uses on approximately 19.81 hectares (50 acres) of vacant land located north and west of the Woodbine Racetrack. The planning framework for Phase I outlined a process for the securing of municipal infrastructure to service both the Phase I and Phase II lands and includes urban design guidelines which provide guiding principles for both phases. This application builds on the Phase I approvals and outlines a refined planning framework for the development of the proposed mixed use community.

The application materials demonstrate a street and block pattern to illustrate the manner in which future development could be deployed on the lands. The applicant has indicated that the ultimate layout will be determined in response to market conditions, which will

evolve following the construction and occupancy of the Phase I retail and entertainment development. The Phase I development is in the implementation phase at this time, and the applicant is requesting that the land use approvals be considered for Phase II at this time as it is critical to their business plan to support the Phase I project and to provide the opportunities for new development as soon as market conditions warrant.

## **Site and Surrounding Area**

The Phase II development is proposed to the north and west of the Woodbine Racetrack and consists of an undeveloped 19.81 hectare portion of the existing 266 hectare site.

The lands surrounding the Phase II proposal include:

North:	Low and high-density residential development
Northeast:	The Woodbine Shopping Centre
Southeast:	The planned Woodbine Live! development The existing Woodbine Racetrack, gaming facilities and the balance of the lands owned by the Woodbine Entertainment Group with the CNR right-of-way with industrial uses beyond
East:	Surface parking lots and Highway 27 with a range of commercial with industrial uses beyond
West:	Highway 427 and the City of Mississauga beyond

With the exception of the residential properties to the north, the context is characterized by the large scale buildings and the expansive parking lots of the existing Woodbine Racetrack.

The property is located approximately four kilometres from Lester B. Pearson International Airport and connected via the regional road network to Highway 407 to the north, Highway 401 to the south, Highway 427 to the west and Highway 27 to the east. Transit is available via a number of surface bus routes with an opportunity for a future GO station and potential light rapid transit service. Existing access is provided from Highway 27 and Highway 427 via Rexdale Boulevard and an existing private roadway from the south and west of the site. However, future access is to be expanded through Phase I approvals for the extension of Humberwood Boulevard as well as two new public roads servicing the existing access driveways from Rexdale Boulevard to accommodate access to lands containing residential uses.

## **Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. The key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and, protecting public health and safety. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including: directions for where and how to grow; the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Staff will review the proposed development for consistency with the PPS and for conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

## **Official Plan**

The lands are identified in the Toronto Official Plan as an Employment District on Map 2 Urban Structure, and designated as an Employment Area on Map 13 Land Use Plan. The site is also subject to Special Site and Area Specific Policies Nos.29 and 296.

Employment Districts permit a broad array of economic activities. Employment Districts offer locations for a variety of employment opportunities including key clusters and activities that benefit from strategic locations. In order to promote expansion of employment activities in Employment Districts, incompatible uses are discouraged.

The Employment Area policies provide for a range of uses including offices, manufacturing, warehousing, hotels, research and development facilities, media facilities, parks, retail outlets ancillary to the permitted uses, restaurants, and small scale stores and services that serve area businesses and workers. Recreation and entertainment facilities are permitted on major streets. In addition, large scale stand alone power centres are permitted on major streets provided they are on the boundary of the Employment Area designation.

Special Site and Area Specific Policy No. 29 addresses the land use requirements in relation to the Lester B. Pearson International Airport and also imbeds the original permissions for the horse racetrack, including housing, dormitories and other sensitive land uses associated with the race track operations. In addition, the policy provides that "new residential and other sensitive land uses may be permitted on the Woodbine Racetrack lands provided at the time of rezoning no new residential uses are located within the Transport Canada approved 30 NEF/NEP Composite Noise Contour. The northwest portion of the property is located outside of the 30 NEF/NEP Composite Noise Contour, in an area where residential uses may be considered.

Amendment 30 to Toronto's Official Plan amended the site and specific policies of Chapter 7 providing for Special Site and Area Specific Policy No. 296 which set out an overall planning framework for the site, the proximate location of future public streets, and the general location of stand alone retail and Commercial/Entertainment on Parcels A and B respectively (Attachment 3). The Special Site and Area Specific Policy also served to reinforce the policies of Special Site and Area Specific Policy No. 29 by requiring that residential and other sensitive land uses were only permitted within the

Parcel C. The Boundaries of which, coordinate with the 30 NEF/NEP Composite Noise Contour reflected in Special Site and Area Specific Policy No. 29. Additionally, Special Site and Area Specific Policy No. 296 specified that a planning framework consistent with Section 3.3, “Building New Neighbourhoods”, including strategies for the provision of parkland, affordable housing, community services, and local institutions among other matters must be prepared prior to the enactment of any implementing zoning by-law for the parcel.

## **Zoning**

The site is zoned Class Two Industrial (I.C2) within the former City of Etobicoke Zoning Code and permits restaurants, administrative offices, banquet halls, entertainment facilities, cinemas, bowling alleys, amusement arcades, hotels and retail sales of products manufactured or stored on site not exceeding 25% of the gross floor area or a maximum of 700 square metres.

The permissions were modified by By-law 8777 as approved by the Municipal Council of the Former Township of Etobicoke on September 8, 1953 which permitted the use of the lands for the purposes of a race track and By-law 8798 later that year served to verify the extent of the property. Additionally, a Minister’s Zoning Order filed as Ontario Regulation 688/98, permits slot machines at the existing Woodbine Racetrack. Furthermore By-law 864-2007 in respect of the Phase I lands, added retail, business and professional offices as well as site specific development standards in respect to parking supply, gross floor area and setbacks for the development of the lands as a mixed use entertainment and retail centre.

A further amendment to the former City of Etobicoke Zoning Code is required to accommodate the residential and business and professional office uses and accessory uses, requested by the applicant and to implement the appropriate development standards and flexibility to respond to market influences. The proposed amendment should implement the Official Plan amendment accompanying this application.

## **Site Plan Control**

The property is subject to Site Plan Control. A Site Plan application will be filed in the future when the details of the project are resolved following the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment submissions.

## **Toronto Green Standard**

Staff will be encouraging the applicant to review sustainable development opportunities by utilizing the Toronto Green Standard, adopted by City Council in July 2006.

## **Airport Operations**

The applications and an accompanying Noise Report have also been circulated to the Greater Toronto Airport Authority for review with respect to aircraft noise issues and conformity with airport height restrictions.

## **Tree Preservation**

The applications and an accompanying Arborist Report have also been circulated to Urban Forestry for review with respect to tree preservation and replacement.

## **Community Facilities and Housing**

The applications and an accompanying Community Facilities and Housing Report have also been circulated for review with respect to community facilities and housing issues.

## **Reasons for the Application**

The lands permit residential development through Special Site and Area Specific Policies Nos. 29 and 296. However, as the precise mix of residential and non-residential uses cannot be finally determined, an Official Plan amendment application is sought to provide an overall development framework taking into consideration the context of airport height limitations, transportation and servicing capacity.

Similarly, as the precise mix of residential and non-residential uses cannot be identified, a Zoning By-law amendment is requested to provide the flexibility sought by the applicant to respond to market conditions as they evolve over time.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Application Submission**

A Noise Report and Arborist Report were provided with the application in addition to a series of plans and reports that have been provided to satisfy requirements associated with Phase I of the proposal. These overlapping plans and studies have been, or are presently in the process of being reviewed by the pertinent departments and agencies and include, but are not limited to, functional servicing, urban design guidelines, environmental assessment, transportation, archaeological assessment, geotechnical investigation, storm water management and phasing of development.

A Notification of Complete Application was issued on January 29, 2009.



## Issues to be Resolved

This is a significant development proposal which represents an opportunity to implement many of the Official Plan's objectives and policies with respect to city building. A development of this scale brings revitalization and reinvestment in the social, economic and environmental infrastructure. However, the new neighbourhood will require a comprehensive planning framework to support new development and connect it with the surrounding fabric of the City. Furthermore, the proposed mixed use neighbourhood must function as community, not just housing and be consistent with Section 3.3 of the Official Plan as identified in Amendment 30 having specific regard for the provision of parkland, affordable housing, community services, and local institutions among other matters.

Specially, Official Plan Section 3.3, "Building New Neighbourhoods" reflects the issues to be addressed as the review is undertaken and the proposal evolves:

1. *New neighbourhoods will have a comprehensive planning framework reflecting the Plan's city-wide goals as well as the local context. The framework should include:*
  - a) *the pattern of streets, development blocks, open spaces and other infrastructure;*
  - b) *the mix and location of land uses;*
  - c) *a strategy to provide parkland and to protect, enhance or restore natural heritage;*
  - d) *a strategy to provide community services and local institutions; and*
  - e) *a strategy to provide affordable housing.*
2. *New neighbourhoods will be viable as communities. They should have:*
  - a) *a community focal point within easy walking distance of the neighbourhood's residents and workers;*
  - b) *a fine grain of interconnected streets and pedestrian routes that define development blocks;*
  - c) *a mix of uses and a range of building types;*
  - d) *high quality parks, community recreation centres, open space and public buildings; and*
  - e) *services and facilities that meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors.*
3. *New neighbourhoods will be carefully integrated into the surrounding fabric of the City. They will have:*
  - a) *good access to transit and good connections to the surrounding streets and open spaces;*
  - b) *uses and building scales that are compatible with surrounding development;*
  - c) *community services and parks that fit within the wider system; and*
  - d) *a housing mix that contributes to the full range of housing.*

In addition to the issues noted above, staff will assess the compliance of the proposal with the Official Plan policies including, but not limited to, issues regarding the large site

policies, the enhancement of surrounding neighbourhoods, Public Realm, Built Form, Public Art, Heritage Resources, Housing, Community Services and Facilities, Parks and Open Space including alternative rate provisions, the Natural Environment, Economic Health and Height and Density Incentives (Section 37 of the Planning Act).

Additional issues may be identified through the review of the application, agency comments and the community consultation process.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

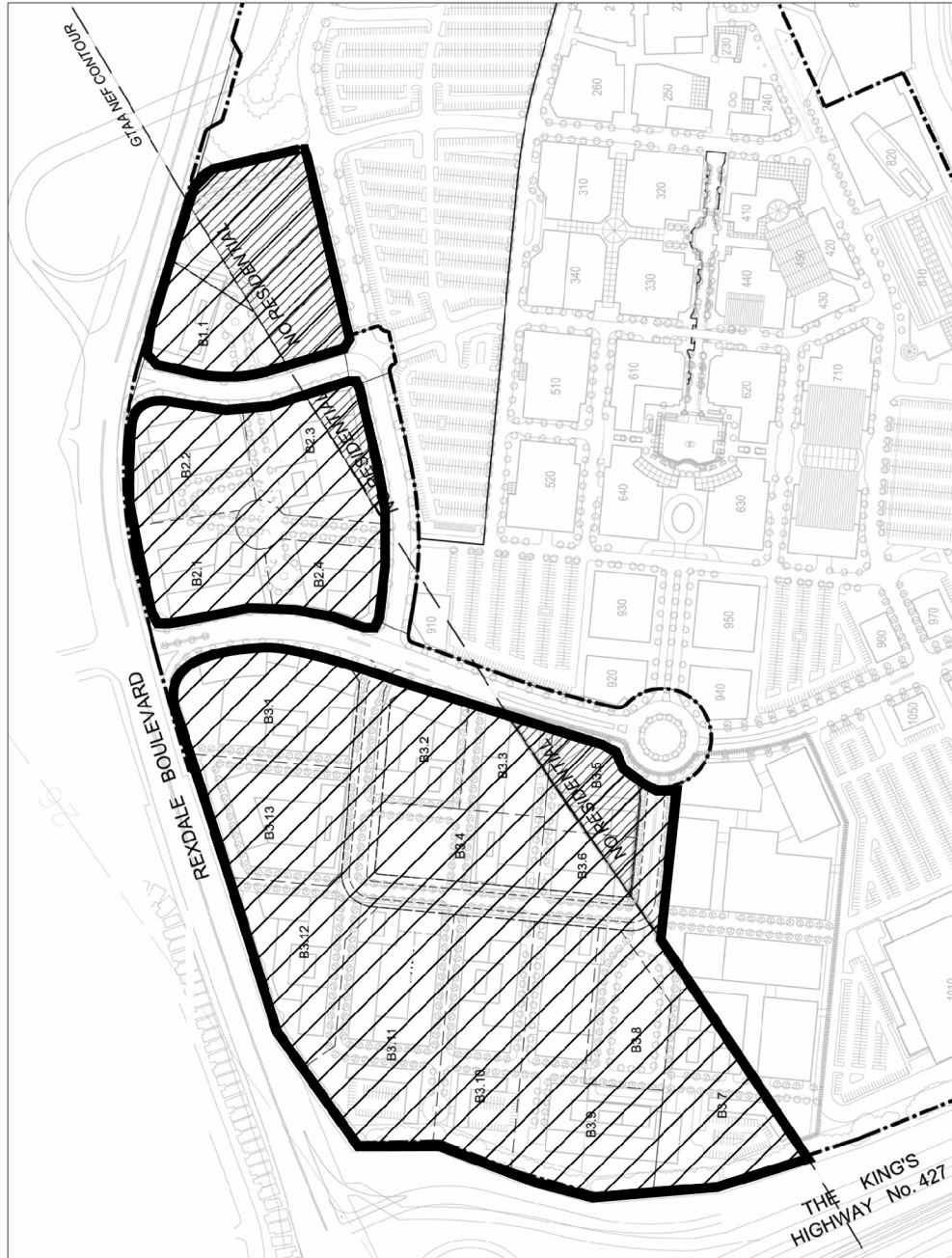
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Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP  
Director, Community Planning  
Etobicoke York District

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Concept Plan  
Attachment 2: Zoning  
Attachment 3: Official Plan  
Attachment 4: Application Data Sheet

# Attachment 1: Concept Plan



555 Rexdale Boulevard

Phase 2

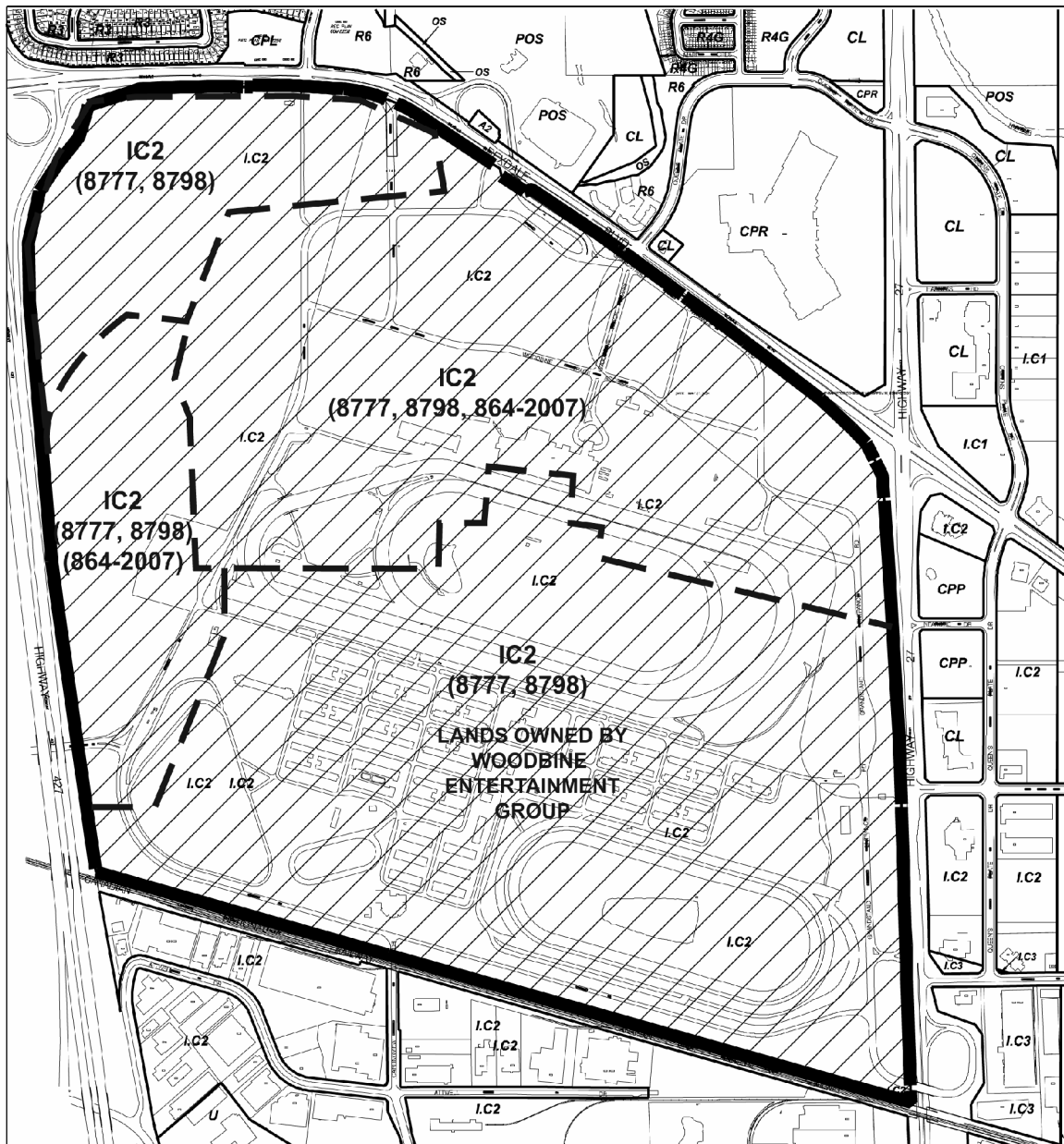
Concept Plan

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale  
03/31/09

File # 08\_232436

## Attachment 2: Zoning



**Toronto** City Planning  
Zoning

555 Rexdale Boulevard

File # 08\_232436

Former Etobicoke

R3 Residential Third Density

R6 Residential Sixth Density

R4G Residential Fourth Density Group

CL Commercial Limited

IC2 Industrial Class 2

IC3 Industrial Class 3

OS Public Open Space

POS Private Open Space

CPL Commercial Planned Local

CPR Commercial Planned Regional

CPP Commercial Planned Referred

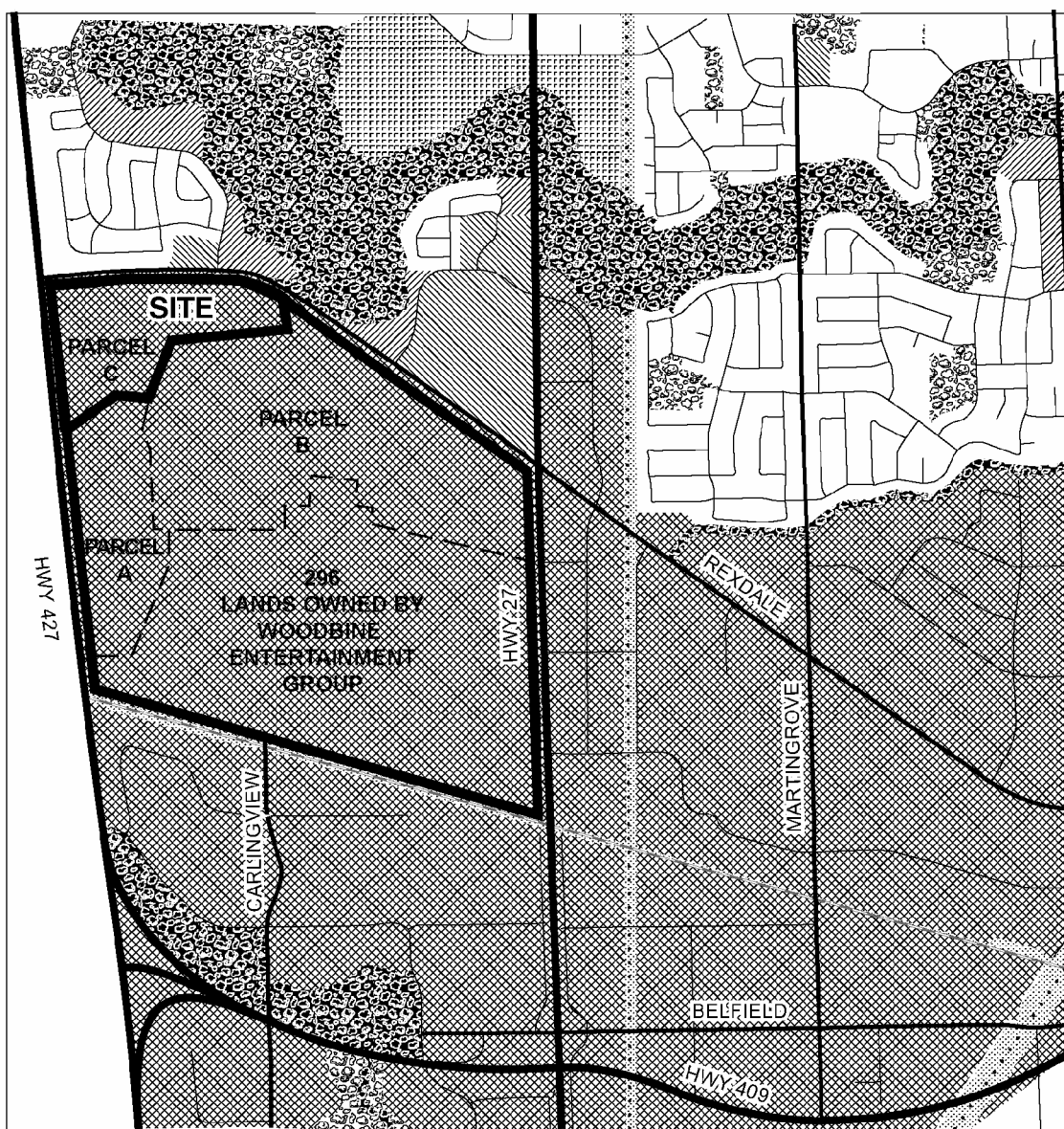
U Utilities

(H) Holding District



Not to Scale  
Zoning By-law 11,737 as amended  
Extracted 09/03/31- MH

### Attachment 3: Official Plan Designation



**Toronto** City Planning  
Division  
Official Plan

555 Rexdale Boulevard

File # 08\_232436

Site	Mixed Use	Institutional
Neighbourhood	Natural Areas	Employment Area
Apartment Neighbourhood	Parks	Utility Corridor

Not to Scale  
04/01/09

## Attachment 4: Application Data Sheet

### APPLICATION DATA SHEET

Application Type	Official Plan Amendment & Rezoning	Application Number:	08 232436 WET 02 OZ
Details	OPA & Rezoning, Standard	Application Date:	December 31, 2008
Municipal Address:	555 REXDALE BOULEVARD		
Location Description:	CON 3 & 4 FTH PT LTS 27-31 **GRID W0201		
Project Description:	To permit a Mixed Use development in the northwest quadrant of the Woodbine Live! site (Phase II).		

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Agent:</b>	<b>Architect:</b>	<b>Owner:</b>
DIAMONDCORP	DIAMONDCORP	Young + Wright / IBI Group	WOODBINE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

### PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	Employment Areas	Site Specific Provision:	29 and 296
Zoning:	IC.2 By-laws 8777, 8798 and 864-2007 and Minister's Zoning Order Ontario Reg. 688/98	Historical Status:	n/a
Height Limit (m):	n/a	Site Plan Control Area:	Yes

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq. m):	198100	Height:	Storeys:	0
Frontage (m):	0		Metres:	0
Depth (m):	0			
Total Ground Floor Area (sq. m):	0			<b>Total</b>
Total Residential GFA (sq. m):	46450		Parking Spaces:	0
Total Non-Residential GFA (sq. m):	46450		Loading Docks	0
Total GFA (sq. m):	92900			
Lot Coverage Ratio (%):	0			
Floor Space Index:	0			

### DWELLING UNITS

### FLOOR AREA BREAKDOWN (upon project completion)

		Above Grade	Below Grade
Tenure Type:			
Rooms:	0	Residential GFA (sq. m):	46450
Bachelor:	0	Retail GFA (sq. m):	0
1 Bedroom:	0	Office GFA (sq. m):	46450
2 Bedroom:	0	Industrial GFA (sq. m):	0
3 + Bedroom:	0	Institutional/Other GFA (sq. m):	0
Total Units:	0		

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