



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Downsview Area Secondary Plan - Road Infrastructure Front-End Funding of Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study and Development Charge Credits

Date:	October 9, 2012
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Acting General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards:	Ward 8 – York West; Ward 9 – York Centre; Ward 10 – York Centre
Reference Number:	P:\2012\ClusterB\TRA\TIM\ex12024tim

SUMMARY

The major landowners of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan lands are Build Toronto, Bombardier Aerospace and Parc Downsview Park Inc. Collectively, they are offering to advance funds to the City to undertake a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment and related studies for various new public roads on these lands, specifically the Transit Road Extension and the National Urban Park Ring Road, on the condition that the City agrees to provide a credit against the development charges that they would be required to pay upon development of their lands in the future. This report seeks Council approval for such DC credits.

City staff recognize the important roles that this road infrastructure, as shown in Attachment 1 appended to this report, would have in both the local and surrounding areas with regards to improving the connectivity to other major streets; providing an alternative to the Allen Road-Sheppard Avenue corridors; and unlocking development potential within the Downsview Area Secondary Plan lands and its surrounding neighbourhoods. None of these benefits will be realized until the specific roads are in place. As owners/developers, Build Toronto, Bombardier Aerospace and Parc Downsview Park Inc. need to have the transportation infrastructure in place in order to service their lands. The City does not have the financial resources to undertake such studies in the near term, so the property owners wish to expedite the process by advancing the funds to do so. The studies would be undertaken and managed by City staff, using consultant assistance per the City's normal procurement process. A preliminary estimate of the cost of the studies is \$550,000.

If the front-end funding offer of the major landowners is not accepted at this time, the City would carry out the studies at some future date using funds drawn from the Transportation Services' Engineering Studies budget. This work would absorb more than half the annual Engineering Studies budget and would need to compete for priority among all other city-wide Environmental Assessment and functional planning studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting General Manager, Transportation Services, recommends that:

1. City Council approve a development charge credit for the front-end funding of the Environmental Assessment Study for the Transit Road Extension and the National Urban Park Ring Road, as shown in Attachment 1, to be provided by Parc Downsview Park Inc., Bombardier Aerospace and Build Toronto.
2. City Council establish the development charge credit as the lesser of the front-end funding provided for the Environmental Assessment Study for the Transit Road Extension and National Urban Park Ring Road, as approved by the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services, and the amount of the roads component of development charges payable for the development of lands within the Downsview Area Secondary Plan owned by Parc Downsview Park Inc., Bombardier Aerospace and Build Toronto in accordance with the City's Development Charges By-law.
3. City Council authorize the execution of a development charge credit agreement between the City and Parc Downsview Park Inc., Bombardier Aerospace and Build Toronto to give effect to the foregoing, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

Financial Impact

If the recommendations in this report are adopted, Council will have approved development charge credits for the front-end funding of the Environmental Assessment Study for Transit Road Extension and the National Urban Park Ring Road to be provided by Parc Downsview Park Inc., Bombardier Aerospace and Build Toronto. In accordance with City policy in this regard, the development charge credit will be the lesser of the front-end funding provided and the roads component of development charges payable for the development of lands within the Downsview Area Secondary Plan owned by Parc Downsview Park Inc., Bombardier Aerospace and Build Toronto in accordance with the City's Development Charges By-law. A preliminary estimate of the cost of the studies is a required cashflow of \$550,000 in 2013 (fully funded by third party funding) and this will be considered during the 2013 Transportation Capital Budget process.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Downsview Area Secondary Plan was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on August 17, 2011. The Plan provides for the development of the National Urban Park and a balanced mix of land uses and development levels that will support the transformation of the area over time to one of new residential and employment communities well served by public transit and appropriate for the surrounding context. It provides a comprehensive planning framework to direct the building of new neighbourhoods with complete communities that include streets and open spaces that have good connections to the surrounding streets and open spaces, are supported by infrastructure and community services, provide for uses and building scales that are compatible with surrounding development and include a full range of housing in terms of scale, tenure and affordability. It provides for a modest increase in overall future population from the previous 1999 Secondary Plan – from 38,000 to 42,000.

The Secondary Plan is structured into seven Districts based on intended use and character. The Secondary Plan requires the preparation of District Plans prior to development proceeding within the Districts to set out development principles and guidelines at a level of detail not possible within the Secondary Plan. District Plan requirements include block and structure plans, context plans showing how public roads and parks and open space areas will be integrated with surrounding lands, and details on building location and massing, and development phasing.

COMMENTS

Transportation Master Plan

A Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was approved as part of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan Review. The TMP update was undertaken to assess and identify, at a strategic level, the transportation infrastructure requirements that are necessary to support the growth and development within the Downsview Area Secondary Plan.

The TMP was conducted in accordance with the master planning process following the requirements of Phases 1 and 2 of the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) document (October 2000, as amended in 2007), which is an approved process under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.

The Downsview Area Secondary Plan Review - Transportation Master Plan Report can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/downsview_phase4_TMP_rep_jan10.pdf

The TMP provides for a multi-modal transportation system to 2031 and includes plans, policies and strategies for a comprehensive transit network, pedestrian/cycling infrastructure, and road network. The planned extension of the Spadina Subway provides the catalyst for significant improvements in transit use in the Secondary Plan area and provides a significant benefit in terms of managing the growth in background auto traffic on the Study Area road network.

As a result of the network connectivity constraints in the area, there is not a well defined grid network of local roads to accommodate new development and disperse new auto traffic generated by development. This tends to result in very high turning volumes at many of the key intersections in the study area.

Without the introduction of new road connections through the Downsview Plan Area, the major boundary arterial road network, which is already operating at or near capacity during peak periods, will experience additional capacity issues. The lack of local grid network also presents challenges in terms of serving new development areas with surface transit.

While the TMP addresses the need and justification at a broad level, more detailed studies for those projects identified as Schedule C projects included in the TMP will require to be completed at a later date following the Municipal Class EA process.

The capital cost for the road network infrastructure in the approved Secondary Plan is estimated at \$100 Million (in 2009 dollars). Based on the study findings and input from agencies and the public, the major infrastructure improvements in the TMP are listed below and further illustrated in Attachment 1, appended to this report:

- A north-south Transit Road Extension from Allen Road through the Chesswood district to Sheppard Avenue West, combined with the east-west connection to Keele Street, will provide direct access to the majority of the high density development areas in the Secondary Plan, and would direct traffic away from the heavily used Keele Street, Allen Road and Sheppard Avenue West corridors;
- An east-west road from the Chesswood district to Keele Street will provide connectivity to the north-south Transit Road Extension and eventually to Allen Road. It is necessary to provide additional capacity to carry the development traffic to and from the Keele Street and Allen Road corridors, supplementing Sheppard Avenue West which is already operating close to capacity. The roadway crosses the Metrolinx Barrie rail-line via a grade separation that will be required to provide sufficient capacity and ensure uninterrupted traffic flow;
- A new north-south link, through the Build Toronto Lands that runs parallel to Allen Road, will provide direct access to the various development areas within these lands. The parallel road will provide access to a series of roadway crossings designed to replace the need for the direct ramps between Allen Road and the Transit Road Extension; and
- The east-west perimeter road at the south end of the Plan will provide access to the Sports/Cultural Commons Centre and would define the southern limit of the National Urban Park district. This road would be expected to carry modest traffic volumes but will nevertheless play an important role in providing additional east-west connectivity through the Secondary Plan Area to relieve both Keele Street and Sheppard Avenue West. In addition, the proposed alignment provides the opportunity to provide enhanced transit access to the National Urban Park, and provides pedestrian and cycling access across the Metrolinx Barrie rail-line. As such, this connection should ultimately include a grade separation at the Metrolinx line crossing.

Front-End Funding of EA Study

Transportation Services' staff received a joint letter, dated June 1, 2012, by Parc Downsview Park Inc., Build Toronto and Bombardier Aerospace which outlined their willingness to provide front-end funding for the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study for Transit Road Extension and the National Urban Park Ring Road. However, this offer is conditional on the City agreeing to provide credits against development charges payable upon development of their lands in the future.

Staff from the Transportation Services and City Planning Divisions recognize the important role that these roads would play at the local level and surrounding area with regards to improving the connectivity to other major streets; providing an alternative to the Allen Road-Sheppard Avenue corridors; and unlocking development potential within the Downsview Area Secondary Plan lands and its surrounding neighbourhoods. None of these benefits will be realized until these roads are in place.

The necessary City staff resources are available to manage the EA study, retain the necessary consulting expertise, and ensure that the process is facilitated in a timely manner and that the study is undertaken in an objective, transparent, and comprehensive manner. A preliminary cost estimate of the EA and related studies is \$550,000. However, the Transportation Services Division does not have the financial resources within its current Capital Budget to undertake the study in the near term. The studies would require cashflow of \$550,000 in 2013 (fully funded by third party funding) and would be considered during the 2013 Transportation Capital Budget process should City Council approve a development charge credit.

As owners/developers of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan lands, Build Toronto, Bombardier Aerospace and Parc Downsview Park Inc. are willing to expedite the study by front-ending the necessary funds. It is therefore recommended that City Council approve a development charge credit for the front-end funding of the Environmental Assessment Study for Transit Road Extension and the National Urban Park Ring Road to be provided by Parc Downsview Park Inc., Bombardier Aerospace and Build Toronto.

It should be noted that there will be no conditions attached to the funding that would skew or affect the study process or conclusion in any way. The City will undertake the EA study in a conventional manner and with the involvement of all the necessary and appropriate internal staff, external stakeholders, agencies, and the public. The technical concerns and objectives of the respective landowners will be addressed through the EA process. Furthermore, Transportation Services has informed the landowners that in accordance with development approvals they will be required to build the roads and pay all capital costs associated with any new infrastructure.

Next Steps

Should City Council authorize a development charge credit for the front-end funding of the EA Study for Transit Road Extension and the National Urban Park Ring Road, a DC credit agreement, to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor, will have to be entered into between the City and the major landowners.

CONTACT

Stephen Schijns, P.Eng.
Manager, Infrastructure Planning
Tel: (416) 392-8340
Fax: (416) 392-4808
E-mail: schijns@toronto.ca

Robert Hatton, Director,
Strategic Initiatives &
Intergovernmental Finance
Tel: (416) 392-9149
Fax: (416) 397-4555
Email: rhatton@toronto.ca

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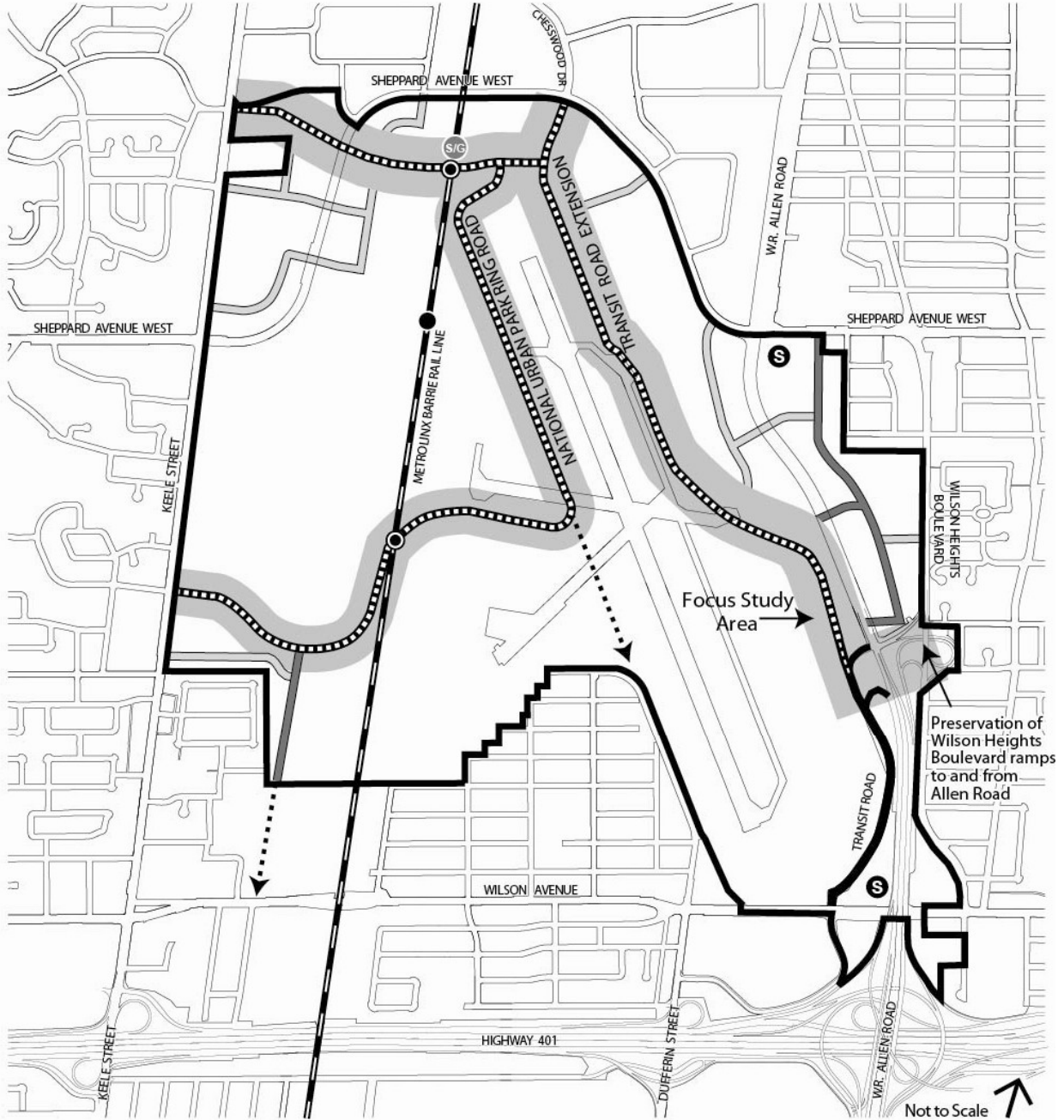
John Mende, P.Eng.
Acting General Manager, Transportation Services

GP/NC/cs

ATTACHMENT

1. Environmental Assessment Street Network Focus Study Area

Attachment 1 – Environmental Assessment Street Network Focus Study Area



Downsview Area Secondary Plan

Environmental Assessment Street Network Focus Study Area

- Secondary Plan Boundary
- Major Streets
- Minor Streets
- Potential Future Streets
- Grade Separated Structures
- At Grade Rail Crossings
- S Existing Subway Station
- S/G Proposed Subway & GO Station
- EA Study Infrastructure

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