

Appendix D – Planning Considerations

Current Planning Framework

Land use decisions made under the *Planning Act* are required to conform to the City's Official Plan, the long-term vision for how the city should grow. The City's Official Plan sets out an urban structure, including identifying areas of growth. It identifies the importance of providing a diversity of land uses across the City and then utilizes land use designations to provide more specific direction to the appropriateness of certain types of uses in certain areas. The Plan does not specifically identify gaming or casinos as a land use, but also does not restrict them.

Woodbine is designated as an *Employment Area*. A Site and Area Specific Official Plan policy, approved in 2007, applies to these lands, and provides a comprehensive vision to permit 330,000 m² of entertainment, commercial and residential uses on 266 hectares of land to create a new regional entertainment destination and residential district. The expansion of gaming at Woodbine would be provided for by the Official Plan.

The Woodbine lands are subject to Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) 29 which "provides for new residential and other sensitive land uses provided at the time of rezoning no new residential uses are located within the Transport Canada approved 30 NEF/NEP Composite Noise Contour". SASP 29 also recognizes the existing uses on the site by permitting the horse racetrack including housing, dormitories and other noise sensitive land uses and the keeping of horses, required only for the operation of horse racing, and for any related, associated or accessory uses, facilities and services.

The Woodbine lands are also subject to SASP 296 that provides the planning framework for "development of the lands that will sustain and build on the existing horse racetrack and associated entertainment uses to create a prominent, active, pedestrian friendly commercial retail and entertainment centre and residential neighbourhood; for residents, workers and visitors in the Greater Toronto Area".

The land is currently zoned Class Two Industrial (IC.2) within the former City of Etobicoke Zoning Code. The IC.2 zone permits a wide range of industrial uses as well as restaurants, offices, banquet halls and entertainment facilities as accessory uses. Furthermore, in 2007, as part of the Woodbine Live! concept for the lands By-law 864-2007, comprising the Phase 1 lands, was adopted by Council and 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.

Slot machines were introduced to the site in 2000. As the former City of Etobicoke Zoning Code and the City of Toronto Zoning By-law did not include gaming or casinos as a permitted use, a Minister's Zoning Order, filed as Ontario Regulation 688/98, was placed on the property to permit slot machines at the existing Woodbine Racetrack. The permission for slots at Woodbine was part of the Provincial Slots at Racetracks program to support the horse racing industry.

Should gaming beyond that stated in the Minister's Zoning Order be desired at Woodbine and/or should a gaming facility be proposed, an amendment to the site specific Zoning By-law would be required to permit additional slots, electronic games and new live dealer tables on the site. It is recommended that a Zoning By-law Amendment application be required to address not only the gaming use but also the development of the site in a comprehensive manner.

The site is subject to site plan control. While a Master Site Plan Concept was approved in July 2011, detailed site plan applications for each phase or blocks within a phase will be required prior to any redevelopment on the site.

Woodbine Live!

The City approved a development concept planned by Woodbine Entertainment Group and Cordish Group for 112 hectares of the site's 266 hectares in 2007. The concept known as Woodbine Live! consisted of 330,000 m² of mixed-use development for a "destination retail/entertainment" project that would build upon and supplement the horse racing operation and included a hotel, restaurants, theatres, a live performance venue, office uses and associated amenities. Phase 1 of the proposal would create a regional entertainment tourist destination that expands on the existing racetrack and gaming facility. Phase 2 would see the development of approximately 2,500 residential units and supporting commercial uses.

The 2007 approvals for Woodbine Live! included an Official Plan Amendment (SASP 296), rezoning and draft plan of subdivision for a development proposal of 330,000 m² of mixed use development for a destination entertainment retail project that builds on and supplements the existing racetrack operations and includes a residential component. The project was proposed to be built in Phases. The draft plan of subdivision was required to subdivide the large parcels into smaller blocks that could be built on and provide public roads and infrastructure.

As part of the draft plan of subdivision, Draft Urban Design Guidelines were prepared to guide the development of the site and ensure a high quality of development. The Guidelines provide direction for: public open space system; pedestrian connections; the role and design of streets; bicycle access; transit; views and view corridors, including gateways; and built form, including new development and signage.

In 2008, City Council approved the Woodbine Live! project as a Transformative Project with a number of conditions. Transformative Projects are only a select few very large and unique projects that would allow the City to achieve multiple goals that have the desired effect of transforming an area's potential. The City approved a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for Woodbine that includes financial incentives (Tax Increment Equivalent Grants, aka. TIEGs), local hiring and training programs, provision of an employment centre, priority hiring, apprenticeship programs and public access to amenities including the live venue.

The approved development concept was a key component of WEG's financial strategy to maintain the economic viability and competitive position of its existing operation by diversifying its revenue base and allowing the expansion of racing and breeding operations. WEG expected additional people would visit the racetrack, resulting in increased revenue which would

ultimately help sustain racing at the site and the horse racing industry which depends on it. At the time of the approval of the development concept, it was projected that the project would provide an estimated 9,400 jobs and generate indirect employment opportunities in the surrounding area. Unfortunately, the partnership between WEG and the Cordish Group dissolved and Woodbine Live! was not realized.

General Development Considerations

The Woodbine lands are physically separated from their surroundings, both in the immediate and broader context. Within its immediate context, wide and busy roads create physical barriers that prevent the lands from being integrated – Rexdale Boulevard presents a physical barrier between the residential neighbourhoods to the north, while Highway 427, Highway 27 and the rail corridor present barriers to the west, east and south. While the major street network surrounding the site presents physical barriers, these same streets provide the site with good accessibility from the broader City and GTA and provide the site with good visibility, important considerations for an expanded gaming facility. In the broader context, while Woodbine is near Pearson International Airport, it is distant from Toronto's downtown area, a tourist destination. This physical location presents both opportunities and challenges. Its location and underutilization may allow for a more intensive use of the site.

Generally, the Woodbine lands are comprised of large structures related to racetrack operations, surface parking lots and large expanses of open space. Currently, there are large areas of vacant and underutilized lands that lack a fine-grain urban fabric. The approved Woodbine Live! concept and development framework address these problems. Expanded gaming and non-gaming related facilities could be accommodated on the site consistent with this development framework. An advantage to locating expanded gaming as part of an integrated entertainment complex at Woodbine, would be the development of the underutilized site and integration of the site into the larger context. This could potentially spur additional development, both on site and in the surrounding area.

Due to the distinct boundaries and singular ownership of Woodbine, it is appropriate to examine the area in its entirety. However, the concept approved by Council in 2007 considers development of the integrated entertainment retail complex on only a portion of the lands, focused around the existing grandstand. Lands south of the grandstand and racetrack were not considered as part of the development concept area. There is ample space to accommodate expanded gaming within the approved development concept area.

The Woodbine Live! development framework anticipated the project would be developed in phases. Phase 1 focused on the retail entertainment complex with approximately 115,000 m² of development. While it is anticipated that new public roads and infrastructure will be required to accommodate full build out, some development could occur with the existing infrastructure.

Preliminary Transit Strategy

Woodbine is not located near higher order transit and is instead serviced by buses operating in mixed traffic on the area road network. Bus service is provided by Toronto Transit Commission

with connections to the Bloor-Danforth Subway line. GO Transit, Mississauga Transit and York Region Transit/VIVA also provide bus service to the area. Only TTC currently enters the site with a stop located in front of the main grandstand.

At present, public transit accounts for approximately 7% of all trips to Woodbine. This is considered very low and is due in part to the availability of free surface parking and its suburban location.

Improvements to public transit will be a key component to planning for intensification on the site to provide alternatives to the automobile. The nature and extent of transit improvements will be directly related to any proposed development and may include the following:

- Improved bus service – with the introduction of new public roads, transit operators currently providing service on the perimeter roads could bring passengers directly to the front doors of new entertainment venues.

Improvements to bus service (route adjustments, increased frequency, express bus service, etc.) is considered to be possible in the short term, based on ridership, as development comes on stream with minimal impact on transit operator priorities.

- Higher order transit - Metrolinx is currently making a significant investment within the Kitchener GO Rail corridor to upgrade rail service to all day two-way operations. In addition, the Union Pearson Express (UPX) was launched in June 2015.

The City's Official Plan identifies a future GO Station near Highway 27 and the rail corridor. With the UPX, the potential for a combined stop to service Woodbine and the surrounding area is a more viable option. Initial, high level, discussions have occurred with Metrolinx over the years as redevelopment opportunities on the Woodbine lands have been reviewed. A GO/UPX stop is not a requirement for expanded gaming, but could provide a basis to attract customers laying over for Pearson International Airport.

As part of the SmartTrack Work Plan (2015-2016), City staff have initiated the Eglinton West feasibility review which will evaluate options for heavy rail from Mount Dennis station to the Mississauga Airport Corporate Centre. This includes the option of a continuous connection along the Kitchener GO Rail Corridor which would include a station at Woodbine. This and other elements of SmartTrack will be reported to City Council in the fall of 2015.

- Finch West LRT – Phase 1 of the Finch West LRT project is expected to run between the planned Keele Subway Station on the Toronto York Spadina Subway Extension to the Humber College Campus located on Highway 27, just south of Finch Avenue West. Metrolinx plans to have this line in service by 2021.

A long term vision is extending the LRT from the planned terminus at Humber College southerly to link up with the Eglinton-Crosstown LRT project at Pearson International Airport (creating a looped system). A Transit Environmental Assessment will need to be

undertaken to determine, among other things, the preferred alignment for a LRT extension. Alignments that pass-by or go through the Woodbine lands may be considered which would significantly improve transit accessibility to these lands.

This extension is currently unfunded and has not been identified as a priority in the City's transit expansion plans. This service is not required to support expanded gaming at Woodbine, however this service would help improve the transit modal share in the future.

- Business Case Analysis – as directed by City Council on March 31, 2015, the City retained Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) to undertake a high level Business Case Analysis (BCA) for extending the Finch West LRT from Humber College to Rexdale and Pearson International Airport. The executive summary of the SDG BCA, dated June 2015, is presented in Appendix E.

SDG's report expanded on the previous work they have undertaken on the Finch West LRT and Pearson International Airport Transportation Studies. The data was updated and modelling was performed based on a possible LRT alignment identified in a previous report dated May 2010 from Delcan which identified a preliminary alignment that extended from Humber College southerly on Highway 27, west on Queen's Plate Drive to Woodbine Racetrack, and departing the Woodbine lands to the west using Goreway Drive and American Drive to access Pearson International Airport.

The high level BCA was prepared based on the emerging Metrolinx framework, comprising of:

- Strategic Case – alignment with planning policy and objectives;
- Economic Case – the cost and benefit of the project;
- Financial Case – how affordable is the project; and
- Deliverability Case – how will it be delivered.

The report concludes there is a reasonable case for the extension and merits further investigation. Several areas were identified that should be the focus of efforts moving forward, including: clarifying proposed expansion plans for the Woodbine site; reviewing the bus network to optimize integration of service providers (MiWay, Viva, etc.); consideration of enhanced bus service as a lower cost alternative; and reviewing the case for a new GO station on the Woodbine lands and the interface with Regional Express Rail/Union Pearson Express.

Transportation Considerations

As with any major redevelopment plan within the city, the proponent of development at the Woodbine site will be required to undertake detailed assessments related to the impacts to the transportation network. These studies will include: transportation demand management plan; traffic impact study; public transit strategy; parking study; loading study; and a bicycle and pedestrian circulation plan.

Through the above noted studies, it is anticipated the parking requirements of the By-law would also be revisited.

Infrastructure Considerations

There is very limited existing servicing infrastructure within the Woodbine site. Connections to the City's servicing infrastructure network can be made at the north, east and south edges of the site. Highway 427 at the west edge of the site limits access to the adjacent servicing infrastructure. Watermains and sanitary sewers exist along Rexdale Boulevard, Highway 27 and south of the CNR tracks. There is a diverse storm drainage network that drains the area via overland flow routes, culverts and storm sewers that ultimately outlet to nearby Mimico Creek and the west branch of the Humber River. There is also a private pond, located on the north side of Rexdale Boulevard, which captures runoff from a portion of the site that is used for irrigation.

A network of new internal infrastructure is required to service the site. While there is some available capacity in the existing external infrastructure, some improvements may also be necessary depending on the size of the future development. A previously submitted Functional Servicing Study in support of the Woodbine Live! proposal identified servicing upgrades that included pipe size increases for watermains and sanitary sewers, in addition to a new sanitary sewer on Carlingview Drive to connect to the City sewer south of the CNR tracks.

Further detailed review of the servicing infrastructure is required to determine the necessary upgrades required to support the future development, taking into consideration the City's existing standards and guidelines. Regardless of findings, a sanitary sewer on Carlingview Drive crossing the CNR tracks will be necessary to provide sanitary service to part of the site.

Considerations for Expanded Gaming at Woodbine

The planning framework for Woodbine supports both the current gaming facility as well as expanded gaming, including live dealer tables, at this location. Woodbine has approximately 3,000 slots and electronic games on site. This includes a \$100M renovation completed in 2012 to accommodate additional electronic games including video roulette, poker and blackjack.

The approved vision for growth and change at Woodbine anticipates a broad range of unique entertainment and retail type uses, namely gaming, racetrack, hotel, convention facilities, live theatre venue, retail as well as future offices and residential. The development framework directs that this growth and change should be phased to ensure it is undertaken in a comprehensive manner addressing the transportation, infrastructure, public realm and design requirements outlined in SASP 296 of the City's Official Plan.

The design conditions that have been developed as part of the City's consideration of Woodbine Live! should be applied to any future development at Woodbine. The development framework seeks to break up this large site into a more urban street and block pattern, to establish public streets that will connect the site to the surrounding area and to provide public amenities that will create an attractive environment for both expanded gaming and any other development. Furthermore, any future development of these lands should also include other uses such as

entertainment and retail that could leverage additional economic benefits to the broader community.

City Planning Approval Process

If expanded gaming is to occur at Woodbine, some planning approvals will be required. All planning approvals are subject to potential appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. Where an Official Plan and/or Zoning By-law Amendment would be required, additional public consultation on the proposal would be undertaken by City Planning staff in accordance with the City's standard practices.

Ensuring that the City's planning approval processes are respected is critical in terms of providing for additional analysis and studies, and revision as necessary, to support the new use as well as to provide additional opportunities for consultation and City Council direction. The City also has the opportunity to utilize holding provisions, if necessary, to ensure critical conditions are secured. The proponent will be required to pay all associated application fees, and any increases in height and/or density could be subject to Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

Should expanded gaming be supported at Woodbine, whether in the form of additional electronic games and live dealer tables to the existing facility or a new gaming facility, an amendment to the site specific Zoning By-law would be required. It is recommended that a Zoning By-law Amendment application be required to address not only the gaming use but also the development of the site in a comprehensive manner.

Other planning approvals that may be required include finalization of the Plan of Subdivision application which received draft approval in 2007 as part of the Woodbine Live! application. A Site Plan Control application would also be required to be submitted for any significant addition to the existing building or for any new buildings.