TORONTO Staff Report

October 22, 2004

To: Administration Committee and Planning and Transportation Committee

From: Commissioner of Urban Development Services

Subject: Report on the Union Station Draft Master Plan
61-71 Front Street West
Toronto Centre-Rosedale, Ward 28

Purpose:

To present a Peer Review and revised Master Plan for Union Station in accordance with the direction of City Council at its meeting on May 18, 19, and 20, 2004.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

(1) City Council adopt the Union Station Draft Master Plan accompanying this report as Attachment No. 1; and

(2) the Commissioner of Urban Development Services be requested to report on a strategic framework to achieve the vision as set out in the Master Plan.

Background:

City Council at its meeting on May 18, 19 and 20, 2004 approved an amendment to By-law 168-93 modifying the permitted density and parking/loading requirements for Union Station. At this meeting, Council requested that an outside consultant be hired to undertake a peer review of the existing and external planning documents and to work with City Planning staff to create a draft Master Plan. The consultant was also requested to develop a public consultation process which would include the Union Station Public Advisory Group, the Save Union Station Committee and other interested parties and to report back to City Council through a joint meeting of the Administration Committee and the Planning and Transportation Committee.

The document accompanying this report is the requested report on the peer review, the public consultation and includes a proposed Master Plan for Union Station.

Comments:

Union Station is the most important focus of commuter and inter-city rail facilities within the downtown core of the City, as well as being the most important point of interchange to other transportation modes within the City. The Official Plan recognizes the importance of the refurbishment of Union Station and its role of fulfilling the transportation policies for the City. The Station provides the opportunity for interchange between different modes of transit including rail, GO buses and the TTC's bus, LRT and subway facilities as well as the planned air-rail link to Pearson Airport. It is intended that the facilities will expand within the next 20 years to accommodate existing transit operators' growth and that the Station will also need to accommodate additional functions.

The Master Plan for Union Station is a visionary document, defining the policies for the immediate restoration, renovation and long-term development of the existing facility. The document will inform the evolution of the Station allowing it to continue as the most significant mixed-use, multi-modal transportation hub within the City. The Master Plan also provides tools to assist in the evaluation of development proposals for new buildings and required connections within the immediate proximity to the Station.

The attached report, co-ordinated by an interdepartmental team of City staff, is the result of extensive consultation and outreach to various stakeholders having an interest in facilities in and around the station including the Union Station Public Advisory Group, the Save Union Station group and the general public. Two public consultation meetings were widely advertised to offer an opportunity to listen to the concerns of the community at large, including business interests. The proposed Master Plan for Union Station responds to the issues noted in the stakeholder meetings and addresses the concerns of those who attended the various stakeholder sessions.

It is anticipated that this document can be a guide upon which to base decisions and to direct investment in transportation facilities and related development opportunities in the long term. The findings also recommend a variety of broad implementation objectives to ensure a coordinated approach to facilities planning at the local, Provincial and Federal levels to promote improved transportation services and a long-range vision for facilities serving the City and beyond.

The Peer Review

The consultant's review of the Master Plan for Union Station confirms that the principles underpinning the originally proposed Draft Master Plan were found to be strong and valid. The consultant has, however, concluded that these principles needed to be restated and presented in a more comprehensive format with significant graphic illustrations. The proposed Master Plan consolidates the principles enunciated in the 1991 "Union Station

Pedestrian Circulation Plan", as updated by the 2001 study of the same name, as well as a number of other significant documents noted in the report.

Overview of the Master Plan

The report identifies four "Big Moves", intended as bold statements to create the overall long-term vision for the Station. The summary of these bold initiatives seeks to clearly articulate the long-term needs related to the redevelopment of the Station and can be summarized under the following headings:

- An Integrated Public Realm
- A Modern Station - Accommodating Change
- Revitalization of Underutilized Spaces
- Maximized Porousness through Extended Pedestrian Connections

The Master Plan of the document identifies three major initiatives, as summarized below:

- Maintaining and Promoting Key Functions: A Multi-Modal Transportation Hub
- Enhancing and Restoring the Station: Heritage Preservation
- A Well Used Inspiring Place: Revitalization

The conclusion of the report sets out an implementation strategy and a series of "next steps". The report highlights the necessity to create urban design guidelines for certain key areas adjacent to the station, to resolve issues related to improved pedestrian facilities and other transportation functions, as well as the requirement to study issues pertaining to future development opportunities at the Station. Staff needs to consult further with the appropriate stakeholders and report back on these issues.

The main policies are then further defined by six Structuring Principles. These principles are derived from the policies of the Railway Lands East Secondary Plan and are then amplified by Guiding Principles. The implementation objectives concluding each of these sections are set out at the end of each of these sections.

Conclusions:

The Master Plan provides a strong vision for the future of the Station and its environs. This Plan has been built on the principles established in the previously approved 1993 Master Plan adopted by Council and on other relevant studies which have been completed since then. The Plan has now been updated through an extensive Peer Review of these existing studies and in consultation with transportation stakeholders and the general public. The approval of the Master Plan will provide a strong statement of

commitment to improving the City's public transportation infrastructure and ensuring that public needs are provided in a coordinated and timely manner.

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Attachment:

Union Station Master Plan