

City-Initiated Sherway Area Study

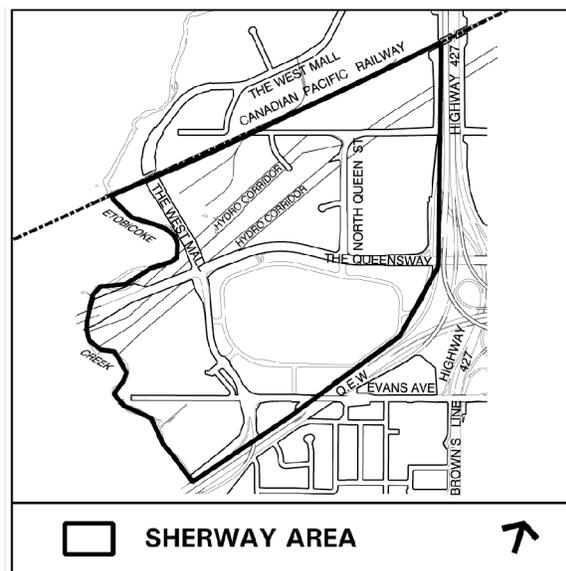
Date:	August 23, 2013
To:	Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District
Wards:	Ward 5 – Etobicoke-Lakeshore
Reference Number:	13 222659 WET 05 OZ

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's direction to undertake a review and update of the planning policy framework for the Sherway area, which is bounded by a rail corridor to the north, Highway 427 to the east, the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) to the south and the Etobicoke Creek to the west.

The Sherway area is subject to a number of Site and Area Specific Policies (SASP) in the Official Plan that require a comprehensive transportation review to be conducted once permitted development capacity has been reached. Currently retail and residential development is at or nearing the maximum development levels as set out in these SASP's and there is landowner interest in redeveloping lands north of The Queensway for residential and additional retail uses. Rather than address these matters separately, it is appropriate to initiate a comprehensive review of the planning framework for the area.

The Sherway Area Study would provide an opportunity to revisit the policy framework enabling the City to update the vision, goals, objectives and priorities for the area and the policies pertaining to land use, transportation, servicing and community infrastructure requirements.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that Council direct:

1. Staff to undertake a review and update of the planning policy framework for the Sherway area, in particular those lands subject to Official Plan Site and Area Specific Policies 12, 13, 19 and 20.
2. The review to include a public consultation program comprised of both broad community wide forums and smaller working groups, to include area residents and businesses, local community associations, property owners within the study area, the Ward Councillor(s) and representatives of City Divisions and external agencies as appropriate.
3. A final study report, including a recommended update to the planning framework for the Sherway area, be targeted for the third quarter of 2015.

Financial Impact

Funding for the Phase 1 initial consultation is available in City Planning's 2013 Operating Budget, estimated at \$35,000. Funding for the subsequent phases (Phases 2-5) of the study will be allocated from City Planning's 2014 Requested Capital Budget, estimated to be approximately \$300,000.

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

DECISION HISTORY

City Council at its meeting of February 1, 2 and 3, 2005 considered applications to amend the former Etobicoke Official Plan and Zoning Code and to modify the Toronto Official Plan to permit a residential development at 700 Evans Avenue comprised of 4 towers totalling 990 residential units and publicly accessible privately owned open space fronting Sherway Gardens Drive. The applications were refused by City Council. The report on these applications can be found at the following link:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2005/agendas/council/cc050201/et1rpt/cl029.pdf>

At that meeting City Council directed the Commissioner of Urban Development Services to report back to the May 31, 2005 meeting of the Etobicoke York Community Council with a Terms of Reference for a comprehensive planning review of the Sherway Centre Secondary Plan area and surrounding areas.

As directed by City Council, a staff report setting out a Terms of Reference for a review of the Sherway Centre Secondary Plan was submitted to the May 31, 2005 Etobicoke York Community Council meeting. The Etobicoke York Community Council:

- Deferred the report until such time as the Ontario Municipal Board issued its decision on the development proposal at 700 Evans Avenue; and
- Requested the Director, Community Planning, West District to provide greater clarity as to which areas will be considered in this planning review, when reporting further to Etobicoke York Community Council.

A copy of the report and decision document can be found at the following links:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2005/agendas/committees/et/et050531/it018.pdf>
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2005/agendas/committees/et/et050531/etdd.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) issued its final decision on the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications for the development proposal at 700 Evans Avenue on November 30, 2005. The OMB approved the applications, subject to the finalization and resolution of a number of site plan matters such as the final design of the publicly accessible private open space area on the development lands. The final resolution of these matters occurred on October 12, 2012. Accordingly, it is an appropriate time to bring back for the consideration of Etobicoke York Community Council a report setting out the proposed rationale, scope of work and estimated timeline for a review of the planning policy framework of the Sherway area.

As part of the City's Official Plan and Municipal Comprehensive Review process, a number of owners within the study area have requested the redesignation of their lands from *Employment Areas* to other designations to permit a broader range of uses, including residential uses. This study will respect the outcome of the Municipal Comprehensive Review expected to be completed in November 2013.

PROPOSED STUDY

Study Area

The Sherway Area Study would include the lands subject to Site and Area Specific Policies (SASP) 12, 13, 19 and 20 in the Official Plan. The area is bounded by the rail corridor to the north, Highway 427 to the east, the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) to the south and the Etobicoke Creek to the west (see Attachment 1).

The Official Plan designates the majority of the lands within SASP 12, 13, 19 and 20 as *Mixed Use Areas* in addition to *Employment Areas*, *Institutional Areas* and *Natural Areas* on Map 15 – Land Use Plan. The Official Plan also identifies the lands along The Queensway as an Avenue and the lands north of The Queensway as an Employment District on Map 2 – Urban Structure.

Study Rationale

In 1993, a Sherway Centre Planning Study was initiated by the former City of Etobicoke for the lands bounded by Highway 427 to the east, the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) and Evans Avenue to the south, the Etobicoke Creek to the west, and Dundas Street to the north. The study was initiated as the former Etobicoke Official Plan identified the area as a 'Centre' for mixed use employment and possible high density residential uses. As well, an Environmental Assessment (EA) by the former Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto was approved by the Ministry of Environment in 1993 that identified the preferred alignment for a westerly extension of the Bloor-Danforth subway line to and through the Sherway area with a station in the vicinity of The Queensway and The West Mall. The Planning Study resulted in the adoption of the Sherway Centre Secondary Plan in 1994.

Elements of the Sherway Centre Secondary Plan area were carried forward into the Toronto Official Plan as Site and Area Specific Policies (SASP) 12, 13, 19 and 20 (see Attachment 1).

The approved Bloor-Danforth Subway Westerly Extension alignment is shown on Map 4 – Higher Order Transit Corridors of the Official Plan. Although there has been no further work on the extension since its approval in 1993, the City has been protecting for the subway extension through the development review process (e.g. building setbacks, subsurface easements, etc.). The Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan does not include this extension in any of the "Big Move" projects. As part of the Five Year Official Plan Review currently underway, the status of this extension and how it is to be identified and provided for through development applications is being reviewed.

SASP 12 applies to the Trillium Health Centre lands on the south side of Evans Avenue, west of The West Mall. These lands are designated *Institutional Areas* in the Official Plan. This SASP contains maximum development density permissions and requires that local streets be provided prior to development of the lands.

SASP 13 applies to the Sherway Gardens shopping mall lands. The Official Plan designates these lands as *Mixed Use Areas* and identifies lands along The Queensway as an Avenue. This SASP sets out pre-subway and post-subway development limits for retail, office and residential development. It requires a new network of local public roads to divide the lands into a more urban pattern of streets and blocks, to provide a framework for reorganizing and intensifying the existing uses and accommodating new uses and forms of development. The retail and office development limits have not been exceeded. However residential development is nearing the limit of 1,350 units as the 700 Evans Avenue residential development contains 1,130 units. A portion of the required local public road network has been completed with the section of Sherway Gardens Road and Sherway Gate connecting The Queensway and Evans Avenue.

SASP 19 applies to the majority of the lands within the Sherway area. SASP 19 limits the amount of pre-subway retail and office development space to a maximum of

250,000 m² gross leasable area and 125,000 m² gross floor area, respectively, unless a comprehensive transportation review demonstrates that sufficient transportation capacity is available for additional space. Retail development within SASP 19 is now at the development limit of 250,000 m² gross leasable area.

SASP 19 also states that a new network of local public roads is required to divide the area into a more urban pattern of streets and blocks, providing a framework for reorganizing and intensifying existing uses and accommodating new uses and forms of development. SASP 19 also identifies conceptual public road network additions. To date, the public road connections that link Highway 427 to the Sherway area, and the section of Sherway Gardens Road noted previously have been achieved. An Environmental Assessment (EA) to recommend options for the preferred alignment of the North Queen Street extension to The East Mall has been underway since 2009 and is targeted for completion by the end of 2013. This EA has been complicated by the existence of two Hydro One corridors located north of The Queensway.

SASP 19 further establishes community infrastructure requirements to support residential uses in the area including local service and retail uses, elementary schools, active and passive open spaces, community facilities including social and recreational facilities and library services, emergency services and a system of linked open space throughout the area for pedestrian, cycling and recreational use.

SASP 20 applies to the employment lands south of the rail corridor designated *Employment Areas* in the Official Plan. This SASP provides for large scale, stand alone retail, recreational and cultural uses. Industrial uses are restricted to enclosed buildings or to uses with limited outdoor storage having no noxious odour, dust, smoke, noise or vibration impacts.

Retail and residential development in the Sherway area is at or nearing maximum development limits as set out in SASP 13 and 19. A comprehensive transportation review is required to consider additional development permissions. As well, there is landowner interest in redeveloping lands north of The Queensway for residential and additional retail uses. Rather than address these matters separately, it is appropriate to initiate a comprehensive review of the planning framework for the area. This would provide an opportunity to revisit the policy framework enabling the City to update the vision, goals, objectives and priorities for the area and the policies pertaining to land use, transportation, servicing and community infrastructure requirements.

Scope of Work

The Sherway Area Study would be a multi-disciplinary review to be conducted as a comprehensive and integrated planning study. The study would be led by an external consulting team with the direction and assistance of Planning staff. The consultant team would be required to have expertise in land use planning, urban design, transportation planning, community services and facilities, public engagement and servicing infrastructure.

The land use consultant would act as the Project Manager to lead the study team and act as the primary liaison with City Planning to undertake the following scope of work:

- a recommended planning framework for the study area that sets out a land use mix, density levels, built form expectations, a road network and block plan, public realm and streetscape, park and open space, servicing infrastructure and phasing requirements;
- amendments to the Official Plan as either a Site and Area Specific Policy or a Secondary Plan;
- amendments to the Zoning By-law to implement the vision for the area;
- a Transportation Master Plan including an expanded and connected public street system, public transit, cycling and walking;
- the provision of parks and open spaces and community facilities to support and meet future local needs;
- Preparation of Urban Design Guidelines and a Public Realm Master Plan;
- improved connections and enhancements to the Etobicoke Trail system; and
- development that will have a positive impact on and contribute to an overall improved quality of life in the City.

The proposed study would be undertaken in five phases. The scope of work for each phase of the study is broadly summarized below.

Phase One: Community Engagement and Awareness

- This phase includes the initial community consultation work proposed to be completed by the end of 2013 (estimated at \$35,000). Work to be undertaken would refine the key areas of analysis for the study and the community consultation and public engagement program.

Phase Two: Identification of Opportunities, Constraints and Development Options

- Analysis of existing conditions;
- Development of key principles to guide the study process; and
- Formulation of development options.

Phase Three: Comprehensive Testing and Evaluation of Development Options

- Testing and evaluating of development options related to land use mix and development levels;
- Evaluation of street network and municipal servicing alternatives;
- Community services and facilities analysis;
- Parks and open space analysis; and
- Built form modelling.

Phase Four: Preferred Development Option and Draft Implementation Work

- Identification and refinement of a preferred development option for the area;
- Draft Transportation Master Plan including the identification and refinement of the preferred street network;
- Development of draft policy direction to support and implement the preferred option including Urban Design Guidelines, Public Realm Master Plan, community services and facilities requirements and priorities, and parks and open space requirements; and
- Identification of any specific transportation, servicing or community infrastructure to be in place prior to the realization of the preferred development option.

Phase Five: Final Study Report and Recommended Planning Framework

Work would include the finalization of the preferred development approach for the study area and the key planning and policy documents to implement the approach such as:

- Site and Area Specific Policy or Secondary Plan including policy direction regarding community services and facilities and parks and open space;
- Transportation Master Plan;
- Urban Design Guidelines;
- Public Realm Master Plan; and
- Identification of any specific development provisions that should form the basis of the implementing zoning.

Each phase would include formal and informal opportunities for ongoing community engagement and input into the study. As well, it is expected that a landowners working group would be established to maintain ongoing communication and feedback from landowners within the study area.

Timelines

Planning staff propose to initiate the study in the fall of 2013. The larger study is expected to be initiated during the first quarter of 2014 with an estimated timeline of completion of 18 months, or the third quarter of 2015. A Final Report would then be presented to Etobicoke York Community Council with a recommended updated planning framework for the study area.

CONCLUSION

The Sherway Area Study would provide an opportunity for a comprehensive analysis of land use, transportation, servicing and community infrastructure in the area to develop an updated planning policy framework in the context of the City's vision and goals for development as set out in the Official Plan. The external consulting team would lead the review, with the direction and assistance of Planning staff. The review would include

liaising with other City Divisions and agencies as well as extensive consultation with stakeholders including landowners, businesses and residents in the area.

CONTACT

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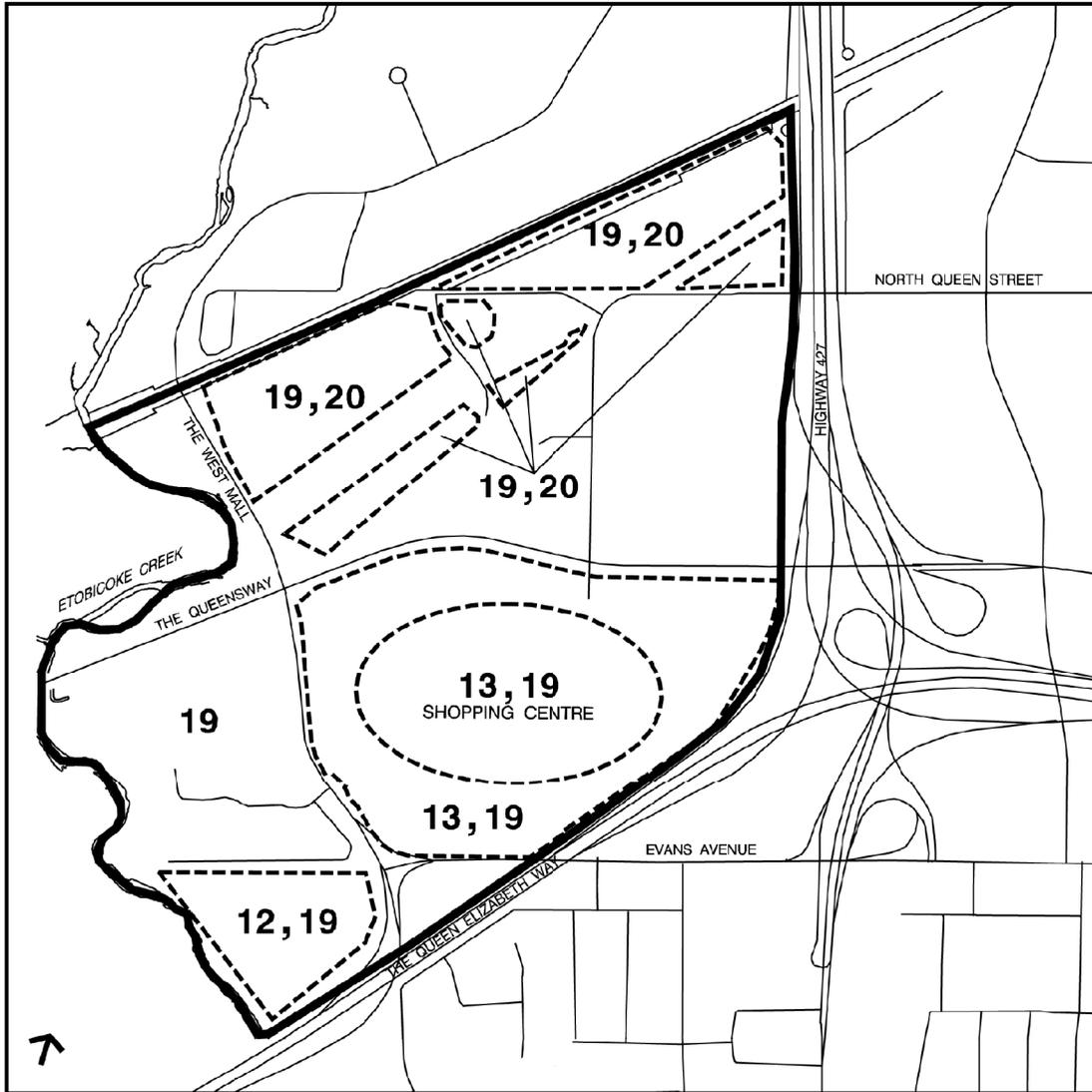
SIGNATURE

Neil Cresswell, MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning
Etobicoke York District

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Official Plan Site and Area Specific Policy Areas 12, 13, 19 and 20

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Site and Area Specific Policy Areas 12, 13, 19 and 20

Sherway Area Study

Not to Scale
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