

## **Trends and Issues in the Intensification of Downtown Toronto**

<b>Date:</b>	April 25, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward Nos. 20, 27 and 28
<b>Reference Number:</b>	File No. 14 146134 SPS 00 TM

### **SUMMARY**

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Toronto's Downtown is home to over 200,000 residents and has a daytime population of well over 500,000 people who both remain and/or work in the Downtown. A third of all jobs in the City, approximately 464,000, are located in the Downtown. The Downtown has also seen four times the rate of growth as the rest of the City between 2006 and 2011.

While this growth reflects the success of our Downtown both in terms of attracting businesses and residents, significant infill has occurred within the Downtown's mature urban fabric, and the related upgrades to or construction of new (soft and hard) infrastructure have not always taken place concurrent with development. Infrastructure investment has been more commonly achieved with master planned areas in the Downtown (e.g. Regent Park and the Railway Lands). In other areas of the Downtown, the consequences of infrastructure not keeping pace with growth have been felt by residents, and identified by City divisions, including City Planning, in various reports to Council.

Correspondingly, there has been a series of recent Council directives (including those noted below) requesting planning studies to address growth and change in the Downtown. In response, City staff are currently working on seven planning studies within the Downtown. Collectively these studies cover only a portion of the 17 square kilometres of land area that fall within the Downtown's boundaries.

Acknowledging the growth pressures within the Downtown boundaries, and the ongoing challenges between development and infrastructure investment in certain areas, a comprehensive review of the Downtown is required.

## DECISION HISTORY

At the February 12, 2012 meeting of the Toronto East York Community Council, the following motions were adopted:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tm/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.TE13.16>:

- Request that the Director, Community Planning report on options for implementing a Development Permit System (DPS) for Downtown Toronto, to replace Section 37 Agreements, as a mechanism to make sure neighbourhoods experiencing rapid intensification acquire the appropriate resources to shoulder fast paced growth. Benefits should include, but would not be limited to: affordable, family and rental housing, institutional, cultural and commercial components in projects, funds for public realm improvements (parks, streetscapes, Heritage Conversation districts, transit), and public squares.
- Request that the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture, General Manager of Transportation Services and the Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration, to submit a report to the Toronto and East York Community Council by the third quarter of 2012 to identify, examine measurements, and review remedies for urban planning, economic development, transportation, public infrastructure, community amenity and social planning impacts created by the density intensification from the ongoing development of tall buildings in downtown Toronto, as promoted by the Ministry of Infrastructure in the 2006 provincial policy, "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe."

The item was adopted in July 11, 2012 by City Council

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.TE17.19>) with a further recommendation that requested:

- City Council direct the Acting Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to bring forward a staff report identifying future implementation options for the Downtown Tall Buildings Vision and Performance Standards, which include, but are not limited to, amendments to the City's Official Plan, Zoning By-law and use of other planning tools.

At the May 7, 2013 meeting of City Council in considering the Parks Plan 2013-2017 the following motion was approved:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.PE20.1>

- City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, the Chief Planner and Executive Director, and the City Manager, to identify appropriate City staff and form an interdivisional working group to create a

detailed parkland acquisition strategy and report back to the Parks and Environment Committee by the first quarter of 2014 with recommendations on how to formally streamline the process to deliver tangible and measurable acquisition goals.

Staff will provide a report on the supplementary agenda for Toronto and East York Community Council for consideration at its meeting on May 13, 2014, in response to these motions.

The report provides an overview of the changes that have taken place in the Downtown through the preparation of a research paper that presents a high-level environmental scan, and presents the "Trends and Issues in the Intensification of Downtown".

Also, in response to Council's directions, City staff will be launching a study entitled "Comprehensive to the Core: Planning Toronto's Downtown" which will develop an integrated Downtown infrastructure and growth strategy. The details of the study, the proposed work program, schedule, interdivisional structure and consultant strategy will be presented in the report.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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