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November 10, 2015

City of Toronto

City of Toronto
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Councillor Colle and City Council:

Re: Dufferin Street Secondary Plan
Yorkdale Shopping Centre
Oxford Properties Group Submission

We are providing our comments on the draft Dufferin Street Secondary Plan in the May 29, 2015 Staff report (Ref. No.: 15 130874 NPS 00 OZ), and presented at today's public meeting.

Oxford Properties Group manages Yorkdale Shopping Centre on behalf of the Owners, and has worked collaboratively with the City on several recent expansions of the Centre. We appreciate the opportunity to engage in a constructive discussion with the City and staff regarding the scope and content of the proposed Secondary Plan.

Master Planning for Yorkdale's Future

As the City has recognized, Yorkdale Shopping Centre is underutilized with significant development potential, particularly the surface parking areas. As part of the long term vision for Yorkdale Shopping Centre, the Owners have developed a tentative master plan for the Centre. The westerly expansion development plan, which was presented to City Staff in early 2015, is illustrative of the Owners' long term vision to continue developing Yorkdale as an integrated mixed use centre with an inviting and animated pedestrian environment.

It is clear that both the City and Owners' share a common understanding of Yorkdale's significance and long term vision for the Centre. Both the Owners and City:

- recognize Yorkdale as a landmark destination and regional retail centre;
- anticipate additional development that will be phased over time;
- envision a reduction in surface parking over the long term;
- recognize there are transportation challenges and a need to improve (or at least maintain) access to Yorkdale Shopping Centre;
- support further improvement to on site pedestrian circulation and integration with off-site pedestrian circulation;



- recognize there are opportunities over the long term to develop Yorkdale in a manner that enhances the public realm, and
- recognize the importance of comprehensive integrated planning to guide long term growth.

Unfortunately, the Dufferin Street Secondary Plan as currently drafted will adversely affect the ability to further develop Yorkdale as an integrated Centre, and undermines the ability develop the underutilized portions of the Site and thereby realize the City's long term objectives.

Yorkdale - Comprehensive Planning and Incremental Redevelopment

Yorkdale Shopping Centre was developed as an integrated retail complex, and is one of Canada's largest and most iconic shopping centres. Well served by public transportation and conveniently located, Yorkdale is an excellent example of existing transit supportive mixed use development that integrates retail, dining, entertainment, office, and multiple public transportation uses into a single site.

While the City and its consultants have recognized that Yorkdale is a Regional Shopping Centre that has a historically grown through incremental expansion, the draft Secondary Plan does not appropriately reflect these realities. Yorkdale has undergone several incremental expansions since it was first developed. Recent notable incremental expansions include:

- South West Expansion that was completed in 2012, which added 145,000 sq. ft. of new retail space and included the development of a new two level below grade parking structure with approximately 750 stalls.
- East Expansion which began in 2013 and remains under construction. When complete it will include approximately 300,000 sq. ft. of new retail space, a new 5 level below grade parking structure with approximately 2,200 stalls, and streetscape and transit improvements along Yorkdale Road.

Incremental expansion has allowed the Centre to remain responsive to both market demand and evolving public policy and urban design initiatives, such the substantial investment in replacing surface parking with below grade parking structures, and the inclusion of green roofs and solar power generation. The Owners' vision for Yorkdale includes replacing surface parking lots with additional incremental growth and redevelopment, to further enhance the Centre and meet the needs of the residents of the City, and the many tourists and residents of the broader urban region who travel to Yorkdale.

The essence of retail development is that it is ever evolving as formats and layouts, store types and brands change and adapt to respond to market conditions and consumer preference.



Flexibility for owners of retail properties to respond to those changing circumstances is important for a retail centre, and even more so for a premier regional shopping centre such as Yorkdale.

Responding to public needs and market realities requires that the entire Yorkdale Shopping Centre be planned for in a comprehensive, integrated and flexible manner that recognizes the existing development while providing appropriate direction for future growth. However, the draft Secondary Plan proposes to artificially divide the western areas currently used for surface parking from the remainder of the Centre, including, multi-level parking structures, the existing enclosed mall, and the transit facilities. Bifurcating the site as proposed in the draft Secondary Plan has significant negative implications for the overall Centre. Notably, bifurcating the Centre will:

- frustrate the opportunities to redevelop surface parking areas in the western portion of Site in a manner that integrates with the existing Centre and development along Dufferin Street,
- permanently reserve large tracts of land predominantly for automobile use through road creation,
- preclude the continued westward expansion of Yorkdale as envisioned; and
- create undesirable low density small “blocks” that are unconnected to the remainder of the Centre and for which there is limited market interest.

Identifying the proposed new street locations as “preliminary and flexible” does not alter that the Secondary Plan requires new public streets within the Centre. Once a notional feature is depicted in a plan, it quickly becomes the basis of public expectations and a rigid staff objective.

While the objectives of the draft Secondary Plan are laudable, it is not appropriate to treat the Dufferin Street frontage of Yorkdale and adjacent surface parking areas in the same manner as the other sites in the Secondary Plan. Yorkdale is unique and distinct when compared to the other lands in the proposed Secondary Plan. It is the largest parcel of contiguous integrated development, and warrants proper consideration, not the piecemeal approach in the draft Dufferin Street Secondary Plan.

Requested Modifications to Secondary Plan – Block Plan for Yorkdale

The City and Owners share a common goal that future development at Yorkdale enhances the Centre as a vibrant transit-oriented mixed use development that positively contributes to the public realm. That goal is achievable, but it requires comprehensive integrated planning that supports the existing development and realistically guides future expansion. Until a detailed



plan for the entire Centre is prepared, it is premature for the proposed Secondary Plan to establish details for how the western portion of site will be redeveloped.

We are asking that the proposed Secondary Plan be modified to remove detailed policies applicable to the western portion of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre Lands and instead recognize that a Block Plan for the entire Centre will be developed and incorporated into either the Dufferin Street Secondary Plan or the Lawrence-Allen Secondary Plan. This would include modifying the following elements of the Secondary Plan so as to defer detailed planning within the Site until a block plan has been prepared for the Centre:

- alter the secondary plan boundary so as to remove the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands from the Secondary Plan and mapping so that the boundary includes only the Dufferin Street frontage.
- Alter the maps and text to remove Block 14 and the new roads proposed within Block 14.
- Modify Maps 6 and 7a to indicate that changes to intersections (including signalization) along the Dufferin Street frontage of the Centre will be addressed as part of the Block Plan for the Centre.
- Modify Map 11 to remove any reference to maximum densities on the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands
- Modify Map 3 and the policies respecting the policies in Section 3.3 to indicate that an Urban Plaza is proposed on the Yorkdale Shopping Centre Lands, with the location and design to be further refined through the Block Plan and finalized as part of any development application.
- Add policy to Section 7.2 that changes to road connections or intersections along the Dufferin Street frontage of Yorkdale will be considered and addressed in the block plan or through the development approval process.

This approach would ensure that key urban design considerations along the Dufferin Street frontage of Yorkdale are established in the Secondary Plan (such as the vision, identification of Priority Retail Areas, Setbacks, Streetscape) and appropriately incorporated into the Block Plan for Yorkdale, while ensuring that detailed planning of Yorkdale is undertaken in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner.

For example, efficient and appropriate integration of vehicular transportation on the surrounding road network with traffic to and from Yorkdale is of interest to the City and Owners, and in our opinion warrants more thoughtful consideration and discussion than has happened to date. The existing McAdam Loop, which is proposed for removal, represents an opportunity to integrate



traffic entering the centre directly with future below grade parking. Such opportunities will be lost if the Secondary Plan proceeds as drafted, but can be explored through the process of block planning for Yorkdale.

Conclusion

Oxford and its consulting team have previously conveyed concerns to the City and Staff through the Avenue study and other City initiated projects for the area, but the draft Secondary Plan does not respond to many of the critical issues that were raised. Urban Strategies provided planning staff a memorandum detailing key concerns with the Secondary Plan as drafted, a copy of which is attached as attached.

Notwithstanding our strong objections to the Dufferin Street Secondary Plan as drafted, we support comprehensive integrated planning for the Yorkdale Shopping Centre, and look forward to continuing our conversation with the City. In that regard, we would be pleased to arrange a meeting with our consulting team to further discuss our concerns and proposals in greater detail.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Filipetti".

John Filipetti
Vice President, Development

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cory Estrela".

Cory Estrela
Director, Corporate Legal

cc. L. Chandler (Oxford Properties Group)
F. Lewinberg (Urban Strategies Inc.)

October 8, 2015

Andria Sallese
Planner - Community Planning
North York District
North York Civic Centre
5100 Yonge Street
North York, ON M2N 5V7

Dear Andria Sallese:

Re: Dufferin Avenue Secondary Plan

We are writing to provide comment on the draft Dufferin Avenue Secondary Plan for consideration in the Staff Report which recommends an implementation approach for the Dufferin Street Avenue Study. As you are aware, Oxford Properties Group¹ participated in the consultation activities associated with the development of the Dufferin Avenue Study and provided both written and verbal comments on elements of the Study related to the Yorkdale Shopping Centre (3401 Dufferin Street). We appreciated the opportunity to participate in the process of developing the Avenue Study, however; we remain concerned that many of the issues and considerations we raised during the process have not been adequately addressed in the implementing Secondary Plan.

General

The Study Area for the Secondary Plan proposes to include less than a third of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands, which will result in fragmented planning of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands.

We recognize the interests and value of developing a cohesive plan for Dufferin Street, including the portion of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands that front onto Dufferin Street between Highway 401 to the north and Yorkdale Road to the south. At the same time, the unique nature and size of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands, the opportunities for the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands to be further developed as an integrated center, and the functional operation of the Shopping Centre and any new development must be recognized and accounted for in the planning documents applicable to the site.

Though the draft Secondary Plan only includes part of the west section of the Shopping Centre lands, the policies proposed for this area will have a significant impact on the entire site. We

¹ Oxford Properties Group is the manager of Yorkdale Shopping Centre on behalf of the Owners.

recommend that the draft Secondary Plan be revised to remove mapping and policies that propose to establish new blocks and streets on the western portion of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands. Instead, the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands, including those portions currently identified as Block 14 in the draft Secondary Plan, should be subject to their own block plan that provides a comprehensive and integrated planning framework for the entire Shopping Centre lands.

The following presents a preliminary high-level summary of key concerns with the proposed Secondary Plan as currently drafted.

Mobility

Section 7 – Mobility and Map 6 – Public Street Plan describe the proposed street network for the Secondary Plan. The Plan proposes many future public streets through the west side of Yorkdale Shopping Centre. Four short east west streets are proposed between Dufferin Street and the west edge of the Shopping Centre and one north/south street along the western edge.

To serve the Shopping Centre, there is general merit in planning for additional road connections. However, any realignment of the road network must take into consideration all of the traffic movements in and around Yorkdale Shopping Centre, including the significant traffic associated with this premier shopping destination. In this regard, there is concern that the new roads proposed for the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands would unduly limit the development of the site, without delivering improvements in traffic flow on the site or the surrounding road network. For example, the potential benefit of the proposed new north/south collector road that would bisect the subject lands is significantly diminished by the following factors:

- A proposed north/south public street located immediately adjacent to the existing Shopping Centre building would eliminate the west portion of the Ring Road that is functionally important to the Shopping Centre and the internal circulation of vehicles;
- A proposed east/west public street at the south limit of Yorkdale's property may actually increase the number of drivers making shortcut movements through the Shopping Centre to Highway 401 eastbound, with resultant impacts to site traffic circulation and the surrounding road network. The long car queues which occur today, because of shortcut movements, are well documented;
- A proposed east/west public street located north of Jane Osler Boulevard would be in conflict with the existing truck access from the Shopping Centre's underground service court. The Shopping Centre was developed with loading operations accessed below grade and removed from the public realm, and the existing truck driveway to Dufferin is the only exit for trucks that service the Shopping Centre;

- The future public streets and resultant right of way requirements will result in a significant reduction in the parking supply for the existing Shopping Centre and will limit the ability to provide parking for the existing Shopping Centre and the future development anticipated on this site;
- The small blocks created by the public streets would limit the westward expansion of the Shopping Centre as currently contemplated, and require each new site to accommodate its own parking supply, vehicular access, loading areas, services, etc. These functional requirements would be quite challenging to satisfy and limit the opportunity to attract tenants and develop the Dufferin frontage with desired animation;
- Providing parking in a cost effective and efficient manner is often challenging on dense sites where further development is planned and anticipated, and the imposition of a public street network will exacerbate the situation. This impact can be mitigated somewhat by making it clear in the relevant planning documents that private parking facilities can be provided beneath the future streets;
- The creation of a public street network where new development will be phased and surface parking will remain, will create legal and administrative difficulties. It is not desirable in urban transit oriented development areas to create parking silos (through small block creation) that cannot be shared between various land uses on different blocks of the overall development.

Ultimately, satisfactory vehicular site access can be provided from Dufferin Street to Yorkdale Shopping Centre without the need for new public streets. Any changes to the entrance and exit configuration of the Shopping Centre should be done in a comprehensive manner and evaluate the changes to traffic flows across the entire site, not just along one street frontage.

We also note that the removal of the existing high-capacity, two-way ramp on the west side of Dufferin Street is not desirable. In the event of its removal, replacement of the southbound left turns into the Shopping Centre would be required. Signalization, capacity and on-street queuing requirements would need to be considered when locating and designing the new southbound left turn. Any entrance reconfiguration would also impact the opportunities for developing additional below grade parking on the site.

The Dufferin Avenue Study and supporting Transportation Master Plan do not provide a demonstrated need for the introduction of new public streets on the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands from a transportation perspective. In our view, the development approval process is the most appropriate process for determining internal traffic circulation on large redevelopment sites, especially ones that have complex transitions and long term phasing of development - like Yorkdale.

If it is ultimately determined through that additional "streets" are required for internal circulation, it is preferred to provide them as private "streets" with public access easements. To the extent that the Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands remain in the Secondary Plan area, the provision for private "streets" with public access easements should be recognized in the policies.

Large Block Policies

In early 2015, the Yorkdale Westerly Expansion Development Plan was presented to city staff. The Development Plan demonstrates the Owner's commitment to creating a highly successful urban environment across the entire site, including along on the western edge of the Shopping Centre Lands. It envisions the extension of the Shopping Centre to Dufferin Street, the replacement of surface parking with new mixed-use and retail development, and the introduction of new street trees along Dufferin Street to create an inviting and animated pedestrian environment.

The overall vision for the westerly expansion of the site is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Dufferin Avenue Study and proposed implementing Secondary Plan. However, the Plan proposes to introduce new site specific policies that are not conducive to new development and will adversely affect the ongoing development of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre and restrict other development on the site.

The creation of these proposed new public streets will result in the subdivision of a portion of the lands into five (5) smaller development blocks. While we support the goal of creating a more accessible and pedestrian friendly environment along Dufferin Street, we are concerned that the City's proposal to subdivide the portion of the Shopping Centre within the Study Area into five (5) smaller development blocks, will adversely affect the development potential on the Yorkdale Lands and the long term intensification of a transited oriented site that is well positioned to support growth.

The detailed proposals in the proposed Secondary Plan will limit the ability to fully realize the long term vision for the westerly expansion of the Shopping Centre as presented to the City. Unlike the proposed street framework, the existing larger development block provides the flexibility to respond to development needs. For Yorkdale Shopping Centre, larger development blocks are a key factor in attracting a broad range of retail tenants and ensuring future growth and development along Dufferin Street.

We recommend that the Block 14 policies be revised and the proposed new public roads illustrated in Map 6 - Public Streets Plan be removed and replaced with text to indicate that the need for, size and location any new private "streets" and entrance reconfiguration would be

addressed as part of the development approval process or through the development of a block plan for the entire Yorkdale Shopping Centre lands.

Municipal Servicing

Section 6 of the proposed Secondary Plan includes policies related to municipal servicing. In review of these policies we recommend further detail be added to the Plan to recognize existing development and constraints, and ensure the appropriate level of investment is in place to support new development.

For example, the anticipated new development on the western edge of the Yorkdale Lands will require new storm and sanitary servicing options. Currently, servicing outlets are restricted to the eastern side of the Yorkdale property. The proposed Secondary Plan should allow for future servicing outlets along Dufferin Avenue.

In response to the Dufferin Avenue Study, Oxford and its consulting team prepared a functional servicing report (**March 2015**). The report recommends the following be considered as part of the proposed Secondary Plan.

- Extension of the existing 300mm watermain located near Dufferin Street and Glen Belle Crescent north along Dufferin street to the northern limits of the study area and further along Yorkdale Road towards Yorkdale Park, and connecting eventually to the existing 300mm watermain located with Ranee Avenue;
- Set allowable sanitary flow to Dufferin Street infrastructure to a peak wet weather flow rate of 45 l/s;
- Permit connections to existing and/or future municipal infrastructure for storm, sanitary and watermain at locations to be determined through future development applications.

We understand that staff will also be finalizing a set of Urban Design Guidelines prior to implementation of the Secondary Plan. Please also accept this letter as a request for notice of the Design Guidelines.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide formal input on the Dufferin Avenue Secondary Plan and look forward to discussing the items outlined in this letter in more detail with you.

**URBAN
STRATEGIES
INC .**

Yours very truly,



Frank Lewinberg – Urban Strategies
Partner
URBAN STRATEGIES INC

Habon Ali

Habon Ali
Associate
URBAN STRATEGIES INC

cc: John Filipetti – Oxford Properties
Lisa Chandler– Oxford Properties
John Barrington – BA Group
John Patterson – Counterpoint