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Toronto and East York Community Council
City of Toronto
2nd Floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON
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Attention: Ms. Ellen Devlin, Administrator, TEYCC

Chair Wong-Tam and Members of Community Council

**Re: Bloor Corridor/Annex Block Planning Study
Official Plan Amendment – Final Report
January 17, 2017 Agenda Item: TE 21.1
Comments on behalf of Bloor-Madison Realty Inc.**

We are counsel to Bloor-Madison Realty Inc. (“Bloor-Madison”), the owner of lands municipally known as 320-326 Bloor Street West, in the City of Toronto (the “Site”). The Site is located on the north side of Bloor Street West, approximately mid-block between Spadina Road and Madison Avenue, within the area identified in Site and Area Specific Policy 334 as the “Spadina Node”.

Our client and its land use planning consultants have reviewed the Final Report of the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, dated November 30, 2016 (the “Staff Report”) and the proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 365 (“OPA 365”) which is to be considered by Community Council at its meeting on January 17, 2017.

As currently proposed, our client does not support the approval of OPA 365. While not exhaustive, we wish to provide some of our client’s concerns with the Staff Report and the recommended OPA.

Proposed OPA 365 identifies two potential tower sites on the block within the northeast quadrant of the Spadina Node consisting of the lands east of Spadina Road, west of Madison Avenue and north of Bloor Street West (the “Block”). The potential tower sites are located at the northeast corner of Bloor St. W and Spadina Road and at 316 Bloor St. West, for which development applications have been filed and appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. OPA 365 proposes maximum height limits of 25 storeys for the properties at the east and west corners of Bloor St. and Spadina Rd. and 20 storeys for the

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adjacent properties, including the Site, as well as a requirement for 25 metres minimum separation distance between towers

Our client disagrees with the identification of specific locations by address or map for the potential tower sites on the Block. While it is likely that the Block can only support two towers, sufficient information and planning analysis do not exist to specifically identify the appropriate sites for such towers.

Each of the four sites within the Block is under different ownership and a land assembly is likely required in order to achieve appropriately sized and located towers. The identified tower site at the northeast corner of Bloor and Spadina is not large enough to support a tower on its own – particularly given its location in relation to a multi-modal transit hub. Further, sufficient study on questions related to access, loading and other critical technical issues has yet to be completed.

A less prescriptive description of a tower location – with criteria based on objective urban design criteria – would permit flexibility in the siting of the towers while recognizing that different land assembly combinations are possible to achieve the vision of the proposed OPA 365.

Further, proposed OPA 365 requires a view corridor analysis to be undertaken for any new development to ensure there are no intrusions into the views of Knox College. Until such a view corridor analysis is undertaken, it is not possible to determine the most appropriate location for a second tower on the Block.

We therefore request that the text and Map 3 of OPA 365 be modified to delete the references to specific municipal addresses and locations of potential towers and replaced with text identifying generally that the Block is appropriate for two potential towers.

Proposed OPA 365 seeks to enshrine into policy a minimum separation distance of 25 metres between towers. This minimum tower separation distance is similarly incorporated in the recently adopted TOcore OPA No. 352 and Zoning By-law Amendments which are subject to a number of appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board, *including by our client*.

Our client and other appellants have appealed the TOcore OPA and ZBAs, in part, on the basis that it is not appropriate to prescribe a strict 25 metre tower separation distance to be arbitrarily applied throughout the downtown. This standard fails to account for site-specific circumstances that may justify reduced tower setbacks and may have the unintended consequence of frustrating or thwarting an otherwise good planning and urban design solution for this Block.

OPA 365 should be modified to remove the 25 metre separation distance requirement and allow for appropriate separation distances between towers to be determined through the zoning by-law following consideration of the specific circumstances of this Block.



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Finally, the maximum heights proposed in OPA 365 are too low and do not sufficiently reflect the nature of the Spadina Node or the provincial policy direction to plan for and encourage intensification in close proximity to major transit station areas.

The Spadina subway, bus and streetcar station/hub is located directly adjacent to and, in some locations, beneath the Spadina Node, at the intersection of Bloor Street West and Spadina Road. This multi-modal public transit hub accommodates rapid and surface transit routes which link to east/west and north/south destinations, including a subway link to the Downtown Core to the south and the City of Vaughan to the north. This transit hub is considered a "major transit station area" under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which is directed to be planned for increased residential and employment densities. The Spadina Node is also located such that active transportation alternatives such as walking and cycling are viable to many nearby Toronto destinations. The Spadina Node is an area where increased densities are encouraged and this should be adequately reflected in any height limits for the Block.

Further, the height limits appear to be based solely on community concerns and have not been supported by thorough planning analysis, which includes objective measures such as view corridors and shadow studies. In our submission, moderate increases in height could be supported on the Block without undermining the character of the area or the potential towers' planned function – particularly given this site is one of the few in the City sitting directly above **three** mass transit lines.

OPA 365 should therefore be modified to allow for greater tower height on the Block, where demonstrated to be justified, and a reduction in tower separation distances.

We respectfully request that Community Council direct planning staff to modify OPA 365 to address our client's identified concerns and proposed modifications. We would be pleased to meet with City staff to discuss the content of this submission and our client's proposed modifications.

Please provide us with notice of any meetings and/or decisions(s) made by Community Council and/or City Council relating to this matter, as well as any further reports or meetings regarding this item.

Yours truly,

DAVIES HOWE PARTNERS LLP


per: Aaron I. Platt

copy: Michael Goldberg, Goldberg Group
Client