



September 14, 2020

Dear Toronto East York Community Council Members (TEYCC):

We write in reference to Item TE18.42 - Exhibition Place Master Plan Proposal Report

We, the members of the thirteen community associations comprising the West Side Community Council, write to express our continued support for the Exhibition Place Master Plan.

The Next Place Plan Phase 1 Proposals Report for Exhibition Place is a substantive and illuminating document. We thank all those involved in its preparation.

We ask that the TEYCC members support the City Planning Division recommendations to City Council to adopt the Exhibition Place Master Plan Phase 1 Proposals Report.

We have several areas that we would like to speak to:

1. Exhibition Place 2017-2019 Strategic Plan update to December 2021 needs to continue to align with the Exhibition Place Master Plan. We feel they do not achieve a holistic approach and that the Strategic Plan focuses primarily on the financial aspects of this 192-acre site. It is critical to invest money into the site as a public asset, and not solely as a revenue generator. This approach will expand the overall attractiveness of Exhibition Place as a destination, as the "Gathering Place" envisioned in the Strategic Plan.
2. Exhibition Place has seen the cancellation of numerous events at its various venues since mid-March, and staff advise they have proactively initiated discussions with the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild regarding innovative strategies toward reopening the site. In this context, the Master Plan Proposals Report offers a first step toward a physical framework to support economic recovery, guiding the restoration of publicly accessible open spaces, and promoting flexibility and resilience in the use of civic assets. It also proposes a number of "quick start" actions that can be implemented in the short term to enhance mobility and connectivity to Exhibition Place as it begins to restore activity. As such, we support the City Planning staff recommendations, starting immediately, to implement elements of item 4.3, Quick Start Initiatives.

3. We remind you the annual financial subsidy to Exhibition Place by taxpayers is quite considerable and is likely to increase substantially throughout the COVID crisis. Since this support will cover both capital investments and maintenance on the 192-acre site, we feel the benefits should accrue directly and ultimately to Torontonians and local residents.
4. Unifying the municipally owned Exhibition Place and provincially owned Ontario Place lands would be a positive step, but we ask that rather than waiting for a provincial government's response you proceed with the Master Plan through the various Phases.
5. Finally, while the Master Plan is being finalized and COVID is having out-sized impacts on budgets and resources, we ask that no further negotiations take place for long-term leases (5 yrs. or longer) or on the sale of any Exhibition Place property. We believe it would be imprudent to value this critical asset in this current marketplace.
6. Finally, we appeal on behalf of the two historic anchors to this site. The Canadian National Exhibition and The Royal Winter Fair have landmark significance to the residents of Toronto. We hope that City Council will make every effort to secure the survival of these two important institutions throughout the COVID crisis.

We thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.,

Sincerely,



Ric Amis  
Chair, West Side Community Council  
Secretary/Chair, Parkdale Residents Association

Members of the WSCC include the Grange Community Association, the Harbord Village Residents' Association, the Garment District Neighbourhood Association, the Trinity Bellwoods Community Association, the Ossington Community Association, the Lakeview Avenue Neighbourhood Association, the Liberty Village Residents' Association, Beaconsfield Village Residents' Association, Active 18, the Parkdale Residents Association, Roncesvalles-Macdonell Residents Association, and the Bloorale Community Improvement Association.