



Joe Cressy 周凱捷

City Councillor | Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York

February 16, 2021

Planning and Housing Committee
City Hall, Committee Room 1
100 Queen St W
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Members,

Re: Request to Province on Status and Timing of Funding Commitments for new schools in the Central Waterfront

Background

Toronto's Central Waterfront area is experiencing rapid growth. The Central Waterfront has an existing population of 39,000, an increase of 53% from the 2016 Census population of 25,380. Currently there are approximately 27,000 residential units in the development pipeline, where there is an active application or a project under construction. Full buildout of the CWSP and its associated precinct plans will result in a potential population of up to 115,000 residents.

The only public elementary school facility that exists in the Central Waterfront today is the Waterfront School, a small facility accommodating roughly 250 students and serving the Bathurst Quay neighbourhood in the western part of the Central Waterfront. The deficit in school facilities is especially acute in the emerging precincts east of Yonge Street over to the Don River, which include Lower Yonge, East Bayfront, Keating Channel (West) and West Don Lands. The City has secured lands and space for required school facilities through the planning process, with landowners awaiting decisions related to land/space transactions and related capital improvements.

Public elementary school facilities identified for the following fast-growing precincts are in need of immediate funding commitments:

- West Don Lands Precinct – Within the West Don Lands Precinct Plan, projections anticipate a population of 11,000 new residents, including 860 school-age children. Taking into account additional density approved through recent Ministerial Zoning Orders (MZOs), LPAT settlements, development proposals and undeveloped lands, it is estimated that the population will be 16,000 at full buildout, an increase of 45% from the projected precinct plan total. Within the Precinct Plan, Block 9 has been identified for a school facility, on which there is not a development application by TDSB.
- Lower Yonge Precinct – The Lower Yonge Precinct Plan was completed in 2016, with a projected population of 13,000 in a very dense 9-hectare neighborhood. The precinct plan identifies the need for 1 public elementary school with a capacity of 450 students. Space for this facility to be constructed has been secured in the podium of 55 Lakeshore Boulevard East implemented by a Section 37 agreement.



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- East Bayfront – The East Bayfront Precinct is estimated to have a residential population of 12,000, with over 900 school-age children. The Precinct Plan did not recommend a public elementary school location in the precinct, recommending instead that the Keating Channel elementary school should be designed to accommodate students from both East Bayfront and Keating Channel. East Bayfront has been developing quickly, with an existing population (2020 estimate) of 3,700, with 0 population in 2016, and an additional 4,700 residential units in the development pipeline.
- Keating Channel (West) Precinct – Full buildout of this Precinct Plan, west of Cherry Street, would see an estimated population in the area of 9,200 new residents. The Precinct Plan identifies the need for 1 public elementary school. The southern block of 333 Lakeshore Boulevard East, which is included in Quayside, has been identified for this purpose through the precinct planning process. Since the Keating Channel school facility was to service both Keating Channel and East Bayfront Precincts, this elementary school is essential as both precincts develop.

To support the achievement of complete communities, the legislative and policy frameworks of both the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto encourage planning for schools to be undertaken in a coordinated manner and for investment to happen in a timely way to service growth. With the rapid growth of the Central Waterfront area, especially the emerging communities east of Yonge Street, it is critical that an implementation and funding strategy for public elementary schools be in place as development proceeds.

Recommendation

1. City Council request the Minister of Education and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing identify the status and timing of Provincial funding commitments to construct public elementary school facilities on sites and space identified for this purpose across Toronto's Central Waterfront.

Sincerely,

Councillor Joe Cressy
Chair, Board of Health
Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York