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REPORT FOR ACTION

Activating a Revitalization Plan for the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood

Date: March 2, 2021
To: Planning and Housing Committee
From: Executive Director, Housing Secretariat and Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
Wards: Ward 13 – Toronto Centre

SUMMARY

In April 2019, City Council adopted Item MM6.13 - "The Dan Harrison Community Complex Master Plan" and directed staff to include a renewed comprehensive strategy to address the long-standing challenges at the Dan Harrison Community Complex as part of the Five-Year Downtown East Action Plan and the Tenants First reports.

In addition, in December 2019, City Council adopted Item PH11.10 - "Activating a Revitalization Plan for the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood", and directed staff to report back to the Planning and Housing Committee with a proposed neighbourhood revitalization plan for the Dundas East and Sherbourne Street area, including a business case for the modernization of the Dan Harrison Community Complex at 251 Sherbourne St. Staff were also requested to examine opportunities to fund the acquisition of the properties at 214, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226 and 230 Sherbourne Street, should they become available for purchase.

This report responds to Council's requests. It outlines work completed to-date and recommends short, medium and longer measures to activate a ten-year Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan for the Dundas East and Sherbourne Street neighbourhood (identified as the area bounded by Pembroke Street in the east, Ontario Street in the west, Carlton Street to the north and Queen Street to the south). Additionally, this report recommends that Council direct Toronto Community Housing Corporation to conduct further due diligence, including an assessment of cost and operational implications, related to the redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Community Complex.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Housing Secretariat and Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration recommend that:

1. City Council as sole shareholder, direct the Toronto Community Housing Corporation Board of Directors to direct the President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Community Housing Corporation to undertake the necessary due diligence work to identify the financial and operational implications related to the full redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Community Complex by the fourth quarter of 2021, and to submit the reports to the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat for review in consultation with the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management and Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO.

2. City Council direct the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, in consultation with the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, the President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Community Housing and Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO to report to the Planning and Housing Committee by the first quarter of 2022 with a proposed plan to improve the built-form and the operations of the Dan Harrison Community Complex and to create new supportive housing opportunities to better serve the needs of existing and future residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no current financial impacts arising from the recommendations contained in this report. There will be financial impacts in future budget cycles, and City staff of relevant divisions will identify and outline additional costs for future budget considerations.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

EQUITY IMPACT

One of the core goals of the 2023 Downtown East Action Plan, which was approved by City Council in July 2019, was to improve stability for people experiencing marginalization in the area, address gaps faced by equity-owed populations. The Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan will be a key component of this work. The Dundas Sherbourne Area has a significant homeless population either living in local shelters or visiting the area daily for services. City statistics have shown that approximately 40% of the homeless population identifies as Black. In addition, 3% of the population in the Dundas Sherbourne area identify as Indigenous, which is three times the City-wide average. This indicates that planning to address housing access and social supports in the area will have the potential for significant positive impact on these groups. This plan will include actions targeted to improve the quality and effectiveness of health and community services as well as shelter and housing conditions for Black and Indigenous Torontonians.

The HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan envisions a city in which all residents have equal opportunity to develop to their full potential. The HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan is also centred on a human rights-based approach to housing which recognizes that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of a person and to building healthy, inclusive sustainable and liveable communities. Providing stable affordable housing with appropriate social support services is also a goal of the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Toronto Community Housing Corporation's Dan Harrison Community Complex is home to many vulnerable and marginalized residents who experience disproportionately high rates of poverty, violence, crime and poor housing conditions. The recommendations of this report are intended to alleviate these issues by advancing work to improve living conditions for residents in the short, medium and longer terms.

Creating new affordable housing with appropriate supports will increase the opportunity for structurally vulnerable and marginalized individuals, including Indigenous Peoples, Black people, seniors, women, the LGBTQ2S+ community, and People of Colour to access safe, healthy and adequate homes.

Access to safe, secure, affordable housing is a key social determinant of health. It also improves the social and economic status of individuals, families and communities. Good quality, affordable housing is also the cornerstone of vibrant, healthy neighbourhoods and supports the environmental and economic health of the city, region and country as a whole.

DECISION HISTORY

On December 17, 2019 City Council adopted Item PH11.10 - "Activating a Revitalization Plan for the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood", and directed staff to report to the Planning and Housing Committee on April 16, 2020 with a proposed neighbourhood revitalization plan for the Dundas East and Sherbourne Street area, including a business case for the modernization of the Dan Harrison Community Complex, and to examine opportunities to fund the acquisition of the Properties and the properties at 214, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226 and 230 Sherbourne Street. http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaltemHistory.do?item=2019.PH11.10 On July 16, 17 and 18, 2019, City Council adopted Item EC6.16 - "Downtown East 2023 Five-Year Action Plan" which included comprehensive five-year Action Plan to coordinate City services and address long term community needs in the Downtown East area where the subject properties are located.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaltemHistory.do?item=2019.EC6.16

On April 16 and 17, 2019, City Council adopted Item MM6.13 - "The Dan Harrison Community Complex Master Plan", which directed staff to work with Toronto Community Housing a renewed comprehensive strategy for the Dan Harrison Community Complex. <u>http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaltemHistory.do?item=2019.MM6.13</u>

On July 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 30, 2018, City Council adopted EX36.37 - "Feasibility of Acquisition or Expropriation of 214, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226 and 230 Sherbourne Street", which provided the preliminary assessment on the potential acquisition or expropriation of the properties located at 214, 218, 220, 222, 224 Sherbourne Street, and directed staff to report back on an affordable housing real estate acquisition/expropriation strategy as part of the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan in 2019.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EX36.37

On March 26 and 27, 2018, City Council adopted Item MM38.10 - "230 Sherbourne Street - Potential Property Acquisition for Affordable Housing Purposes" which directed staff to report back to the June 25, 2018 Affordable Housing Committee on the results of the due diligence and the potential sources of funding to acquire the properties.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaltemHistory.do?item=2018.MM38.10

On March 31, 2015, City Council adopted Item TE 4.8 - "Final Report - Downtown East Planning Study - Official Plan Amendment" which established a site and area specific policy for the area known at the Garden District generally bounded by Mutual Street, Carlton Street, Sherbourne and Queen Street. This site and area specific policy (OPA 82) put in place land use direction and permissions for sites in the area, including the Dan Harrison site and the properties at 214-230 Sherbourne. <u>http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaltemHistory.do?item=2015.TE4.8</u>

On January 31, 2017 adopted TE21.12 - "Designation of the Garden District Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act", which established the Garden District Heritage Conservation District (HCD). This HCD is currently under appeal at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. Properties within the HCD, including the Dan Harrison site and 230 Sherbourne has either been listed or designated as an important cultural heritage property. The City Council Decision can be found at: http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaltemHistory.do?item=2017.TE21.12

Background

The 2023 Downtown East Action Plan was adopted by City Council in July 2019 to coordinate City services and address long-term community needs in the area. The Downtown East area is bounded by Bloor Street on the north, Front Street on the south, Bay Street on the west, and the Don Valley Parkway on the east. The Action Plan was designed to address a number of complex challenges in the area related to poverty, homelessness, housing, community safety, mental health and substance use, particularly opioid related overdoses.

In December 2019, City Council directed staff to propose a Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan including a full community engagement process for the Dundas East and Sherbourne area. The intended scope of the engagement is overall community needs with a specific focus on the modernization of the Dan Harrison Community Complex. The intent of the Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan is to address community safety and social cohesion issues which are longstanding and complex. Because of this complexity, a longer term vision for the area is also needed to facilitate partnership between diverse stakeholders in the area, guide City investment and advance intergovernmental advocacy.

Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan and Community/Tenant Engagement

In February, 2020 two facilitators were hired to conduct a series of focus groups to inform a comprehensive strategy for the future of the Dan Harrison Community Complex -- one part of the Downtown East Action Plan is to create safe and inclusive communities and provide stability for marginalized people. Their process found strong feedback from all groups that a full redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Building should be considered. Feedback was also provided to inform initial priorities for the community development in the area through the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan.

The Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan will include two components:

- a Community Development Plan, the development of which will be led by Social Development, Finance and Administration; and
- a Redevelopment Plan, which will comprise the Dan Harrison and Sherbourne Properties work outlined below, led by the Housing Secretariat.

In the Community Development Plan, immediate actions are designed to provide a response to acute community concerns regarding safety and cleanliness; mid-term work will be oriented around establishing a common community identity, enhancing access to appropriate mental health supports, and fostering community-led social activities; and long-term actions will focus on moving toward community health and wellness through alignment with local revitalization projects and strong community leadership.

The actions outlined in the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan also align with and advance the goals of several City of Toronto initiatives including the Community Benefits Framework, the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism and the City's Commitments to Reconciliation. It also aligns with the City's equity-based strategies including the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan and the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy. The Plan will be developed to ensure that actions build on and contribute to the advancement of the objectives of the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy, including actions that advance access to affordable housing, better coordination and effective delivery of services for vulnerable residents, and equitable employment and economic development for the Downtown East.

The Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan will also be implemented in close collaboration with the City's forthcoming Community Safety and Well Being Plan and the piloting of the new Community Crisis Support Service. The Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan will implement projects on the ground, such as the de-escalation team and the Housing Unit Takeover Pilot, which be in strong alignment with the Community Safety and Well Being Plan work around reducing victimization and community violence and strengthening trauma-responsive supports.

Community Development Plan

Below is an outline of the immediate, medium and longer term actions for the development of the Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan, including next steps to be taken in order to improve the health and well-being of residents in the community. Details for the Community Development Plan and Redevelopment Plan are further elaborated after the chart.

Phase	Confirmed/Anticipated Projects	Intended Long-term Outcomes
1) Immediate and Short-term Actions Q2 2021	 Launch of Peer Cleanup Team Launch of Community De- Escalation Team Launch of Community Safety Planning Table Dedicated Staff to oversee plan development and engagement of leadership group 	 Increase in timely and appropriate response to local concerns Reduced calls to Police for social disorder Reduced complaints about needles and garbage Increase in number of community members who know who to call for a safety concern

Chart A - Summary of Immediate, Mid-Term and Longer Term Actions

Phase	Confirmed/Anticipated Projects	Intended Long-term Outcomes
2) Mid-Term Actions Q3 2021- Q2 2022	 Community research and engagement process to define community identity, strengths and values Community events and activities to build social connection Roll out community-based initiatives to enhance, mental health, and employment/volunteer pathways Development of initiatives to respond to prioritized local populations Council review of Plan for Redevelopment of Dan Harrison Community Complex 	 Residents report that programs and interventions contribute to positive changes in the community Increase in number of safe, inclusive community events Increase in sense of connection to community Increase in number of people who report having supports and social networks to cope with a crisis Increase in number of people who report that participation in programs has improved their general health/ mental health and well-being
3) Longer Term 2022-2032	 Develop/advance local investment plans to coordinate City, provincial and federal government investments plus local agency investments in the area over time, including alignment between: George St Revitalization; John Innes Revitalization; St. Luke's Revitalization; And Metrolinx Development and Dan Harrison Community Complex Renewal Plan implementation and monitoring 	 Community members report having opportunity to give feedback programs and services in the area, awareness of where to direct complaints, and opportunity to participate in an advisory group Community members report increased perception of safety Community members report increased trust and collaboration with City and other local stakeholders

Short Term Actions

As a part of the Downtown East Action Plan, two new neighbourhood-specific initiatives will be mobilized in early 2021, a peer-led cleanup crew; and a community de-escalation team. These responses were prioritized as concerns about sharps and garbage (specifically on private property) and response to non-violent crisis or conflict were raised by all stakeholders as immediate local priorities.

In addition to these initiatives, a coordinated neighbourhood safety planning table will be mobilized. This process will build off the Operations Table model developed in the Yonge and Dundas area to develop a coordinated approach for elevating and deploying response to local safety concerns, and tracking response times. This safety planning table will create an opportunity for cross-mobilization of safety teams operating in the area. The Downtown East Action Plan will fund an external position to lead the mobilization of immediate actions and to oversee the engagement structure of all stakeholders in the planning process.

Concurrent with the immediate mobilization of these initiatives, a process will be implemented to engage local stakeholders in the development of a stakeholder table to guide the development, implementation, and monitoring of the Community Development Plan in the mid- and long-term. This group would be representative of residents, businesses, people with lived experience and local agencies, who would guide the process to find common goals, measures of success, and plan implementation of actions in the Downtown East Action Plan. This group will also undertake a focussed engagement process to ensure representation on the steering table of specific populations that may require targeted responses such as the Indigenous community, families, the Black homeless population, seniors, or other locally specific groups, with specific actions or outcomes articulated for these groups. This will be aligned with the Downtown East Action Plan consultation of the Indigenous community which will help to prioritize which actions from existing City consultations with the community should be mobilized in the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood.

Mid-Term Actions

The second phase of the Community Development Plan will include mid-term actions. This includes a process to define the community identity of the Dundas Sherbourne Neighbourhood in order to inform long range planning, and would include an assetbased research project to define neighbourhood strengths and values.

Mid-term actions in this phase are anticipated to focus on events and activities that build social connection and sense of community identity throughout the year. This phase is anticipated to also include programming related to mental health supports and local employment/volunteer opportunities, as well as engagement on a potential allocation of new homes specifically for Black households. Further details will be outlined in the Downtown East Action Plan report back in Q3 2021.

Longer-Term Actions

The longer term phase of the Community Development Plan will identify how the various revitalization projects in the area can be leveraged to support these community strengths and values in order to contribute to safety, inclusivity and liveability for all members of the community. These projects include the Dan Harrison Community Complex Renewal, the Revitalization of John Innes Community Recreation Centre and Moss Park, the George St Revitalization, and the St Luke's United Church redevelopment.

This phase of the plan will set priorities for local growth and identify investments required by all orders of government as well as the private and non-profit sectors. A monitoring and accountability structure to be overseen by the community will also be established as part of this work.

Redevelopment Plan

A Redevelopment Plan for the Dundas and Sherbourne Area will support improved housing outcomes for the people in the area. People experiencing homelessness who use shelter spaces or live rough in the area often require a range of supports for their ongoing housing and health stability. The 2018 Street Needs Assessment identified that 57% of respondents to more than one chronic health issue. In addition, the area has double the City-wide average of inadequate housing (14%) and 56% of seniors in the area live alone. 50% of households in the area are living under the low income cut-off, which does not include representation of the homeless population in the area. City data has shown that approximately 40% of the homeless population identifies as Black. In addition, 3% of the population in the Dundas Sherbourne area identify as Indigenous, which is three times the City-wide average.

Supportive housing with the capacity to appropriately accommodate people who have experience with substance use, mental health or trauma is integral to increasing safety and stability for the entire population. In addition to connecting these individuals to appropriate supportive housing across the City, strengthening the availability of supportive housing units within the Downtown East area will be needed to ensure people experiencing homelessness who have strong social and support ties in the area can maintain their connections to community and health and social supports, and that appropriate supports are available to meet the housing needs of residents in in appropriate housing as well.

The Redevelopment Plan for the neighbourhood will incorporate modernization of the existing built-form structures to create good quality, safe, adequate housing to improve housing outcomes for current and future residents as part of the Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan. This will include actions related to the Dan Harrison Community Complex and the Sherbourne Street Properties as listed below.

The Dan Harrison Community Complex

The Dan Harrison Community Complex is owned by Toronto Community Housing Corporation and located northeast of Dundas Street East and Sherbourne Street. It is a collection of heritage houses and newer mid-rise apartment buildings situated on the north-east block of Dundas St. East and Sherbourne St. within the broader Downtown East neighborhood of Toronto. The Complex provides affordable housing for some 430 residents, with 376 units in 17 rooming houses and two 6-storey mid-rise apartment buildings.

The area surrounding Dan Harrison is home to many of the City's most vulnerable and marginalized residents who experience high levels of poverty, addiction and mental health challenges, violence, crime and homelessness. Since the 1980s, Dan Harrison

has been seen as a high-need community. A comprehensive 1991 study found a community struggling with broken doors, forced locks, drug dealing, prostitution, isolated seniors and overwhelmed community agency staff.1 Accordingly, many agencies and organizations that help cater to this vulnerable population are located at the intersection of Dundas and Sherbourne and in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Toronto Community Housing Corporation has undertaken or planned a number of safety improvements for the Dan Harrison site based on previous consultation and feedback on the site. Highlights are listed in the chart below:

Timeframe	Detail	
Completed by March 2021	 Dan Harrison Violence Reduction Plan Officers have increased patrol and as a result there have been more incidents being recorded and investigated Dedicated Community Services Coordinator started in November 2020 to lead engagement on and education activities for tenants impacted by mental health and substance use issue Toronto Community Housing Corporation and City of Toronto have selected the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness to support the development of a community of practice to address Housing Unit Takeovers. Four new special constables/Community Safety Coordinators assigned to the site Increased G4S security guards deployed at Dan Harrison buildings Upgrades to lobby area that improve the feelings of safety and enhance the quality of life for residents 	
Upcoming in 2021	 Capital repair work proceeding as planned with work anticipated for Spring 2021 including: Perimeter fence upgrade Alarm system upgrades Repairs and upgrades to interior courtyard hardscaping Additional bike storage 	

As noted by Toronto Community Housing Corporation in its business case submission to the City (Attachment 1), the physical condition of the Dan Harrison Community Complex, as well as the lack of social services, are inadequate to properly address the complex needs of existing tenants and the surrounding community.

While the business case presented by Toronto Community Housing Corporation outlines two options including renewal or redevelopment, initial community outreach signalled a strong need for a full redevelopment of the Complex. Residents noted the

¹ City of Toronto Housing Department, Research Report #91-004, Review of the Dan Harrison Community Complex, July 1991.

need to replace deteriorating buildings and improve the design to enhance community safety, increase support services and to create a mixed-income community.

Additionally, as part of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation Mandate Direction Document for 2021 as adopted by Council in EX17.2, the City and Toronto Community Housing Corporation were directed to work together to explore using available resources to provide appropriate supports for homeless individuals and families in Toronto Community Housing Corporation units and to consult with community partners and develop a plan to transition some high needs buildings to supportive housing. The work to redevelop Dan Harrison Community Complex will consider this direction in addition to the redevelopment of the physical structure.

Future Redevelopment Process

This report recommends that Council direct Toronto Community Housing Corporation to undertake the necessary due diligence work to identify the financial and operational implications related to the full redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Community Complex by the fourth quarter of 2021, and to present recommendations to City staff for review/assessment. As part of this assessment, the Interdivisional City staff team, including CreateTO, will also assess the feasibility of creating new supportive housing opportunities with a range of wraparound supports.

Subject to future approvals by Council and securing the necessary funding, the future redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Community Complex will be carried through a stage gate process as approved by Council in Item No. PH7.4.

This process is to ensure appropriate levels of consultation, oversight and consistency in decision-making, while ensuring that City objectives, including affordable housing are achieved. The delivery framework including key activities, estimated timelines and key accountabilities is described below

	Stage 1: Initial Development Proposal and Consent	Stage 2: Procurement and Final Consents	Stage 3: Delivery
Key Actions	Initial Design Stakeholder Consultations Due Diligence Planning Guidelines Feasibility Analysis Class 4 cost estimate Initial assessment of funding and financing opportunities Initial Development Proposal Report Initiate Planning Framework Update (e.g. Secondary Plan, OPA, Rezoning)	Project procurement Evaluation of bids by joint TCHC/City/CreateTO team Design development and engineering Stakeholder consultation Class 3 estimate Funding/financing proposal Actions Report for Shareholder and Service Manager consents Planning report	Complete detailed design Sale/Lease Transaction Developer Financing Developer Planning Application (expedited) Stakeholder consultations Developer Construction Awards - Complete construction

	Stage 1: Initial Development Proposal and Consent	Stage 2: Procurement and Final Consents	Stage 3: Delivery
		Award and Negotiations following Council approval of project	
Duration (estimate)	9 months – 1 year from approval of the Initial Development Proposal by Council	9 months – 1 year from approval of the Initial Development Proposal by Council	2 - 5 years from approval of the Initial Development Proposal by Council

Sherbourne Properties

The properties at 214, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226 and 230 Sherbourne Street ("214-230 Sherbourne Street") are privately-owned and located roughly 100 metres south west of the Dan Harrison Community Complex. They consist of six vacant lots and one vacant, two and a half storey, heritage designated property.

Since mid-2020, CreateTO staff have been reaching out to the owners of 214-230 Sherbourne Street to assess their interest in selling the properties. To-date, the owners have not expressed an interest in selling but discussions remain ongoing. While discussions with the owners continue, staff will concurrently continue to explore possible funding opportunities, including funding through the federal National Housing Strategy program streams that could be used to purchase the site.

Conclusion

This report outlines work completed to-date and recommends short, medium and longer measures to activate a ten-year Neighbourhood Revitalization Plan for the Dundas East and Sherbourne Street neighbourhood. Additionally, this report recommends that Council direct Toronto Community Housing Corporation to conduct further due diligence, including an assessment of cost and operational implications, related to the redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Community Complex. Following an interdivisional City assessment of the feasibility assessment, City staff will report back to Council in the first quarter of 2022 with a plan for the future redevelopment.

The future redevelopment of the Dan Harrison Complex will be a key action to transform the Dundas East and Sherbourne Street neighbourhood. It will help improve access to safe, secure, affordable housing plus a range of wraparound support services for marginalized and vulnerable individuals, including those from racialized groups, women and people experiencing homelessness who continue to be underserved by our housing and health care systems. However, in order to advance this initiative and address some of the long-standing systemic and structural inequities facing disadvantages groups, strong support will be needed from the federal and provincial governments.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Draft Dan Harrison Community Complex Business Case