

April 29, 2024

Economic and Community Development Committee  
Toronto City Hall  
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Toronto, ON M5H 2N2  
ecdc@toronto.ca

To: Councillor Alejandra Bravo and members of the Economic and Community Development Committee, City of Toronto.

**Re: EC12.2 - Downsview Community Development Plan**

Social Planning Toronto is excited to be a part of the Downsview development that is embarking on the Secondary Plan approval process. As a participant in the consultation process for the last two years, as a member of the Community Resource Group, we are very optimistic for the opportunities this development brings to Downsview communities. We see potential in the newly released Community Development Plan (CDP) associated with the Secondary Plan.

We want to provide our support for a strong Community Development Plan (CDP) that will advance equitable neighbourhood planning and community benefits in Downsview. We hope the committee and SDFA consider the following recommendations, which we feel could strengthen the implementation of the CDP.

- 1) **Setting Initial Targets:** By setting initial targets in the eight priority areas, a foundation can be set for the evaluation of the CDP or future status reports. These initial targets can then be shaped or adjusted through the proposed Community Resource Group. Some concrete targets will be outlined in the upcoming Secondary Plan or District Plans. These targets can be adapted to the CDP priority areas. Establishing baseline targets will support accountability, monitoring, and evaluation and will enable Downsview communities to own the CDP in a meaningful way.
- 2) **Shorten the CDP review timeline from five to three years:** A shortened time frame of three years, rather than the proposed 5 years for the review of CDP will make it easier for

community members to stay engaged and informed by seeing regular progress in the plan. Members of the Community Resource Group (CRG) have also supported a shorter review timeline. Community members have high expectations for this development and will likely be encouraged to stay involved with shorter time commitments and updates.

- 3) **Make space for people with lived experience in the governance structures:** One of the stated aims of the CDP is to support the development of inclusive and equitable communities. To meet this aim, we encourage that in the development of the updated Community Resource Group, there are opportunities and space for people with lived experience of poverty to participate. We encourage the City of Toronto to consider a governance structure that allows learning opportunities and capacity-building for community members to stay informed, participate, and contribute at an equal level. Accountability structures should ensure that when input is provided by community members that they are informed of the outcomes of their input and how decision-making takes place.

SPT wishes to congratulate the Canada Lands Company and Northcrest Development for opening their doors to neighbours. We hope this relationship gets stronger with cooperation, active listening, and continuing to create opportunities for Downsview communities. The possibilities are endless here for Downsview and our city.

Sincerely,

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