

## **Commuter Parking Opportunities for 777 Victoria Park Avenue**

**Date:** November 21, 2024

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management

**Wards:** 20 – Scarborough-Southwest

### **REASON FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

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The attachment to this report is about a position to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the City of Toronto.

### **SUMMARY**

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On July 24, 2024 City Council requested through item [2024.PH14.6](#) that the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services, the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management (“CREM”), and the Board of Directors, CreateTO to direct the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO to identify options for additional off-site Green P public parking to off-set the loss of commuter parking at 777 Victoria Park Avenue as a result of the Housing Now project at this location. The item also directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, and the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO to identify parking opportunities at 781 Victoria Park Avenue, Dentonia Park Golf Course (the “Golf Course”), for Toronto Transit Commission’s (“TTC”) Victoria Park Station commuter use, with consideration of the impacts on Golf Course operations and other operational requirements. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the review for parking alternatives, including at the Golf Course.

Following City Council’s direction to review the capacity of the Golf Course parking lot to accommodate commuter parking, CreateTO retained a consultant to undertake a parking utilization study. The study concluded that upon completion of the new TTC Passenger Pick-Up and Drop-Off (“PPUDO”) on-site, previously approved by Council, and which reduces the current capacity of the golf course parking from 55 to 47, remaining parking spaces will be required to support the Golf Course and parkland

users. Any further reduction to the Golf Course parking lot for commuter use will have significant impact to the Golf Course's operations and its continued viability.

CreateTO, and the Toronto Parking Authority, in consultation with CREM, continue to explore alternative sites for replacement commuter parking. Additional details are provided in this report and in Confidential Attachment 1.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Board of Directors, CreateTO to direct the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO, and the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, in consultation with the President, Toronto Parking Authority, to:

a) undertake a parking utilization study of 705 Warden Avenue to determine available capacity;

b) undertake continued due diligence to further explore options for offsite paid Green P public parking facility as outlined in Confidential Attachment 1; and

c) report to City Council in the second quarter of 2025 with results of the parking utilization study at 705 Warden Avenue and the due diligence analysis to establish a new off site Green P parking facility, including updated financial estimates, and recommend the most suitable commuter parking solution(s).

2. City Council authorize the public release of Confidential Attachment 1 following the conclusion of any real estate transactions.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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Funding of \$60,000 will be required in 2024 to undertake a parking utilization study at 705 Warden Avenue in order to determine available capacity. An additional estimated \$16,000 to undertake due diligence is required in 2024 to secure options and provide more reliable cost estimates and financial projections for a new Green P parking lot. A total of \$76,000 in funding is available in the Corporate Real Estate Management 2024 capital budget for these initiatives.

Toronto Parking Authority ("TPA") has not allocated operating or capital funds for an additional off-street Green P parking lot. The current financial analysis for alternative parking locations indicates the new parking lot would require funding to undertake capital improvements to meet operational standards and to operate the facility, with funding provided through the City's capital and operating budget. Preliminary estimates

to establish and maintain a new parking lot, subject to further due diligence, are provided in Confidential Attachment 1.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact section.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting on July 24-25, 2024, City Council adopted PH14.6 “Advancing the Construction of Affordable Rental Homes at 777 Victoria Park Ave”. This report made a number of recommendations to help facilitate the Housing Now project at 777 Victoria Park and realize a significant number of new affordable rental homes. The Dentonia Park Golf Course parking lot was discussed in the context of this report, including direction to identify other parking alternatives in the area.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.PH14.6>.

At its meeting on July 24, 2024, Committee of Adjustment approved a Minor Variance related to 777 Victoria Park Ave. This approval removed the developer’s request for a reduction in public parking. The proposed shared parking spaces for visitor, commuter and public parking in the Proposed Development is 75 spaces. The Minor Variance became final and binding on August 14, 2024.

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/9794-CommitteeofAdjustment-Scarborough-Hearing-Agenda-July-24-2024.pdf>.

At its meeting on October 11, 2023, City Council adopted GG6.17 “Award of Negotiated Request for Proposal Document Number 3703952212 for Management of Play, Pro Shops and Food and Beverage Services at Five City-Operated Golf Courses”. This report authorized staff to enter into a contract with Thistle Golf Ltd.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.GG6.17>

At its meeting on February 2, 2022, City Council adopted IE27.6 “Review of City of Toronto Golf Courses”. This report made a number of recommendations regarding the future of golf operations & community programming in the City of Toronto

<https://secure.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.IE27.6>

At its meeting on January 30, 2019, City Council adopted EX 1.1 "Implementing the "Housing Now" Initiative". This report provided recommendations on the organizational structure and processes to deliver the Housing Now Initiative, the proposed affordable housing program and the overall financial implications of the program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EX1.1>

## COMMENTS

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### Background

#### *777 Victoria Park Avenue – Housing Now Development and TTC Commuter Lot*

In January 2019, City Council approved a signature affordable housing initiative, Housing Now, to leverage and optimize the use of City-owned surplus land at 777 Victoria Park Avenue. The proposed development brings a Mixed Use Hub containing a total of 705 rental homes (256 of which are affordable rental), and amenities including shared parking, retail, new child care centre, community space and privately owned public spaces (“POPS”). Redevelopment of the parking lot is aligned with City Council directions to prioritize affordable housing through the Housing Now program, and aligns with various Planning policies to make better use of surface parking lots in proximity to transit stations, including:

- City of Toronto Official Plan: Direction to redevelop surface parking lots on City-owned land and limit the supply of surface parking as a non-ancillary use for sites in areas well serviced by transit (Policy 2.4.7).
- Provincial Policy Statement (2020): Direction to identify appropriate locations for transit-supportive development to accommodate a significant supply of housing options through intensification and redevelopment (Policy 1.1.3.3).

The housing project is being constructed on the existing commuter parking lot, which currently contains 174 public parking spaces (excluding 4 taxi stands and 9 PPUDO spaces). In 2024, Lea Consulting was retained by CreateTO to undertake a parking study for the TTC parking lot located at 777 Victoria Park Avenue. The study determined the peak weekday utilization rate was 100%. A license plate survey was also conducted to identify parking users’ origin. Key highlights include:

- **Local Ward:** 21% to 27% of parking users live directly within Ward 20
- **Other Wards:** 34% to 42% of parking users live in Wards 16, 19, 21 and 24
- **Outside of City:** 18% to 27% of parking users live outside of the City

#### *Public Parking Opportunities at 777 Victoria Park Avenue*

The new Housing Now development at 777 Victoria Park Avenue will contain 75 shared parking spaces for visitor, commuter, and public parking. The shared parking spaces are expected to be available once the building is completed, which is currently estimated in December 2030.

City Council directed staff to identify up to 50 additional parking spots beyond the initial 54 replacement spots originally planned for the redevelopment. Subsequently, a further 21 spots were secured in the redevelopment for a total of 75 Spaces in the new development. As such, staff are targeting an additional 30 spaces, for a total target of 105 replacement parking spaces in proximity to TTC's Victoria Park Station. The City of Toronto does not have defined service levels for municipally owned parking around transit stations and or hubs, or municipal parking services at large (e.g. based on

population density, geography, ward, or commercial activity levels). 105 parking spaces provide a replacement rate of 60% of the current available 174 parking spaces. In addition, new residents who occupy the planned 705 rental homes at 777 Victoria Park Avenue will be in walking distance to the Station, thereby increasing overall TTC ridership while reducing the need for vehicles-based ‘last mile’ connections to and from the Station.

**Alternative Commuter Parking Sites**

CreateTO performed a geographic scan of public and private parking opportunities within 800 meters (or a 10-minute walk) of the Station, in pursuit of 30 additional parking spaces, over and above the 75 spaces to be included in the new development, and to achieve the total target of 105 replacement spaces.

A total of 10 opportunities are in various stages of exploration, as outlined in Confidential Attachment 1.

**Dentonia Park Golf Course and Parks Operations**

Dentonia Park Golf Course (the “Golf Course”) is one of the options explored for additional commuter parking, as directed by City Council, given its location directly north of the Station. The Golf Course is City-owned and provides access to high-quality and affordable golf between March and November.

The Golf Course is the City’s most affordable golf course and has experienced significant growth in golf participation and revenue. Between 2018 and 2023, total course utilization grew by over 100 per cent, from 21,218 total rounds of golf to 42,457. Revenue to date for the 2024 season at the Golf Course is tracking ahead of 2023. Through October 2024, the Golf Course generated approximately \$980,000 in gross revenue compared to \$1,035,000 during the same period in 2023. Table 1 contains details of this growth in participation and revenue.

Table 1: Dentonia Park Golf Course Usage Metrics

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Rounds of Golf	21,218	24,181	32,802	34,218	36,747	42,457
Total Revenue	\$415,302	\$482,790	\$713,078	\$745,455	\$862,933	\$1,009,997

In 2024, the City entered into a 10-year management agreement with Thistle Golf Ltd. (“TGL”) following a negotiated RFP (“nRFP”) process to provide golf management, food and beverage services, retail, and community programming at all City-owned golf courses. The management agreement between TGL and the City includes relevant parking provisions to support the sustainability of the Course. Following the planned construction of the PPUDO and associated reduction of parking spaces from 55 to 47 at

the Course, TGL has advised that any further reduction in parking may result in a net-loss in golf-related revenue and participation in community programming. Such changes may affect the terms of the management agreement with TGL.

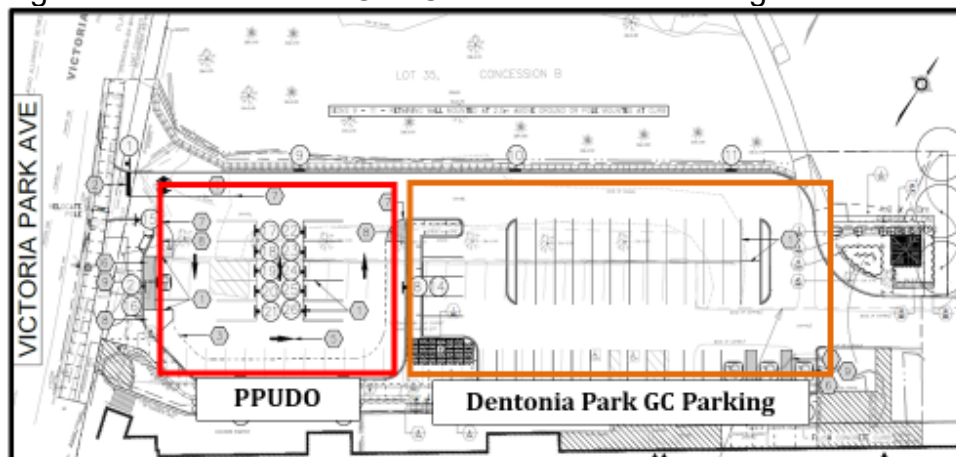
Notwithstanding the impacts to golf course operations, directing the use of the Golf Course for commuter parking could lead to future financial implications, including the need for enforcement, signage, and payment infrastructure. Reducing parking for golf users may also result in impacts on nearby on-street parking, as participants may seek alternative parking on local streets. The extent of these impacts would require further study.

### **Dentonia Park Golf Course: Parking Utilization Study**

The Housing Now redevelopment at 777 Victoria Park Avenue will relocate the existing TTC PPUDO from the current site into a rebuilt parking lot at 781 Victoria Park Avenue, the Golf Course.

The design of the rebuilt parking lot will see a reduction from 55 to 47 parking spaces at the Golf Course's parking facility as a result of the PPUDO accommodation including 11 short-term parking spaces for PPUDO purposes. See Figure 1 below for more details.

Figure 1: Dentonia Park Golf Course – Future Parking Lot



CreateTO retained Lea Consulting to undertake a study (the “Study”) to determine the feasibility to convert a portion of the parking lot at the Golf Course for commuter parking use. The study undertook three initiatives:

- Parking utilization study of both the Golf Course and 777 Victoria Park Avenue (current TTC commuter parking lot);
- Parking tracing survey to differentiate TTC commuter users from golf course users; and
- License plate surveying of inbound vehicles to create a user profile.

Excluding Sunday, utilization of the parking lot specifically by users of the Golf Course was between 43 and 48 vehicles or 78% to 87% of capacity. Adjusting for the new parking supply upon construction of the PPUDO, peak utilization is projected to be 91% to 102% of future capacity, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Dentonia Park Golf Course Parking Lot Usage Study Results

Date	Peak Time	Peak Parking Space Demands of Golf Users	Overall Utilization in Current Parking Lot (55 Spaces)	Overall Utilization After Construction of PPUDO (47 Spaces)
Wednesday, July 31, 2024	11:30 AM	43	78%	91%
Thursday August 1, 2024	9:30 AM	47	85%	100%
Friday August 16, 2024	8:30 AM	47	85%	100%
Saturday August 10, 2024	12:30 PM	48	87%	102%
Sunday August 11, 2024	9:00 AM	37	67%	79%

The study concluded that anticipated golf users will utilize the full parking lot for the majority of the golf season and there is no residual capacity available for other users.

Due to the timing of City Council's direction, only the in-season impacts have been reviewed. As directed by City Council, the City has also advanced initiatives related to year-round recreational and complementary community programming use. If further consideration for commuter use of the Golf Course's parking lot during the golf off-season were to be considered, further study would be required to fully understand any off-season impacts to programming and community access. Due to the upcoming construction of the PPUDO and planned upgrades at the Station (occurring during the 2026 to 2027 golf off-season), the earliest examination of off-season commuter parking could reasonably take place would be following construction and the conclusion of the 2027 golf season.

### Other Parking Options near TTC Stations

TTC's Victoria Park Station is between Warden Station to the east and Main Street Station to the west, where alternative parking for vehicles is also available.

#### *Warden Station Parking (six-minute drive/3.1 km to TTC Victoria Park Station)*

Warden Station's north parking lot at 705 Warden Avenue has a total of 920 parking spaces, with an average daily peak occupancy of 27% (which increased from 11%

occupancy following closure of Warden Station's south parking lot in November 2023). Considering the relatively low utilization rate (27% or 248 spaces occupied at the daily peak), there is estimated capacity to accommodate 672 more vehicles, which can mathematically accommodate all 174 commuter parking spaces at 777 Victoria Park Avenue. As such, commuters may be directed to park at 705 Warden Avenue instead of 777 Victoria Park Avenue as an interim measure. Pricing at 705 Warden Avenue is the same as 777 Victoria Park Avenue, with a daily rate of \$4.00 between 5:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m., an evening rate of \$2.00 between 3:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m., and free parking on weekends and statutory holidays. An observation study of the north parking lot at 705 Warden Avenue is recommended in this report to confirm TPA's average daily peak occupancy rate of 27%, as this only captures paid customer transactions.

705 Warden Avenue is a Housing Now affordable rental housing site. Due to the complexity and scale of the project, plus current market conditions, there is currently no established start date for construction. Nonetheless, staging of the new development is being investigated to be done in phases that may allow for the maximum number of parking to be available during construction (the exact number of parking spaces and phasing is not known at this time). The final development at 705 Warden Avenue is currently proposed to provide a total of 277 parking spaces (compared to 920 currently available) for the public once construction is completed.

#### *Main Street Station parking (five-minute drive/1.6km to TTC Victoria Park Station)*

There are no Green P parking lots near Main Street Station. However, there are private parking options that are approximately a five-minute walk to Main Street station, including:

- Canada Wide Parking: 2681 Danforth Avenue - Canadian Tire Parking Lot
- ParkSmart: 255 Main Street (convenience address) - Underground Garage
- Canada Wide Parking: 2451 Danforth Avenue - Sobey's Parking Lot

### **Conclusion**

CreateTO, TPA, in consultation with CREM, will continue to explore alternative parking arrangements in proximity to the Station, and subject to funding availability, may be able to secure new parking solutions. The parking study of the Golf Course parking lot concluded that, following the completion of the TTC PPUDO, there is no available capacity for commuter parking during golf season. Significant impacts to parking infrastructure would affect public access, leading to potential financial burdens and implications for the City's management agreement with TGL.

CreateTO and City staff will undertake a utilization study of the parking lot at 705 Warden Avenue to determine available capacity and undertake due diligence for establishing a new TPA lot as described in Confidential Attachment 1, and report back to City Council in the second quarter of 2025 with the most suitable commuter parking solution(s).



## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Patrick Matozzo  
Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Confidential Attachment 1 - Alternative Parking Options Explored and Preliminary Financial Estimates for Green P Parking Facility