

## **Woodbine Transit Oriented Community Secondary Plan - Authorization to Enter into Agreements for Resourcing**

**Date:** January 3, 2025

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Executive Director, Development Review

**Ward:** 1 - Etobicoke North

### **SUMMARY**

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Through the Toronto-Ontario New Deal, the City and Province agreed to advancing transit-oriented communities (TOC), including the prioritization and expeditious treatment of planning approvals for a mixed-use TOC at the future Woodbine GO station. This report seeks Council authorization for the City to negotiate a Resourcing Agreement with the Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) to cover costs of City staff time required to complete the future Woodbine TOC Secondary Plan.

The Resourcing Agreement will include funding of new temporary City staff positions compensated with regular rates of pay, and contributions towards the procurement of consultants for required peer reviewed studies.

This report also recommends an exemption from the Donations to the City of Toronto for Community Benefits Policy which is required in order for the City to accept payments under the Resourcing Agreement.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Executive Director, Development Review recommend that:

1. City Council authorize the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Executive Director, Development Review to negotiate and enter into a Resourcing Agreement with Woodbine Entertainment Group for the purpose of funding a dedicated staff team to complete a Secondary Plan study on an expedited basis, on terms acceptable to the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Executive Director, Development Review, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

2. City Council approve an exemption from the Donations to the City of Toronto for Community Benefits Policy for the purpose of payments made under the Resourcing Agreement in Recommendation 1. above.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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City Planning and Development Review are recommending that a Resourcing Agreement be executed to secure funding to support an expedited planning process for a Woodbine TOC Secondary Plan.

Funding received will be detailed in future program reporting brought forward for Council consideration through the budget process.

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

## DECISION HISTORY

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On July 19, 2023, City Council adopted Item [PH5.3](#) recommending Official Plan Amendment 653 (OPA 653), which retained the southern portion of 555 Rexdale Boulevard as Employment Areas and continued the *Core Employment Areas* land use designation for this portion of the lands. OPA 653 is subject to Ministerial approval pursuant to section 26 of the *Planning Act*. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has not issued his decision on OPA 653.

On December 13, 2023, City Council adopted [CC13.2](#) related to the Ontario-Toronto New Deal Agreement. Core Commitments of the New Deal terms include Advancing Transit Oriented Communities on the Woodbine lands, surrounding the future Woodbine GO station, despite the Council's adoption of OPA 653.

## COMMENTS

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[The New Deal terms](#) between the City and the Province state that, despite the City's recently submitted Official Plan Amendments, the City commits to cooperation and collaboration on a proposal for mixed-use TOC at the future Woodbine GO as well as prioritization and expeditious treatment of planning approvals.

### Working Group

The Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) staff initiated a working group with representatives from Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG), Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), MOI and City staff. The first meeting was held on July 15, 2024, with the second on October 8, 2024.

Following the working group process, on October 28, 2024, in a letter to MMAH staff, the Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services made recommendations outlining potential Minister's modifications to OPA 653 as it relates to the southeast portion of the lands at 555 Rexdale Boulevard. The recommended Minister's modifications reflect key City principles that a master planning exercise would need to consider for the southeast portion of the site, including demonstrating residential compatibility with nearby impactful industries and Pearson International Airport, requiring minimum amounts of affordable housing, and balancing residential and employment growth in each phase of development.

## **Proposed Secondary Plan Process**

Staff's recommended modifications, if approved, will set out a framework for a collaborative Secondary Plan study process, where WEG will undertake a due diligence exercise and produce background studies that the dedicated City staff team will review. Based on staff's review of WEG's submitted material, staff will prepare a Secondary Plan for Council's consideration under expedited timelines. Given the collaborative study process, staff have committed to complete the Secondary Plan within 12 months from the day that WEG submits a complete set of required background materials.

## **Dedicated Staff Team**

To satisfy the New Deal terms, the City will require a team of dedicated staff to complete an expedited Secondary Plan process, complete with public and stakeholder engagement. WEG has agreed to pay for the dedicated staff positions.

Accepting funding for these temporary staff positions directly from WEG runs contrary to the [Donations to the City of Toronto for Community Benefits](#) Policy, including section 1,, which prohibits donations during planning approval and procurement processes. Under section 3.9 of the Policy, Council approval is also required to accept funding from WEG as its value will exceed \$50,000 in a fiscal year. City Planning staff, in consultation with Legal Services and Strategic Partnerships staff, have determined that an exemption from the Donations Policy is required to accept payment for dedicated staff time from WEG.

## **Next Steps**

Staff are developing Terms of Reference for the required background studies in collaboration with WEG's consultant team. This ongoing process will result in Terms of Reference that will include and determine: a detailed breakdown of the required Secondary Plan components; levels of effort for staff to review each component; and necessary number of staff subject-matter experts to deliver a Secondary Plan for Council's consideration within 12 months.

Upon receiving Council's authorization to enter into a Resourcing Agreement, staff will finalize the agreement terms with WEG's representatives. Once the agreement is executed, staff will expedite the hiring process for the required temporary positions. These temporary positions will be compensated at rates consistent with the regular pay scale for each identified role.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

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