



Oren Tamir
Interim Executive Director
Development Review Division

Toronto & East York District
Toronto City Hall
18th fl. E., 100 Queen St. W.
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Carly Bowman, M.Sc.Pl., MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning

Tel: (416) 338-3788
Refer to: Doris Ho (416) 338-1264
E-Mail: Doris.Ho@toronto.ca
www.toronto.ca/planning

Don Boyle
Chief Executive Officer
Exhibition Place
200 Princes' Boulevard
Toronto, ON M6K 3C3

March 4, 2026

Re: Review of Proposed Exhibition Place Vision Plan
Ward 10 - Spadina-Fort York

Thank you for sharing the revised plans for Festival Plaza, as shown in the deck 'Exhibition Place Better Living Centre - Festival Plaza Concept' prepared by Studio tla and presented to staff at a meeting on January 21st. This letter provides a preliminary response to the revised Festival Plaza concept shown in that deck, an evolution of the plans initially presented to staff in the slide deck entitled 'A Vision Plan for Exhibition Place' dated May 2025.

The revised concept presents a high-level vision for public realm improvements to the central area of the Exhibition Place grounds. It proposes two distinct areas of focus for a range of public realm improvements and amenities:

- A pedestrian connection to Ontario Place and the central waterfront, comprised of three distinct areas (Food Village, Spine and The Hub), generally located east of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and the Better Living Centre and west of the Food Building, BMO Field and lot 852.
- An alternative vision for 'Festival Plaza', which had initially been proposed to be located at parking lot 852.

Staff continue to view the proposals for public realm improvements as shown in the Vision Plan generally consistent with the direction provided in the 2020 Exhibition Place Master Plan – Phase I Proposals report. We recommend that the Master Plan Proposals Report should be used as a basis for further developing the design ideas expressed in the revised concept. The Master Plan was developed based on extensive consultation with the public and Exhibition Place tenants, and incorporates the principles of the City's Official Plan, as well as other important guiding documents and legislation, such as the Ontario Heritage Act and the Exhibition Place Cultural Heritage Landscape Assessment.

With regard to the changes to the proposal for Festival Plaza, staff believe that the proposed retention and adaptive re-use of the north bay of the Better Living Centre

building, in particular, is a considerable improvement over the earlier proposal, which had included the demolition of this listed heritage building. Heritage staff will provide further comments on the proposal when the necessary Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is submitted. As discussed during our meeting on January 21st, a Conservation Plan will also be required to be submitted. Heritage Planning staff are happy to meet with Exhibition Place staff and the consultant retained to undertake the HIA for Festival Plaza to discuss the project.


Our thanks as well for sharing the draft annotated table of contents for the 'Concept Implementation Framework' document, which is intended to outline the basis for the further development of the revised concept. City staff look forward to working with Exhibition Place staff on the concept, and the detailed design of both the proposed pedestrian connection and the Festival Plaza.

Consistent with our previous advice, we urge you to advance the work as two integrated but separate components/projects. This is because, of the two components, the Festival Plaza component will be more complex to design and implement, and will require a greater level of effort in terms of due diligence. This approach would allow Exhibition Place to move forward faster on the development of more detailed plans for the pedestrian connection, should funding be advanced.

For both projects, a design process should seek to advance the projects in a phased manner (30%, 60%, 90% and 100% design milestones). Stakeholder and community engagement, including engagement with First Nations, should be incorporated at the 30% and 60% design stages, and the designs should be presented to one of the Waterfront or City DRPs for input.

Staff recommend pursuing the pedestrian connection between the Exhibition Place Transit Hub and Ontario Place as a priority in recognition of the need to provide for this connection as part of the transit network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carly R", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Carly Bowman, M.Sc.Pl., MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning
Toronto and East York District
Development Review Division