



## Little Jamaica Community Coalition

### PH27.5 - 9 Shortt Street - Zoning By-law Amendment Application - Decision Report - Approval

**Date:** January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

**Subject:** Letter supporting a non-profit lead on the 9 Shortt Street development

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee and Council,

We are excited to learn about the City of Toronto's future development plans for our community at the 9 Shortt Street site. As a collection of local housing advocates, non-profits, CLT's, and community builders in the Little Jamaica and Eglinton-Vaughan neighbourhood, we are encouraged this project proposes much needed affordable rental housing units alongside public space, amenity and retail.

As you are aware, this equity seeking neighbourhood has faced many challenges because of prolonged transit construction and rising cost of living which have negatively impacted the area's cultural composition, retail vitality, and economic opportunities. Consequently, many of our community members including a largely Black, visible minority, working class, and senior population have witnessed this tension and displacement in Little Jamaica firsthand.

The 9 Shortt St. development offers a unique opportunity to counteract many of these negative trends and provide a model for affordable, community centred and dignified housing, amenity and retail space. Understanding this, we are collectively requesting that a non-profit lead (such as a cooperative, community land trust, non-profit housing provider, or a consortium of such) be required in the Request for Proposal. In addition, we collectively request that deeply affordable units are provided within this development.

The following is a list of items we believe are critical in enabling this development to truly meet the needs and interests of the neighbourhood and its residents. These requests are for your consideration and are items we'll continue to advocate for as the project progresses.



- 1. Non-profit Lead:** Similar to the recently awarded Parkdale Hub, we request the main stakeholder of 9 Shortt St. to be led by a non-profit as a non-profit has the best intentions and capacity in partnering to develop community centred housing, amenity, and retail. This should be specifically required within the RFP, including the option for a consortium if non-profits maintain a majority stake/ leadership. Such non-profits can include non-profit housing providers, cooperatives, and community land trusts. Such a consortium can assist in issues of capacity that the density of the project poses.
- 2. Affordable Housing:** We request the development plan to prioritize deeply affordable and broader (more units) affordability, including RGI, by offering additional points to bidders that propose increasing affordability through creative solutions. Specifically, deeply affordable units are of incredible importance as the 2021 census shows that 30% of people in the surrounding area cannot afford over \$1200 for rents to be affordable. Yet, the affordable rates proposed by the city are much higher, meaning that such “affordability” is likely to further the displacement of the community which has particularly impacted Black residents. This requires different city offices and departments to be open to innovation and actively encourage new ideas to reach this target in a financially sustainable way.
- 3. Community Benefits:** We request the successful proponent be required to work with our coalition and local community organizations to co-develop, finalize and publish a unique Community Economic Benefits Plan. The plan must outline the project’s objectives and targets when it comes to apprenticeship training, hiring and workforce diversity, local and Black business procurement, supply chain diversity, and include tracking, monitoring and reporting protocols.
- 4. Affordable Length:** We request the RFP requires those that get the bid to keep the affordable units at the set affordable prices or lower for 99+ years.
- 5. Black and Senior Priority:** We would like to see project proponents demonstrate a good understanding and interest in the needs of Black residents and low-income



Seniors, with leads or development partners that can deliver critical services to these groups -including housing services, cultural services, health services, etc.

6. **Culturally Specific Retail:** We request that the development plan includes a requirement for project proponents to work with local organizations to promote and enhance culturally specific retail and amenity space with a particular focus on the Afro-Caribbean community given cultural history and demographic of the community. Focus should also be given to Afro-Caribbean and community ownership of said retail.
7. **Community Engagement:** We request that the RFP requires project proponents to coordinate ongoing and meaningful engagement with the community, including working with the community to increase affordability of housing, facilitating community benefits opportunities and decreasing local displacement of people and businesses. This engagement should be conducted in a collective manner where information is shared equally as are engagement and decision opportunities.
8. **CLT Priority:** We request that priority is given to local CLT's in partnering with non-profit team leads as they have a deep understanding of local issues and resident needs.

We look forward to seeing these recommendations reflected in the development plan for 9 Shortt St. and working with you to maximize the benefits and opportunities this project will bring to the community.

Sincerely,

Kumsa Baker

**On behalf of the Little Jamaica Community Coalition:** Toronto Community Benefits Network, CP Planning, Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization, & Eglinton Vaughan Community Land Trust