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Planning and Housing Committee
2025.PH26.6, North York at the Centre:
Directions Report for an Updated Secondary Plan

**Re: Recommended Option – North York Centre Secondary Plan (NYCSP)
Preliminary Comments for 11 – 21 Johnston Avenue**

1.0. Background

We are writing on behalf of the owners of the properties municipally known as 11 -21 Johnston Avenue (the “subject site”). The subject site is an assembly of three (3) properties, currently occupied by 1 to 2-storey single detached dwellings. This correspondence is in response to the Recommended Option for the update to the North York Centre Secondary Plan (NYCSP) presented to Planning and Housing Committee to be considered on December 3, 2025.

2.0. Description of Area Context

The subject site is in an area characterized by a mix of low, mid-rise and tall residential, mixed-use and office buildings, located along the Yonge Street and Sheppard Avenue East corridors. The subject site is located adjacent to the existing western boundary of the *North York Centre* which is generally bounded by Cummer Avenue to the north, Doris Avenue to the east, Highway 401 to the south and Beecroft Road to the west. The NYCSP has seen significant development and intensification over the last 2 decades plus, given its location at the intersection of two (2) subway lines, being a *Centre* in City policy terms, and being in proximity to a diverse range of community amenities, retail, commercial and office uses.

The subject site has excellent surface and rapid transit connectivity. The subject site is located approximately 130.0 m (approximately 2-minute walk) from the Poyntz entrance to the Sheppard-Yonge subway station. Several TTC and GO bus routes are located near the subject site and converge at a bus terminal of the Sheppard-Yonge subway station. As the intersection of two subway lines together with a significant bus terminal, the Yonge-Sheppard subway station is a Major Transit Hub.

3.0. Policy Context

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS 2024) was issued under section 3 of the Planning Act and came into force on October 20, 2024. PPS 2024 emphasizes the promotion of intensification, compact development, and transit-supportive densities to optimize land and infrastructure use, including public transit and pedestrian-friendly design. A key focus of the PPS is the intensification of lands around existing and proposed higher-order transit stations, to enable the provision of a broader range of housing opportunities close to transit stations.

The subject site is by definition in the PPS 2024, within a *Strategic Growth Area* and a *Major Transit Station Area* due to its location very close to *higher order transit* and *frequent transit* service, focused

at the Sheppard subway station. Many of the surface nearby transit routes operate all day, seven days a week, and in some cases, provide transit service every ten minutes or better. By definition, such transit routes are referred to *frequent transit* by the PPS.

City of Toronto Official Plan (City OP)

The subject site is designated *Neighborhoods* on Map 16 - Land Use of the City of Toronto Official Plan (City OP) a designation which permits a full range of residential uses within lower scale buildings, as well as parks, schools, local institutions and small-scale stores and shops serving the needs of area residents. The lands immediately to the east are designed *Mixed Use Areas*. While the subject site and the lands to the north, south and west are currently designated *Neighbourhoods*, as part of the NYCSP Review, this designation is currently under review, as discussed further below.

Official Plan Amendment No. 570 – Protected Major Transit Station Areas

Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 570 was approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, with modifications, on August 15, 2025. In his decision on August 15, 2025, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved six OPAs bringing new policies for 25 *MTSAs* and 95 *PMTSAs* into force and effect, which results in a new Chapter 8 of the City Official Plan. Chapter 8 implements a framework to facilitate transit-supportive development through the delineation of *Major Transit Station Areas* ("*MTSAs*") and *Protected Major Transit Station Areas* ("*PMTSAs*").

The subject site is identified within the Sheppard-Yonge *PMTSA* (SASP 725), which is planned for a minimum population and employment minimum target of 350 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

Recommended Option – North York Centre Secondary Plan

The NYCSP is currently under review to better reflect current development conditions and trends for a *Centre* in the City OP, to better reflect the establishment of the Sheppard-Yonge and Finch *PMTSAs*, and to implement the new policies of the PPS 2024. The Review has completed Phase 1 - Background Review, which provides a foundation for understanding of existing and planned conditions and to identify opportunities and constraints to guide future planning decisions in the *Centre*. The review is currently in Phase 2 – Options and Directions, which builds on the Visioning Framework developed in Phase 1, along with input from the community and other stakeholders from public meetings, to identify the recommended Option for updating the Secondary Plan.

The recommended option continues to include an expanded NYCSP area boundary that would include the subject site and further lands to the west. The recommended option also includes permissions for a range of building types with the tallest buildings along Yonge Street and mid-rise and low-rise buildings generally toward the east and west limits of the Secondary Plan area.

The Recommended Structure Map identifies the subject site within a tall building area. The Recommended Land Use Map identifies the subject site within the Mixed Use Areas 2. The Recommended Building Heights and Types Map identifies the subject site within Tall Building Area 3 where heights between 15 – 45-storeys are permitted.

Due to the very close proximity of the subject site to Sheppard-Yonge Station, it is our opinion, that a height of up to 45-storeys falls short of optimizing the lands and public infrastructure surrounding the

subject site. In addition, a number of legislative and policy changes have taken place in the last few years which are germane to the planning considerations of the updated NYCSP, including:

- Legislative changes to the Planning Act, as enacted through Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act (2022)) and Bill 185 (Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act (2024)).
- The new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (“2024 PPS”) came into force on October 20, 2024. The 2024 PPS replaces both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020. The 2024 PPS is intended to be a streamlined province-wide land use planning policy framework that provides municipalities with the tools and flexibility in order to facilitate the development of at least 1.5 million homes by 2031.
- A much greater emphasis in this recent PPS directs planning authorities to promote the planning principles of intensification, compact form, transit supportive development forms and densities, that optimize the use of land, housing options and opportunities, and infrastructure, including public transit infrastructure, pedestrian friendly development, and efficient use of land, resources and public infrastructure. A key focus of these documents is for the provision of intensification surrounding existing and proposed higher order transit stations as a means to bring on more housing units.
- The 2023 City Council approved Housing Pledge aimed, to facilitate the construction of 285,000 new homes by 2031.
- The 2025 Ministerial approval of the OPA 570, bringing the Sheppard-Yonge PMTSA and its minimum population and employment target of 350 residents and jobs combined per hectare into effect.
- The approval of OPA 778 concerning lands along *Avenues* and in particular, lands within 500-800 metres of higher order transit.

It is through this lens that we suggest revisions to the NYCSP, as a means to support Provincial and Local policies aimed at promoting optimized intensification, through redevelopment, and increasing the supply of housing in a faster manner, particularly on lands very well serviced by existing higher order transit infrastructure.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on a review and analysis of the key policy documents, the review of the subject site and the area context, it is our opinion that a redevelopment of the subject site with a 45-storey building would be an underutilization of the lands. We conclude that given the existing and evolving redevelopment context, the existing transit infrastructure in very close proximity to the site and the recent legislative and policy changes, that these lands are capable of, and should be contemplated for a tall building with a height up to 50 storeys.

We conclude this for the following reasons:

- From height and density perspectives, current and evolving Provincial and City policies related to the increased production of more housing units, strongly suggest support for optimizing the use of the land and infrastructure, as a means to create more housing and population on this site. More than any other time in the last decades, land use policy supports growth, aimed at increasing housing supply. The outcome of this is an approval environment that is increasing conventional site and area heights and densities across the City, in the NYCSP area, and the

region. The subject site is capable of accommodating this trend with the utilization of appropriate standards.

- The history of the NYCSP area has been to incrementally be amended to permit growth and change by demonstrating whether sufficient servicing capacity, transportation and physical infrastructure exists to support an intensified redevelopment. These matters can be addressed on through a private application.
- The subject site is located well within an approved *Protected Major Transit Station Area*, as identified by OPA 570. The Provincial policies, contained in the PPS 2024 promote and encourage compact urban form, intensification, optimization of the existing land base and infrastructure, and development that is transit-supportive, as we are suggesting for the subject site. These documents also promote and encourage an increase in housing and population, particularly in areas well served by public transit.
- A number of policy changes have taken place which are germane to the planning consideration of this potential redevelopment proposal as described above.

Should the recommended option be endorsed by Planning and Housing Committee showing the subject site with a height range of 15–45-storeys, we request that similar implementation provisions to those in OPA 615, Section 9 – Implementation be considered for the ultimate new North York Centre Secondary Plan, which provides the following:

Minor Variations

9.14 Minor variations to the policies within Section 3: Public Realm and Section 8: Built Form of the Yonge Street North Secondary Plan shall be to the satisfaction of the City, be minor in nature, and shall respond to the unique conditions or context of a site. Such variations will not require an amendment to this Plan.

We would be pleased to meet with the staff and Local Councillor to discuss this matter further. We also request notice of any upcoming report and/or meeting(s) concerning this topic area, and any decision regarding this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact Clay Janzen at ext. 2104 or the undesignated at ext. 2100.

Yours very truly,
GOLDBERG GROUP



Michael S. Goldberg, MCIP, RPP
Principal

cc. Stafford Homes – Nathaniel Pace