
COMMUNITY MEETING: Community Benefits through Expanded Gaming at Woodbine Racetrack

March 21, 2018
Rexdale Community Hub

Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to update community on what City of Toronto has been doing related to community benefits conditions required by City Council in 2015 from the casino service provider at Woodbine Racetrack. The discussion was a continuation of the process that started in 2015. This meeting did not address planning matters. City Planning hosted a community meeting in fall 2017.

Through community consultations in 2015, the City heard what community benefits the community wants to see with expanded gaming. The community meeting on March 21 was focused on how the City can best achieve and implement those community benefits already identified in the conditions. The meeting was not to discuss new conditions.

The meeting was moderated by Chris Brillinger, Executive Director, Social Development, Finance & Administration Division at City of Toronto. The moderator presented the community benefit conditions broken down into 5 themes: Business opportunities, employment opportunities, community space, community health & well-being, and long-term success. After the presentation and some questions, meeting attendees were invited to join table discussions to provide feedback on each theme.

The feedback collected at the community meeting will help to inform how the City can best achieve the community benefits identified within the Council conditions. A City staff report will be on the agenda at Executive Committee on April 17, and then City Council on April 24-25-26, 2018.

Background and Context – Expanded Gaming at Woodbine Racetrack

In 2015, City Council approved expansion of gaming at Woodbine Racetrack, subject to 21 planning, social, economic, and health conditions. Currently, Woodbine Racetrack already has approximately 3000 slots and electronic table games. "Expanded gaming" refers to the addition of live table gaming.

In 2015, community consultations took place. The purpose of the consultation was to get community input on expanded gaming at Woodbine Racetrack. Toronto residents provided input through public meetings, an online survey and telephone polling.

Overall, the 2015 public consultation identified awareness, level of support, and desired conditions of expansion. The most frequently mentioned conditions were jobs for local residents, community safety, counselling for problem gambling, greater gaming control and regulation and better infrastructure and commercial development.

The City took findings and identified planning, social, economic, and health conditions. In July 2015, Council passed a resolution in support of expanded gaming, subject to 21 planning, economic, social and health related conditions. There are 8 conditions that relate to business opportunities, employment opportunities, community health and well-being, and long-term success. City staff commonly refer to those conditions as the community benefits conditions. City Council directed City staff to report back to City Council on whether Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation's selected service provider has met, or contractually agreed to meet, those Council conditions. This report back to City Council will take place spring 2018.

In August 2017, Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation announced the service provider for the GTA gaming bundle was Ontario Gaming GTA LP, which is a partnership between Great Canadian Gaming and Brookfield. In fall 2017, City of Toronto began working with Great Canadian Gaming who is responsible for bringing forward its plan on how it intends to meet the City's conditions.

Community Meeting Attendees

More than 150 people attended the community meeting on March 21, 2018. It was attended by stakeholders in the local area including Rexdale community residents, community organizations, advocacy groups, health organizations, Councillor Michael Ford's office, Councillor Vincent Crisanti's office, unions, and educational institutions. City staff represented a range of divisions (City Manager's Office, City Planning, Economic Development & Culture, Social Development, Finance & Administration, Toronto Employment & Social Services, Toronto Public Health). Also, external stakeholders attended, such as Canadian Aboriginal & Minority Supply Council, Great Canadian Gaming, Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation, and Woodbine Entertainment Group.

Contact

If you have any questions about this document, please contact April Lim, Policy Development Officer at april.lim@toronto.ca

Summary Notes

The following notes summarize small group discussions that took place at the community meeting on March 21, 2018. These notes are non-binding, and are presented in this document for information only.

There are 5 key themes:

- Theme 1: Business Opportunities
- Theme 2: Employment Opportunities
- Theme 3: Community Health & Well-Being
- Theme 4: Community Space
- Theme 5: Long-Term Success

These summary notes are posted on the City of Toronto Expanded Gaming at Woodbine Racetrack website <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/city-administration/city-managers-office/key-intiatives/expanded-gaming-at-woodbine-racetrack-555-rexdale-blvd/>

Theme 1: Business Opportunities

How can Great Canadian Gaming reach out to local businesses?

- Work with Albion Islington Business Improvement Area, unions, local Councillors' offices, Community Police Liaison Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Children and Parents Empowerment (CAPE)
- Work with and access resources available at Toronto Community Benefits Network
- Attend business meetings in Rexdale communities
- Small businesses and social enterprises must have access to procurement opportunities
- Give as much notice as possible for future procurement opportunities (E.g. locally accessible materials for construction)
- Scalability may be an issue, so how can smaller businesses team up to bid on larger contracts?
- Supplier councils can make connections between members
- What is the catchment area for local procurement? Should prioritize local and set targets for local procurement

Target outreach to local communities to promote business opportunities

- Promote Great Canadian Gaming procurement needs to the local community in multiple languages and media formats
- More outreach needed from Great Canadian Gaming
- Host outreach events such as a business fair, for business opportunities in both construction and operations phases

- Think about upcoming procurement opportunities, what's coming up in 3-5 years so businesses can prepare in advance
- Need clear specification of procurement needs during construction and during operations
- This is especially important for smaller businesses to know well in advance
- Equally important is for Great Canadian Gaming to know what range of goods and services are available in the local community
- The formation of a business registry (listing business name, description and capacities) recommended
- Great Canadian Gaming can publish what is 'not' locally available, this can give the local business community an opportunity to mobilize or respond to these gaps
- Set aside resources for businesses advisory group for social enterprises
- There are geographic barriers to communication in Rexdale, smaller communities within Rexdale are insular and don't have strong communication networks between Rexdale communities
- Use media outlets to reach Rexdale residents
 - Hormarka TV is a Somali language online channel with 12,000 subscribers
 - Ethnic TV and print media, see National Ethnic Press and Media Council for the directory
 - Appeal to different languages commonly used in local area – Hindi, Punjab, etc.

Resources for social enterprises and local businesses

- There needs to be an entrepreneurship incubator
- Diverse suppliers need some capacity building to become competitive for procurement opportunities
- A body needs to oversee the process and act as an intermediary between the businesses and Great Canadian Gaming so that there is maximum success for businesses. Can supplier councils play a role?
- "Perfect your pitch" is a program that one of the supplier councils offers to their business members (Canadian Aboriginal & Minority Supply Council)

Theme 2: Employment Opportunities

Barriers to accessing and retaining employment

- Great Canadian Gaming should provide entry level job training and skills development. What skills are required for the different jobs, and where can community obtain skills training?
- There needs to be hard targets for local employment opportunities. What are the types and profiles of jobs that will be available?

- When it comes to building trades, Great Canadian Gaming should reach out to Toronto Community Benefits Network and Public Service Alliance of Canada representatives to be involved in working with institutions to train job seekers to access construction jobs
- TCBN should be at the accountability table for employment opportunities
- Unite Here has a hospitality training centre in the Rexdale community
- Job opportunities should have local hiring targets with special attention to the demographic profile of residents in the Rexdale area
- Need to address barriers that are unique to 24 hour operations
- Need living wages (\$18+/hr) and hard targets for local residents, especially for youth
- Need to identify jobs that don't require police checks and support access
- Youth with police records face barriers to finding work based on past records
- Find ways to mitigate postal code discrimination and hiring practices that discriminate against people with lack of formal education
- Lack of local, affordable child care is a barrier to obtaining and retaining employment, especially when jobs involve shift work; providing on-site child care centre at place of employment would impact job retention

Strong need for job training and skills development programs for local residents

- Great Canadian Gaming should have a training centre for preparatory skills training for local residents
- Consider a bursary program for local residents to access funds for education and training to prepare for jobs
- Jobs are hard to access by marginalized groups, they need training to succeed
- Administrative and accounting office jobs should be included
- Partner with United Way and agencies dealing with systemic barriers with respect to employment and supports for youth
- Mentorship plan to be included for youth and local residents
- Entrepreneurship, create start-ups, self-reliance skills development programs
- Offer internships and summer jobs
- Connect with programs like Hammerheads that link building trades with training programs in the community
- Offer hospitality training programs for banquet servers and computer skills

Community Outreach

- Great Canadian Gaming needs to reach out to wide range of demographic groups in the area to promote job opportunities, this includes youth, seniors, newcomers, women, youth, people with disabilities
- Many newcomers and immigrants in the Rexdale area. Many have foreign skills that are not recognized in mainstream workplaces
- Many local residents unable to access information or attend events such as these as they are working 2-3 survival jobs and caring for children; need to find a way to increase connections and support people to move into better jobs

Other Important Employment Issues

- There should be hard targets or a percentage of job opportunities reserved for local residents in the Rexdale community
- CBA needs to be binding
- Create an endowment fund to be a future sustainability tool to access supports and unique training needs as they arise
- Communities in Rexdale need wraparound support services that include housing support and on-site affordable child care centre
- There is a lack of social services in schools

Theme 3: Community Health & Well-Being

Indicators for well-being

- Consult local community agencies to help identify the indicators for well-being (E.g. Rexdale Community Health Centre, William Osler Health System, Rexdale Women's Centre)
- Partner with Wellesley Institute to conduct a longitudinal study on health and wellness and report on indicators
- Reports on other communities with casinos, how did they fare? Make sure Great Canadian Gaming can learn from these and plan for future

Oversight & governance

- Community wants input on who represents them at oversight tables, not just who Council appoints
- Support for Toronto Community Benefits Network to be one of the community voices at the table

Programs to mitigate negative impacts of expanded gaming

- Question about PlaySmart (Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation explained), how to recognize if gambling patrons (such as seniors or people with special needs) are being coerced to gamble by caregivers

- Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation requires Woodbine staff training to look for red flags and signs and escalate response where needed
- Ensure North Etobicoke residents are safe
- Rexdale is already a lower income area
- Comprehensive mental health strategy and program to promote health is needed
- Start at a young age and promote mental health programs at school like the Toronto Public Health programs (E.g. dental, speech) where Toronto Public Health coordinates and translates information
- Programs to prevent dropping out of high school
- Focus on supports and programs for seniors E.g. Eating healthy and diabetes
- Make information available in accessible languages and cultural norms
- Workshops for seniors and youth together, to learn from each other
- Housing rental rates – need affordable housing

Theme 4: Community Space

What are the community space needs?

- More inviting hub space for meetings and multi-purpose areas
- Free, accessible space should be open to everyone
- Separate space apart from "casino theatre" for family oriented events
- Spaces for different themes such as children and family, artists, programs, meetings
- Workshop spaces for seniors, youth and senior activities
- Rentable spaces
- Subsidized daycare for employees on site
- Endowment and/or scholarship funds to invest in the community such as annual scholarships for local youth and residents

Policies and guidelines to access community space

- Needs to be driven by a broader Arts and Culture Strategy that is developed with the community
- There need to be guidelines for community to access space
- Examples, Rexdale Community Hub has good practices that can be used (E.g. permit process), Artscape has a Community Access Program with clear guidelines on how Daniels Spectrum space is used
- Guidelines should be developed with community input on types of performances, types and sizes of space needs, process to request access to space, etc.
- Should be free or very affordable for community residents (residents could have lower fee, versus non-residents)
- Community input on use of space should be through community representatives on oversight committees

- TCBN should be at the table for accountability on community space opportunities
- Communication on community access plan should be in different languages that represent the communities

Community input on theatre

- What types of events will be hosted? Community wants input on types of performances at theatre
- What is the process to access performance space?
- Should include family oriented entertainment
- All communications and outreach should be in multiple languages of local communities
- Be sure that some performances represent population in North Etobicoke
- Need to promote and recognize local artists
- Art contributes to well-being
- Consider asking local arts institutions to establish a presence at Woodbine, E.g. Ontario College of Art and Design or Humber College campus at Woodbine or other institutions
- Acts should include music programs

Location of community space

- Concern with close proximity to casino
- Multiple community spaces are needed around the community (not just at the casino)
- Transportation needed in Etobicoke, Woodbine site not easily accessible by public transit
- Area is expanding, visitors from Pearson
- Casino will bring more people
- Lack of accessibility is an issue, the solution cannot be a bus, buses are too slow
- How do existing transportation plans affect Woodbine? Finch, Metrolinx, etc.

Theme 5: Long-Term Success

Accountability and oversight

- Needs to be an external group to keep both Great Canadian and City accountable
- There should be other parties signing the agreement
- Local, youth, low income individuals at the oversight table
- Should have ongoing flexibility about all conditions and change over time (living document)
- Community voice on all tables
- Refer to recommendations made by Toronto Community Benefits Network
- Tables proposed in the conditions are good
- Community at tables, Toronto Community Benefits Network a must at all levels
- Legally binding agreement that you can litigate

- Score card (indicators) on the web. Types of indicators E.g.
 - 100% of subcontractors required to follow original agreement.
 - Employee retention rate and career and professional growth

Employment targets

- Guaranteed access to good jobs, training
- Accountability means that this is realized
 - Hard targets - 60% full time jobs, 10% construction hours for local diverse residents
- If hiring targets are only suggestions, it won't happen
- Permanent requirements, they are all musts and can't be under resourced
- Hiring of youth for construction requirements result in success, especially for construction
- Need reporting and correction (quarterly), a living document to keep track of number of hours and workers hired during construction phase
- Long term plan has to include permanent offices that have social workers, support who can help employees who work there who are at risk
- Give employees professional development with increased salary rates upon completion
- When that is done, employee growth, career ladders, not contracted out (high road workforce model)
- Aspirational jobs, managers need to promote this
- Adopt a high road model
- Pathways for career growth, retaining people

Long-term investment in community

- Profit invested in community (perhaps 4%)
- E.g. community centres, housing, for youth to succeed in school (tutoring and scholarships at, Humber College, Seneca College, etc.)
- Focus on youth at risk (E.g. risk of dropping out) and returning from jail who need jobs
- Look at local population and needs which are unique