

LAKE SHORE COMMUNITY UPDATE #2

Community Engagement Activities

As the Community Engagement Facilitators for the site, we wanted to update you that we have begun meeting with a number of key stakeholders in the community, including resident groups, the BIA, organizations, agencies, and associations.

The early community engagement for the 2950-70 Lake Shore West site provides an opportunity to engage with and hear from different community members about how they would like to be engaged. It provides an opportunity for the City to learn of any service gaps, and understand ways to mitigate arising issues or challenges.

We have received many questions in regard to the site. Along with the Community Information Session, we will aim to answer some of these questions in our ongoing updates to you. You can read responses to some of your questions in this update.

The Community Information Session is confirmed for October 20, 2020, from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. This session will be virtual, in compliance with current COVID public health regulations.

Information on how to join the session via video or telephone can be found in the attached flyer or go to the website for the 2950-70 Lake Shore Blvd West site at: www.toronto.ca/ShelterExpansionSites.

A report will be prepared by the third-party Community Engagement Facilitators, Maria and Violetta of Barnes Management Group, that will be made available to the community after the Information Session.

If you would like to receive regular updates, please contact Violetta at clc.2950.70lakeshoreblvdwest@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list, or call (416) 800-2914 ext. 202 . Updates will also be posted to the City website at: www.toronto.ca/ShelterExpansionSites.

Q & As

How does the City typically engage the local community prior to opening a shelter?

The opening of a municipal shelter follows the council directed community engagement process through the development of a site-specific community engagement plan. Once the location has been secured and a shelter operator chosen, community engagement includes:

- Focused stakeholder meetings led by a third-party facilitator that encourages solution-focused discussion in smaller meeting formats
- An Information Session where the community can meet and ask questions of the service provider, local partners and City staff
- The formation of a Community Liaison Committee
- Regular e-Newsletters and website updates.

A more detailed plan to engage community will be developed in early 2021, that will provide more opportunities to get involved as the project at 2950-70 Lake Shore Blvd. West progresses.

How is this early engagement process different from the typical engagement?

The City typically begins engagement 6-9 months before the service opens, focusing on facilitating active discussions between service operators, elected officials and the community on how to best integrate a new shelter into the neighbourhood.

As a result of community interest, Councillor Grimes put forward a motion to Council, (which was unanimously approved) that directed the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) Division to commence an Early Engagement process — to ensure the community has the opportunity to voice how they want to be engaged in this process, and to hear how they want to participate in the successful integration of the shelter into the community. SSHA has launched the early engagement process and will add activities to the usual community engagement plans for the services being developed at 2950 and 2970 Lake Shore Blvd W.

Before the purchase is finalized, SSHA will:

- Hire a Community Engagement Facilitator (CEF) to lead early engagement work at the proposed shelter
- Conduct outreach to community organizations to explore partnerships
- Host an online community information session in October so local residents will have a chance to hear directly from City representatives
- Work with community leaders and groups from the community to schedule community safety walks to identify areas of concern, and begin discussions to ensure that community safety concerns are addressed.

The City is committed to providing opportunities for the community to be engaged in the successful integration of this new shelter, to make sure you are well informed and have a chance to make your voice heard. The City has hired Third-party Community Engagement Facilitators, Maria Crawford and Violetta Ilkiw, of Barnes Management Group.

A number of activities are being planned to ensure community members are kept informed of activities for the site. Meetings are planned with key stakeholders before the Information Session on October 20, 2020, and a community safety walk in late October, following the Community Information Session.

A report will be prepared by the third-party Community Engagement Facilitators, Maria and Violetta of Barnes Management Group, that will be made available to the community after the Information Session.

How was this site selected for use as a Municipal Shelter?

In order to acquire the sites needed to add 1000 new beds across the City, as directed by City Council, SSHA has conducted an extensive search of public and private property. Through extensive assessments of bylaws, existing infrastructure, and proximity to essential services, 2950 and 2970 Lake Shore Blvd. West was deemed a suitable location for a new shelter.

What makes this a good location for a new shelter?

Currently Ward 3 – Etobicoke Lake Shore has two shelters – one for women experiencing homelessness and one for women with or without children who are experiencing or at risk of ex-periencing any type of violence. Adding another shelter will help support the City's goal of spreading out shelter services across the city; and to meet the needs of increasing homelessness and people experiencing precarious housing in the Lakeshore West neighbourhood. The site is near essential services such as transportation, community centres, public libraries, health services, and a major road (Lake Shore Blvd).

Will there be affordable housing on the site?

The Interim Shelter Recovery Strategy included a priority on developing a property acquisition strategy and shifting investments from emergency shelter to more permanent housing solutions. Pending approval of recommendations in the Interim Shelter Recovery and Infrastructure Implementation Plan report being presented at the October 14th meeting of Economic and Community Development Committee, the purchase of 2950 and 2970 Lake Shore Boulevard could be included in this acquisition strategy. In advance of this approval and as a result of council direction, the City has begun preliminary investigations into the feasibility of locating permanent affordable or supportive housing at the site.

