

UPDATE >>>> DOWNSVIEW

‘What We Heard’ Report

Part 1 of 3: Downsview Public Library Pop-Up

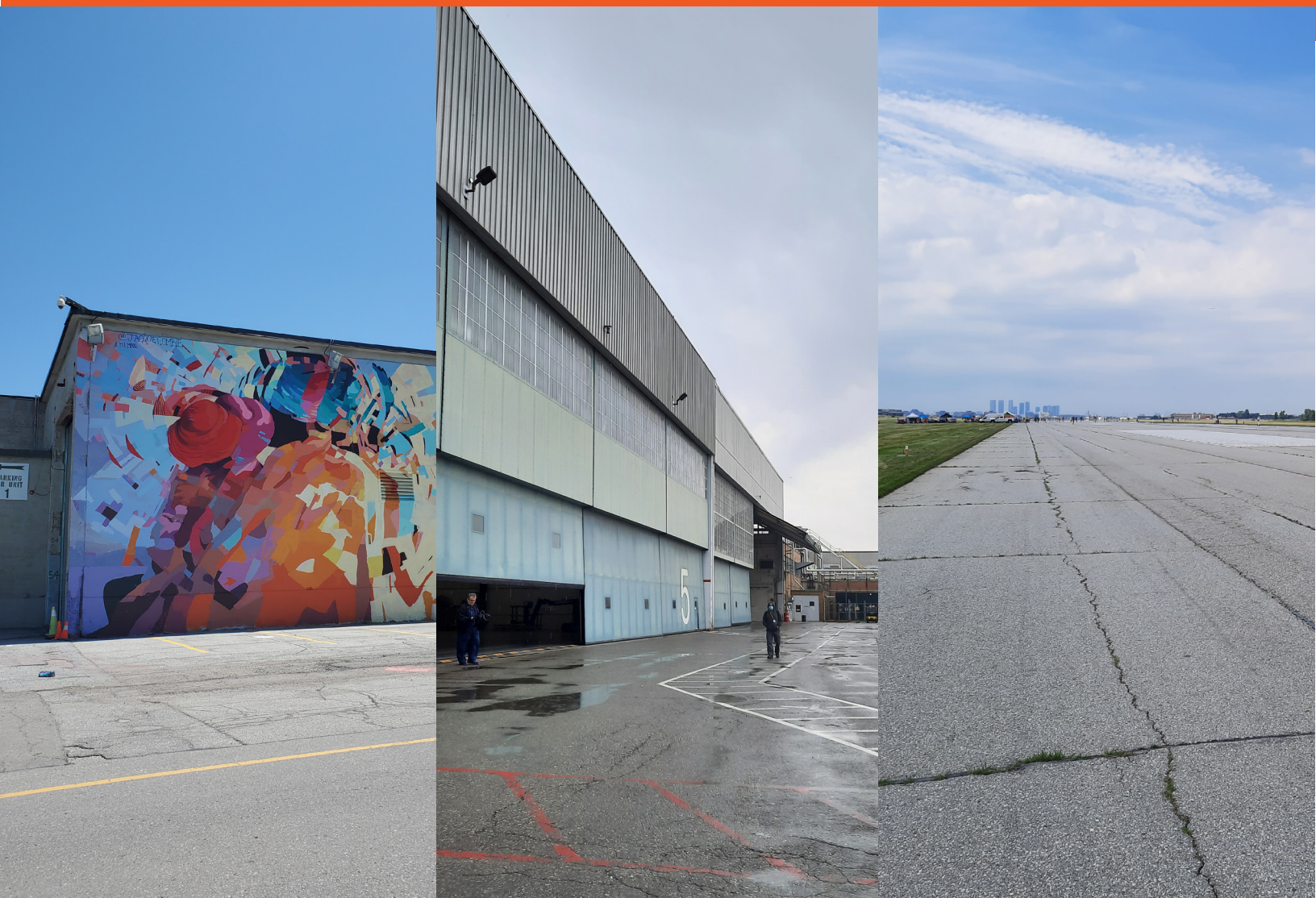
June Consultation Activities for the Update Downsview Study

June 20 – June 25, 2022

Report prepared by City Planning

City of Toronto

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Introduction

The Update Downsview Study is reimagining the future of the Downsview area and creating a new framework to guide change. To this end, the Project Team presented its first [Staff Report](#) to the May 31st Planning and Housing Committee, which outlined 17 Emerging Directions, and initiated the associated Environmental Assessment Study in April.

To begin Phase 2 of the Study, the Project Team delivered a number of public engagement activities, centered around the week of June 20th to 25th, to obtain feedback on the Emerging Directions and the Environmental Assessment Study, as well as additional input to consider as the Update Downsview Study progresses. The public engagement activities also provided information on the Official Plan Amendment (OPA) application submitted by Northcrest Developments and Canada Lands Company (CLC) (the Landowners) as well as the Taxiway West district application submitted by Northcrest Developments. The purpose of this **'What We Heard Report'** is to provide an overview of the public consultation activities and summarize the input received. The 'What We Heard Report' (WWH Report) consists of three parts (separate PDFs):

- › **WWH Report Part 1: Downsview Public Library Pop-Up**
- › WWH Report Part 2: Survey & Off-Site Pop-Ups
- › WWH Report Part 3: Virtual Public Meeting & Public Correspondence

This document (WWH Part 1) will focus on the input received throughout the week at the Downsview Public Library Pop-Up.

High Level Key Themes

The following is a high level summary of the key themes we heard through public input, across all of our activities:

- › Need for more housing options, including affordable housing;
- › Concern about proposed intensity of development and increased traffic congestion;
- › Need for improved pedestrian, cycling and transit infrastructure;
- › Need to address existing traffic issues, including through better connectivity;
- › Desire for a wide range of additional community services and facilities, including parks and open spaces;
- › Importance of achieving equitable economic development objectives;

- › Interest in additional programming and events in the area, particularly related to children/youth and celebrating cultural diversity; and,
- › Ensuring access to retail and jobs through new development.

Overview

Part 1: Downsview Public Library Pop-Up of the **What We Heard Report** provides an overview of the week-long Pop-Up event, including materials and activities available and a summary of comments received from residents, workers, and business representatives who attended throughout the week. The comments are organized by topic, which includes: built form and land use; environment and parks and open space; mobility and Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP); inclusive social and economic development; as well as other miscellaneous comments.



Pop-Up at the Downsview Public Library

The City of Toronto's Update Downsview Project Team held an in-person Pop-Up at the Downsview Public Library from Monday, June 20th to Saturday, June 25th, 2022 to share information on the Update Downsview Study and related Environmental Assessment (EA) Study, have discussions with the public, and receive input and comments.



In addition to members of the Core Team, a variety of Project Team members attended over the course of the week, aligning with the topic-specific expert schedule outlined below. Information on the OPA application and Taxiway West district plan application were on display, with representatives of the applicant team and their consultants available to answer questions and receive comments. Over 200 people were engaged with in-person throughout the week at the Downsview Public Library Pop-Up as well as informal off-site Pop-Ups.

Topic-Specific Schedule

- › Monday, June 20th: Servicing, Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainability;
- › Tuesday, June 21st: Parks and Open Space;
- › Wednesday, June 22nd: Transportation;
- › Thursday, June 23rd: Community Services & Facilities and Community Benefits & Economic Development;
- › Friday, June 24th: Built Form and Land Use; and,
- › Saturday, June 25th: General.

The Downsview Public Library Pop-Up included video/images looping on a screen, a series of information boards, material outlining the OPA and district plan applications, and other printed reference material. While at the Pop-Up, City staff also approached library patrons to complete a survey on the key topics. The full set of information boards prepared by the City are available on the Update Downsview [webpage](#) under 'Meetings & Events'.



Ways to Provide Input

There were a number of ways to provide input at the Pop-Up, including:

- › Dot sticker activities;
- › Sticky notes on the information boards;
- › Comment forms;
- › Survey sheet (consolidated with those completed during informal off-site Pop-Ups. See *Part 2: Survey & Off-Site Pop-Ups* (separate PDF) of the 'What We Heard Report');

- › Environmental Assessment Study survey;
- › Talking with members of the Project Team or Landowners team; and,
- › Take-away postcard which included contact information and the Study webpage for attendees to e-mail comments after the event and sign up for e-updates.

Summary of Comments

Post-it Notes, Comment Sheets and Discussions

The following is a summary of the comments received at the library Pop-Up through post-it notes on the information boards, comment sheets and discussions with the Project Team and applicants, categorized by topic.

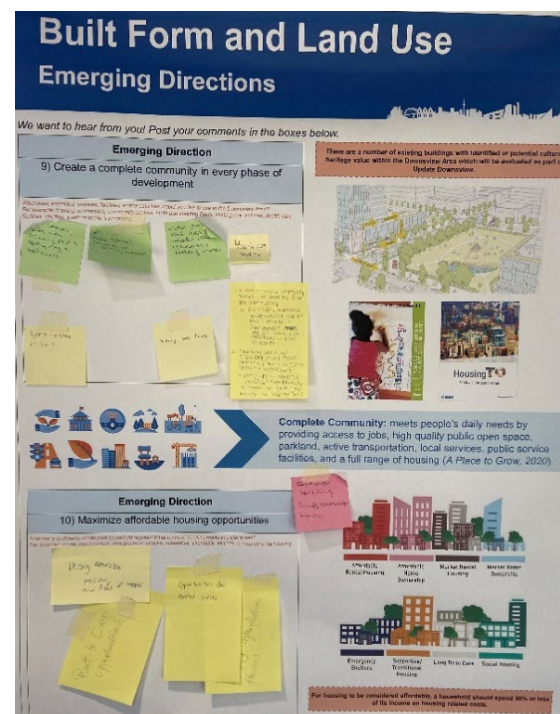
Built Form and Land Use:

- › Affordable everything, bring communities together;
- › Build more housing;
- › Multi-unit residential buildings will support more businesses;
- › The incorporation of high rises is acceptable if the proposed density is reasonable;
- › Prefer low-rise adjacent to existing communities; prefer mid-rises/townhouses;
- › Need affordable housing, ownership and rental housing, larger family-sized units, deeply affordable housing, TCHC rent-geared-to-income and rent-to-own;

- › Concern about the rail crossing cutting through the Supply Depot (a heritage building);
- › Rail crossings need to be visible and safe;
- › Celebrate the runway;
- › Create City-wide cultural landmarks, community gathering spaces for arts & culture;
- › Need new and updated schools, health care facilities, day care/affordable daycare facilities;
- › Need community centres with swimming pools, skating rinks, ball courts, mental health supports, local youth mentorship, and innovation hubs;
- › Concern with having a community centre integrated within a building due to sense of ownership;
- › Design spaces/services to be open and accessible to help community feel safer;
- › Consider a year-round community-based market, an affordable grocery store, affordable retail/micro retail spaces;
- › Ensure development facilitates walkability/bikeability, with good transit connections for further destinations;
- › Given the removal of height restrictions once the airport is closed, it is important

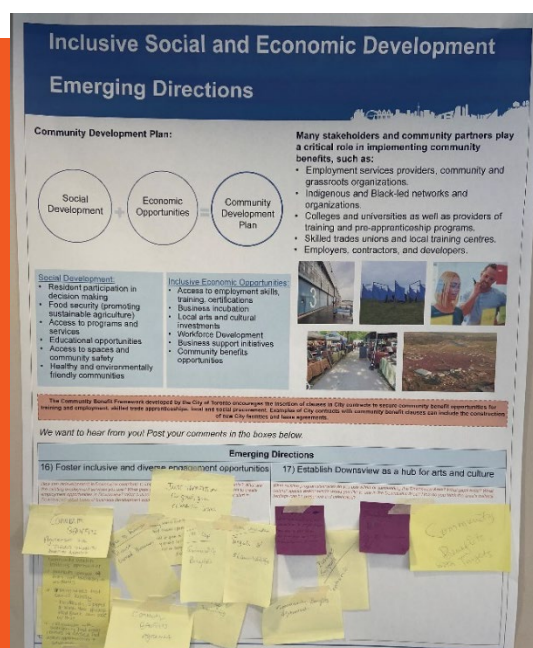
to consider the built form conditions along the edges, including height;

- › Support intensification, especially near transit stations;
- › Consider impacts of wind and sunlight;
- › Need to maintain privacy from tall buildings, recognize this is not downtown; and,
- › Architecture of individual buildings should be attractive and exciting.



Environment and Parks & Open Space:

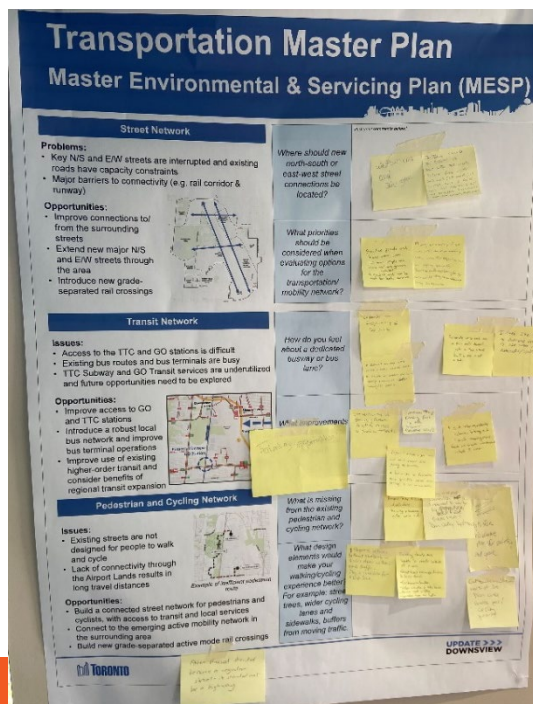
Inclusive Social and Economic Development:



- › There is a gap in social/arts spaces for young people in North York;
 - › More opportunities to host events in Downsview, as well as easier application processes;
 - › Address existing gaps, such as diverse employment/diverse-owned businesses, training opportunities, incubator/start-up training, mentoring and other business supports – shouldn't rely only on film studios;
 - › Need more support for women in the construction sector, including services such as daycares with appropriate hours of operation;
 - › Consider impacts of COVID-19 when designing new communities;
 - › Libraries are an important gathering space for community;
 - › Avoid displacement of residents/businesses and disproportionate impact on Indigenous businesses;
 - › Need for Indigenous early childhood education;
 - › Opportunities for partnerships and including youth in the city building process;
 - › Provide quality jobs that allow local residents to be able to afford to live in the area; and,
 - › Some community events and programming should be free of charge.
- › Consider specifically mentioning community benefits as an emerging direction;
 - › Incorporating community benefits agreements early on and for each construction project could ensure Update Downsview achieves its goal of inclusive and equitable economic opportunities, allowing residents to benefit from development and the City to grow a diverse workforce;
 - › Focus on a 'just transition' which includes good, green climate jobs;
 - › Include targets and accountability;
 - › Community wealth building opportunities, with focus on local vendors and addressing food access issues/solutions;

Mobility & Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP):

- › Need improved pedestrian and cyclist connections in the area of, and across the rail line at, Downsview Park Station (currently underground crossing only);
- › Prioritize cyclist safety, comfort and efficiency, including through connecting bike lanes with other trails, rail corridor crossings, and addressing missing connections with continuous, separated bike lanes;
- › Ensure pedestrian safety and connectivity, such as with highly visible crosswalks, wide and continuous sidewalks, separate spaces for pedestrians vs. cyclists, and traffic calming such as street trees;
- › Encourage less driving, including through: bus/taxi-only streets, car-free streets, and streets restricted to service vehicles/residents;
- › Prioritize people and bikes over cars – narrower streets and with fewer cars, less parking would be needed and free up valuable land;
- › Many seniors live nearby and will not be cycling or walking long distances;
- › Add active transportation bridge over highway from Wilson to Yorkdale;
- › Winterized infrastructure – warming stations, wind shelters, washrooms;
- › Need for seamless connections across the 1st District (Taxiway West district) and with surrounding areas, including to/from the nearby TTC stations;
- › Increase transit service/frequency in area, consider physically separated bus lanes, and reorganize local bus routes, including better connecting Downsview Park station;





- › Improve pedestrian access to TTC Stations from all directions;
- › Need better road network through the site for cars and transit (#101 Downsview Park bus should run from Downsview Park station);
- › Need better cycling and transit inter-operability, including secure bike parking at stations and connected bike routes (TTC and GO stations);
- › A dedicated busway is important for provide fast, reliable transit service;
- › Every street should be a complete street [a complete street is a street which serves all users and can include bike lanes, street trees, seating, sidewalks, etc.];
- › Build a better/more connected street network throughout the area, important for accessing nearby retail/amenities (e.g. access issues for Stanley Greene);
- › Make Yukon Road a publicly accessible road that extends into the Downsview lands to improve connectivity for nearby communities;
- › Change Allen Road from a highway to a regular street;
- › Need more commuter parking lots for people who drive;
- › Area streets already have traffic/truck movement concerns, need to mitigate impacts of construction and population growth and improve traffic management;
- › Protect the Ancaster neighbourhood from traffic/congestion by reducing access from residential streets;
- › Concern with locations/configurations of turn lanes;
- › Keele Street is dangerous and the area needs more pathways;
- › Build a new road directly from Sheppard/Allen to Sheppard/Keele in addition to the current configuration of Sheppard;
- › Consider extending Caledonia Road;
- › Concern regarding the proposed connection of Dufferin Street to Chesswood Road as Chesswood is only 2 lanes and ends in a dead-end; the street naming may also be confusing;
- › Consider existing wildlife, provide animal crossings for roads (bridges or tunnels);
- › Prefer elevated planter beds/plants over bioswales in street right-of-ways;
- › Make Carl Hall Road a grade separated rail crossing;
- › Add street connections across the rail line;
- › Make the rail line crossing north of Supply Depot, concern with the plan to go through it;
- › Issues with flooding, need to look at underground water flow; and,
- › Concerned about how stormwater is managed in Allen East area (e.g. through culverts).



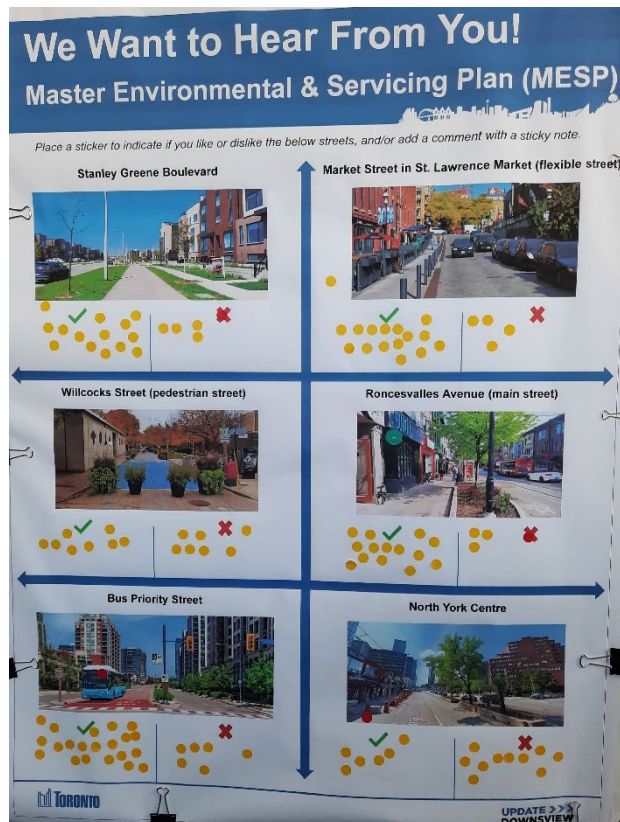
Other:

- › Add additional development application signage, particularly to North East;
- › Everyone needs to be involved in collaboration for this project to be successful;
- › Engagement before development is important;
- › Important to have in-person meetings and mailed notices;
- › Appreciation that material at the Pop-Up was available in multiple languages.
- › Could include physical displays or virtual walk-throughs on tablets to strengthen engagement;
- › Interest from young artists to get involved;
- › Interest in the economics and the implementation mechanisms of the proposed vision over 30+ years; and,
- › Concerned about construction impacts on the existing community.

Note: Please refer to WWH Report Part 2: Survey & Off-Site Pop-Ups as well as WWH Report Part 3: Virtual Public Meeting & Public Correspondence for additional summaries of the public consultation activities that occurred throughout the week of June 20th to June 25th, 2022.

Dot Sticker Activities

Boards with example photos were made available at the in-person Pop-Up as an alternative approach to providing feedback. The Parks & Open Spaces dot sticker activity was geared towards children at the Pop-Up.





Staying in Touch

Please visit the [Update Downsview webpage](#) for more information and to subscribe to receive updates related to the City's work on the Downsview Area Secondary Plan update. A short [survey](#) has been made available on the Update Downsview webpage if you are interested in providing additional feedback on the Update Downsview Study. You can also continue to contact City staff directly to provide your comments or ask questions:

Update Downsview Study

Jessica Krushnisky
Planner, City of Toronto
416-392-7215

Environmental Assessment (EA) Study

Andrew Au
Program Manager, City of Toronto
416-395-7163

To contact the id8 team regarding their development application, visit <https://www.id8downsview.ca/contact>.