

*On Wednesday, July 14, 2021 Northcrest and Canada Lands hosted an Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting that brought together Indigenous leaders from ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Nishnawbe Homes, Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre, Toronto & York Region Métis Council, and members of Indigenous communities who live in and around Downsview, as well as landowners Northcrest Developments and Canada Lands Company, and the City of Toronto's Indigenous Affairs Office.*

*The meeting included the participation of Elder Carolyn King. She is greatly recognized for her commitment to Indigenous-led initiatives and her efforts to improve Canadians' understanding of First Nations, including developing the Moccasin Identifier Project. The Moccasin Identifier Project educates all people about the original peoples and treaties of the territory by telling the story of their moccasins and the tracks they created on the earth. She is one of the founders of CKRZ radio, the Three Fires Homecoming Traditional Pow-Wow, and a past Chief of the Mississaugas of the Credit. She called on the spirit through an opening invocation and thanksgiving and guided the group through the evening with her ongoing advice and participation.*

*A brief overview of the project updates was shared by Chris Eby (Northcrest) and Deana Grinnell (Canada Lands). Other consultants supporting Northcrest and Canada Lands also participated, including representatives of Henning Larsen and KPMB.*

*The meeting was facilitated by Bob Goulais of Nbsiing Consulting with support from Swerhun Inc. Nicole Swerhun delivered the Land Acknowledgement on behalf of the id8 Downsview team. As facilitators that are not advocating for any particular outcome of this project, the intent is to capture the perspectives shared during the discussion, not to assess the merit or accuracy of any of these perspectives. This summary does not indicate an endorsement of any of these perspectives on the part of Northcrest Developments or Canada Lands Company. The meeting was held online using Zoom conferencing software.*

***The summary was subject to participant review prior to being finalized. If you have any comments or questions, please contact Bob at [info@bobgoulais.com](mailto:info@bobgoulais.com).***

## Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting #2

id8 Downsview

Wednesday, July 14, 2021, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

### SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The purpose of the meeting was to share and discuss the updates for id8 Downsview since the last sharing meeting that was held on October 7, 2020 and to continue the dialogue on important community priorities.

The updates included the importance of collaborating with Indigenous communities to create ways to celebrate Indigenous peoples, history and living culture; adding 100 acres of new parks and open space; and incorporating Indigenous placekeeping in architecture, commemoration, naming, public education, parks and open spaces, and a new dedicated space for cultural use and ceremonies.

This summary reflects the feedback shared by participants and is organized by key themes of discussion.

### KEY DISCUSSION TAKE-AWAYS

- Given the scale of the site and the development opportunity, ensure Indigenous ways of knowing and being are integrated in a meaningful way, where future generations of Indigenous people live, work, go to school, and celebrate culture together. This means deeply affordable housing for Indigenous people, especially youth; an Indigenous school and daycare; and support for Indigenous workforce development.
- Support for City-nature and urban farming, which align with the Indigenous ways of knowing and ways of being, especially in the face of the climate emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- There is interest in continuing the dialogue as the project moves forward.

More detail on each of these points is provided in the rest of this summary.

## DETAILED FEEDBACK

Note that feedback from participants is in regular text. When Northcrest, Canada Lands, and/or their consultants responded to questions, their responses are noted in *italics*.

### 1. Importance of Meaningful Indigenous Inclusion, Scale, and Opportunity

#### Feedback

- Meaningful inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing and ways of being goes beyond a little space for pow-wow or symbolic commemoration. This place needs to be accessible for Indigenous people, for us to be present in the area — to live, work, go to school and celebrate our culture.
- This place has a beautiful, wonderful potential. If this project is decades-long, then we are planning for the next generations. Will we all be doing the same thing? Will it be completely transformation and totally different? We need versatility of use for different people, and it is important that the Indigenous peoples of this land, the Indigenous youth, are part of this future.
- Indigenous people come together a lot. It is important to create spaces and opportunities, like community kitchens, for Indigenous people to come together to celebrate our culture. We want to be together, not spread apart from each other.

#### Questions & Responses

- This project is fascinating. The scale of it boggles the mind – a city within the city. No need for cars, schools, employment, restaurants outside of this area. It is onto itself, with every imaginable amenity within a five-minute walk from your house. Why would people come here? Why would people want to leave?

*One of the first things we've done is look at and get to know surrounding communities to assess how to best integrated with them. Our goal is to knit and bring communities together, to be a breathing, vital part of the city.*

- Will you build on top of the runway, or will the runway no longer exist?

*The runway will be decommissioned in 2023. We see the runway transforming over time. We see it being a long mainly pedestrian amenity with lots of recreational activities year-round, with vibrant street life, cafes, and shops – a continuous connector of all different places in the area. Esplanade in Toronto is a small version of it. Our ambition is to pull the best from the world and Toronto and make something special.*

- What about parking for those who do not live here?

*There will still be parking, but given that we have underutilized subway stations, our hope is to create a place where people will not use a car.*

- Is part of the plan to make it a Smart City?

*No, it is not. We strongly feel that people build communities, not technologies. Technology is not a driver for us.*

## 2. Importance of Environmental Stewardship and Climate Emergency

### Feedback

- It is great to see that the approach to development is friendly to the Indigenous ways of knowing and ways of being, including looking seven generations forward and seven generations backward. You seem to be embracing and considering the climate emergency in the ideas of urban farming and City-nature. There are a lot of developments that do not acknowledge the climate emergency and what is happening in the world.

*We fully understand that this development has to respond to the climate emergency. Sustainability and climate resilience is at the forefront of everything we do.*

- The pandemic made it evident that land use planning was not good in a way that put a lot of people together in one place. It did not address the climate emergency as western Canada is burning. If the future is to look differently, we need to keep working on it. The ideas of the green-blue system and the resource lands and urban farming in the city are good ones. There are also good examples of urban reserves in Saskatoon and Winnipeg. Those reserves include several different Indigenous people, not just the rights holders.

### Questions & Responses

- Where will the additional 100 acres of the new park space be?

*The concept for green space is not one continuous block, but rather a network of green spaces and neighbourhood parks woven together through the entire site. It's a much more integrated approach, where the network will provide more than just ways to move but will also help with biodiversity, stormwater, and microclimate. This is what we call City-nature.*

## 3. Need for Housing Affordability for Indigenous People

### Feedback

- If Indigenous people are to come here and thrive, the place needs to be affordable to them. Indigenous inclusion is not just about land and water values. It is also about being contributing members of the community and being able to afford living in that community is key. How will the Indigenous people be able to live and thrive in the community that will be made attractive to so many?

*Contributing to the solution for the housing affordability challenge is important to us. We have recently entered a settlement agreement with the City of Toronto, where 20% of residential units will be affordable. CMHC lands initiative could also bring subsidized housing into the community. These are all the tools in the toolkit to bring affordability into the area.*

- Younger generations need affordable housing. It is difficult to get affordable housing for sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds. The common mentality is for them to stay at home with their parents, but our youth is very resilient, and some are starting out their lives earlier than others, and some are successful at early age. They are respectful but are painted as incompetent; and with no history of renting, it becomes a very challenging situation for them to find a place to live. The thinking needs to change, and we need to empower them in what they do.

- Affordable housing at 80% of the average market rent is not affordable. We need rent-geared-to-income (RGI) subsidies, deeply affordable housing to bring our people here. If it's housing for the masses, it certainly is not for us. If the housing is deeply affordable, then it opens a crack in the door for Indigenous people to live here.
- As an immediate interim use, consider providing space for people living in tents. The City is trying to move them all over the city to follow the physical distancing requirements, they would be grateful to have such space.

*Thank you, you delivered your message effectively – Toronto is not affordable, particularly for youth. We would like to be part of the solution to the housing crisis. We know that several Indigenous housing providers are part of these dialogues, including Anishinaabe Homes, and we are on the journey to explore opportunities for partnerships when the time comes. We know it will take a lot of heavy lifting.*

#### Questions & Responses

- How many residential units are you planning in total?

*We do not have a solid grasp on this number yet; but we know the number needs to meet provincial standards for the transit-oriented development, so it will be medium density.*

- Is there a way to get commitment for Indigenous housing on its own, not as a package deal for affordable housing? Opportunities for jobs are wonderful, but Indigenous youth needs place to live to access those opportunities.

*We are not at that stage of the process yet, but it is good for us to know.*

## 4. Importance of Indigenous Education and Interest in an Indigenous School and Daycare

### Feedback

- There is a need for Indigenous education, Indigenous schools, and Indigenous early learning and childcare centres. If you have jobs for Indigenous people, then you need places for Indigenous children to be rooted in their language and culture. It is not a good idea to take Indigenous children to mainstream childcare.
- We need an immersion school for our children – from kindergarten to Grade 12 – so that in 30 years there are fluent speakers in our community. Ojibway Odawa is one of the languages in our city.

### Question & Response

- What type of education will be available? Is there an opportunity for an Indigenous school?

*We are interested in attracting education at the post-secondary level, and we are working with school boards, as well. We would be interested in understanding what type of program and facility you have in mind.*

## 5. Interest in Supporting Indigenous Skills and Employment

### Feedback

- Consider an Indigenous employment and training facility – run by Indigenous people for Indigenous people. We need employment and training for Indigenous youth and for anybody who will be interested to come to this part of the world. It sounds like this place will have a myriad of opportunities and it is going to be a beacon, so let's make it our beacon together.

*Thank you for your suggestion, this is something we can definitely look at and explore, as we want inclusive job opportunities for everyone.*

*Northcrest is also excited to have one of the largest film studios in Downsview and looking forward to welcoming Indigenous storytellers and film makers. We are excited about workforce development opportunities – from training to well-paid unionized jobs that will be available in the years to come, as we are anticipating the employment numbers to increase 10 times as these lands get developed.*

- Explore creative opportunities to promote Indigenous economic development through dedicated land. For example, if a portion of the land can be designated as an extension of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation through an additions-to-reserve (ATR) process, then there could be opportunities through employment leasing for Indigenous people working in Toronto to be exempt from income taxes.

*We are a long way from having people coming to live to this site, but we recognize that the status quo cannot persist, as it does not produce the outcomes we want. We know that the situation we are in requires innovative solutions. We are interested in learning more about such creative solutions.*

## 6. Interest in the Engagement Process

### Question & Response

- When is the next sharing meeting? How often will you be meeting moving forward?

*We do not have a specific date yet, as what we normally do is take the results of this dialogue and determine the next steps. Our intention is to continue having this specific intentional engagement with Indigenous communities as we move forward. We are planning to submit an application to the City with the Framework Plan for these lands at the end of September, and we want to have a public briefing about it before the submission. We will keep you updated on the latest progress and will let you know when the next sharing meeting will be held.*

*We are also forming a Community Resource Group. The purpose of the group is to meet and stay connected regularly, at least quarterly, to share information and seek feedback on the activities that will unfold over time related to the development of these lands. We encourage all of you to apply. More information and the application form is available on the project website at [id8downsview.ca/crg](http://id8downsview.ca/crg) (the link was also shared with participants during the meeting in the Zoom chat).*

## 7. Questions about Noise

### Questions & Responses

- I am curious about the noise from GO trains.

*The transit capacity will increase according to the Provincial plan, which means there will be more trains running more frequently. We will work with Metrolinx to ensure there are measures in place to decrease sound. It is not allowed to build residential uses close to a rail line, so there will be a natural separation as well.*

- Pre-pandemic there were noise complaints from larger scale events. There were also complaints about littering after events. Will this be addressed and how?

*Downsview Park has the Festival Terrace that hosts a handful of large events. Canada Lands has been working with the community and the City around noise management and introduced a new audio technology that helps decrease noise reverberations. And we will always have to manage littering.*

- When will Bombardier be decommissioned? I live at Downsview Park, and on many nights from 11 pm to 7 am engines are being tested for days. It howls and the sound reverberates.

*Bombardier is moving to Pearson Airport in 2023, so the runway will be decommissioned then. We are also happy to share that the types of jobs we are planning to attract to Downsview are quiet – film, technology, and research and innovation.*

### **NEXT STEPS**

Bob wrapped up the meeting by thanking people for attending – Miigwetch/Nia:weh/Marsee. He committed to sending the draft summary for review and he committed to following up personally to keep people updated and for invitations to future meetings.

Nicole encouraged everyone to apply for a Community Resource Group and shared the project website link with more information and the application form: [id8downsview.ca/crg](https://id8downsview.ca/crg)

Chris and Deana expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the meaningful conversation and acknowledged the themes of the discussion.

Elder Carolyn King delivered the closing invocation.