

On Wednesday, June 10, 2020 approximately 145 people participated in a Virtual Townhall hosted by Northcrest and Canada Lands as part of the id8 Downsview public engagement process. Participants included members of the public and the project team (representatives of Northcrest and Canada Lands and consultants from Urban Strategies Inc. and Henning Larsen), as well as Toronto City Councillor James Pasternak who represents Ward 6 York Centre. A recording of this public session is available at www.id8downsview.ca.

The Virtual Townhall was held online using WebEx video conferencing software and included opening remarks from Councillor Pasternak (enclosed), a brief introduction of the project from Northcrest and Canada Lands, followed by a facilitated discussion period open to all participants. Those who did not have a chance to ask a question or share their thoughts with the project team were encouraged to do so by registering for upcoming small group discussions on June 17th, filling out an online feedback form, e-mailing, or connecting by phone.

The meeting was facilitated and documented by Swerhun Inc. 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.

This summary was subject to participant review prior to being finalized. If you have any questions about what's here, please contact the id8 Downsview team at info@id8downsview.ca.

id8 Downsview

Virtual Townhall

Wednesday, June 10, 2020, 7 – 8 pm

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Feedback from participants is in regular text, and responses (where provided) from Northcrest, Canada Lands, and their consultants are noted in *italics*.

Overall sentiment

- Considerable insight and advice shared, with some expressing interest in staying connected as the project unfolds. Many said that it's important to make sure this land gets used in the right way going forward. There's excitement about the potential of the project in terms of improving connectivity, iconic runway design opportunities and opportunities to establish a model for North America for building inclusive, cohesive, complete communities.
- Appreciation from participants that Northcrest and Canada Lands are starting an open engagement process.

Needs to be connected and walkable

- Connections have to come first, and they have to come early in the process. Downsview cannot wait decades for safe, active transportation. We needed them Sunday when that woman was murdered by a motorist. *We agree. One of the aspects of this Framework Plan is phasing, including looking at infrastructure and when elements of infrastructure can be brought on. Comments like these are really helpful to inform this process.*
- A lot of the residential areas in Downsview are not easily accessible by public transit. Given that more residential is being added, it is important to improve access to public transit and the public transit itself, as right now it is inadequate. *The site includes three subway stops that create a real opportunity for Transit Oriented Development with intensification that can help increase use of the existing transit. Getting to/from these stations, sometimes referred to as the last or first mile, is a separate issue and a big issue for us. We're absolutely focused on ways to improve access to the existing transit (i.e. getting people to/from the three subway stations).*

- Walkability needs to be a real priority. Currently, the Downsview community is very car-centric. Commuter pedestrian space needs serious consideration. Some places that are a short physical distance away still take 20-minutes to walk to because the entrance is on the other side or a street crossing is too far away.
- Getting to the park from the east side of Allen is challenging. Consider a multi-use bridge over Allen Road so it is easier for those who live east of Allen Road to get to and enjoy the park. *Connectivity and creating connections into the existing communities is a key priority for this project. We'll definitely be looking at different opportunities to understand how best to create connections, including where these connections should exist.*
- Create more connections through Downsview Park to make it easier for people from either side of the park to connect. It would be great if people could meet in the centre of the park. *We recognize that the existing runway is a barrier to connections across the park and we're excited to solve this problem with the community. The runway will be leaving and when it does there will be a great opportunity to connect all the surrounding communities to the site.*

Need affordable housing and complete communities

- As a Crown corporation and public sector pension fund, look at setting aggressive affordable housing targets (i.e. 30% of all units being somewhere on the affordable housing spectrum), especially on the subway-related components of the plan. Do not wait for the City and Queen's Park to define public policies, ratify inclusive zoning, or require housing affordability. We are not looking for a miracle, we're looking for math. Write it into the Framework Plan.
- I wanted to commend the developers for the emphasis on a complete community. I think that this is wonderful. We know we need employment lands; we know we need housing. I would suggest that the housing component needs to be denser than what I've seen discussed so far.

Continued employment here is important, as is Downsview Park

- The 2011 Secondary Plan identifies the Bombardier lands as employment lands. It's important to protect employment lands in the area and any considered change to the Secondary Plan should reflect that. *The lands are currently zoned for Employment Areas and we always see employment being a significant component of this area. That said, the area is changing, including the airport and runway being decommissioned, and there are opportunities to revisit the Secondary Plan. Any changes to the Secondary Plan will be part of a later process. We're here tonight to start generating a framework for the future development of the site. We want to hear from you and others what you would like to see included in this framework and where we should be focussing our efforts, in part, to leverage the many assets on the site and in the surrounding area.*
- I am concerned that developers with money will be able to come in and do whatever they want by throwing money at the situation, in particular replace/remove the existing Employment Lands and/or park space. Will there be anything in place that will prevent this from happening?
- *Both Northcrest and Canada Lands are committed to being here for the long term and ensuring we get this right. We're not here for the quick build, quick flip, or quick buck. The City will also have a lot of control over what gets approved and be a key partner at the table throughout the process to ensure there is alignment with their policies. This process will take many years and we will be going to City Council multiple times for approvals. As noted earlier, there is always going to be a significant employment component here, including new and great employers. In terms of the park, it will never shrink in size; it will only grow and get better.*

Be proactive in terms of looking at issues of equity

- As you move forward with your planning, be proactive in terms of looking at issues of equity, inclusion, power, and structure. This project has the potential to be a model for North America. *Thank you, this is a guiding principle for us. Diversity is a strength in the city and it will also be important for this plan. We will be looking to talk to you and other community members as we go through the process to help guide us.*

More capacity is needed for schools and education

- Capacity for education and schooling in the area has been overlooked in the past. Right now, we have a critical issue with many schools in the area being at or over capacity. The current system allows developers and the City to say they have contacted the school boards, and everything is fine, but everything is not fine because the school boards don't have the money to fund the schools required. The provincial government needs to be involved in this process because they allocate the money to the school boards to build schools. We need local schools in the area so that new students can walk to schools and to help offset the load on existing schools, which are already over capacity. *We have met with the school boards and they have said the same thing, some of the schools in the area are already at or over capacity. We're continuing to speak with them to make sure we understand the current situation and work with them on planning for the future. We've also been talking with the Province. There are some things we can do to influence funding. However, allocating funding is ultimately a decision the Province makes. We're also speaking with the school boards about creative ways to facilitate schools earlier in the process, including co-location of schools, co-locating schools with community facilities, and potentially more urban style schools that might reduce the cost of schools.*

Support for the Merchant's Market

- I would like to convey a message on behalf of my 12-year-old son who really likes the Downsview Market. The market is a destination that creates an opportunity for families to get together and purchase local goods. Can the market be integrated into the plans for the future? A lot of great cities have wonderful markets that offer a variety of food. It creates a destination for weekends and opportunities for families to get together and purchase local goods. *We have heard this from others as well, and we also love the community that the market creates and recognize that it responds to many community needs. In our planning we're hoping to create community hubs like the market and will be using the spirit of the community that the market creates to inform how we go about neighbourhood planning.*

Celebrate the runway, build on past plans and designs

- The design of the runway could be an amazing opportunity for Toronto. The runway could become symbolic of Toronto, like CN Tower, or like Champs-Élysées in France if you can integrate it and build a market and the community around it. *We agree and see the runway as a great asset. Runways typically connect people globally; wouldn't it be great if the runway could connect people locally. This is something we see as having great potential and something we must do.*
- There have been many plans and designs for this area that have not been executed. How much of your research includes looking at previous design proposals, e.g. the one done by the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in 2000, which was pretty radical? *We've worked to follow the spirit of OMA plan; many of the features in the plan have set the framework for Downsview Park and will influence the plan for the emerging neighbourhoods around the park. There is a*

real opportunity to build on some of the notions identified in this earlier plan, particularly those that relate to leveraging the tree canopy and the richness of the ravines to connect nature and the city.

Thoughts about noise

- There are a number of great events that take place at Downsview Park. That said, they can produce a lot of noise; I will be living very close to Downsview Park and interested to know how noise impacts residents that live around the park. *There are a few large events held in Downsview Park each summer, which are called amplified events. Canada Lands has worked with the promoters of these events over the last few years to limit how much “bounce” there is into the community through the use of repeater systems. Last year only two or three calls were received with concerns about noise. That said, when you live very close to the park there will be some ambient noise from these large events. Creating a complete community is all about compatibility and ensuring the right relationship between the types of buildings and spaces and the types of uses. This includes having places that have exciting activities that draw people to the area but still allows local residents to enjoy their home.*
- Regarding the comment about noise, people living close to Downsview Park will definitely hear amplified events. The lack of calls about noise is not a result of reduced noise but rather the community being resigned to the noise.

NEXT STEPS

Northcrest and Canada Lands thanked everyone who joined the meeting and encouraged participants share more feedback and continue staying in touch.

Remarks by Councillor Pasternak to Open the Meeting

After a quick round of introductions of the Northcrest and Canada Lands teams, Councillor James Pasternak kicked off the meeting with the following remarks:

- Welcome everybody and thank you for participating. Thank you Northcrest and Canada Lands for making this opportunity available to the community. Also big thanks to the first responders and those in medical profession who are helping us in this pandemic crisis.
- Only thing unfortunate about tonight is that we can't do it in person. I'm hopeful that once this pandemic is behind us, we will be able to run in-person meetings by the City, with Northcrest, and Canada Lands, and the Planning Department in 2021.
- Many know that the lands in question are subject to the 2011 Downsview Secondary Plan and it is City official policy that these are Employment Lands. I adhere to Council's direction and they currently remain Employment Lands.
- My job is to represent the voice of the community, to protect the integrity of the neighborhood, the history of the neighborhood, respect for the character of the neighborhood.
- As this process goes forward – it's a long process and there's a lot of debate – Bombardier doesn't leave for another three years, we'll be fighting for community assets: a community centre, daycare, cycling, green space, library, schools, places of worship to have a complete community. That's what keeps communities prosperous, and these assets are long overdue for Downsview.
- If there are any questions this evening that come up after the discussions start, you can please call me at my office 416-392-1371. I wish everybody to be safe, be healthy, and have a good summer. Take care, enjoy the evening, and I look forward to your comments.