

On Tuesday, July 13, 2021, approximately 106 people participated in the first of two Round 3 Virtual Townhalls hosted by Northcrest Developments and Canada Lands Company 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 their 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 and a copy of the slides presented are available at www.id8downsview.ca.

This Virtual Townhall was held online using Zoom video conferencing software and included opening remarks from Councillor Pasternak (enclosed), a presentation overview of the vision and the emerging ideas for the future of the site, followed by a facilitated discussion period open to all participants. Participants also shared comments and questions in the Zoom chat and are included in this summary. Answers to the chat questions not already answered verbally during the meeting will be provided in a separate document and posted on the project website.

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 or Canada Lands.

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

Round 3 Virtual Townhall

Tuesday, July 13, 2021, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Overall sentiment

- Many participants expressed appreciation and excitement about the vision, saying they were inspired by the renderings, ideas, and opportunities. In particular, there was support for the innovative approach to sustainability, using the runway as an organizing principle, and emphasis on complete communities.
- Many participants stressed that vibrant neighbourhoods are inclusive and accessible to all, have community assets, and reach their full potential through arts and culture. Participants shared considerable advice and insights regarding the need for affordable housing, support for local workforce development and businesses, and the importance of arts and culture and community amenities. Many urged Northcrest and Canada Lands not to miss the opportunity for making Downsview a unique destination.
- Some participants emphasized the importance of realizing the vision, noting that implementation could be challenging and that it's important for connections to happen first.
- Some participants expressed appreciation for the process, shared advice, and expressed interest in continuing to be engaged.

Detailed feedback

This summary reflects the feedback shared by participants. When Northcrest, Canada Lands, and/or their consultants responded to questions or offered comments, those responses are written in *italics*.

Realize the vision and start with building connections.

- **It is important to implement the vision and have the community fully involved. How will the vision for the outdoor spaces be delivered on?** We have all had experiences of renderings not matching the reality. The implementation of this vision is especially

important given the considerations around land tenure, long-term management.

We are in it for the long term, we are not in it for a quick land sale or a quick flip. We do not need to make profit right away, and there is a real benefit to this – it allows us to take a different approach. These renderings and this vision are our intention, and we will work very hard with the community to ensure that we deliver this vision.

- **Connections over the Barrie line need to happen at the beginning of the development process, not at the end.** The lack of connectivity across the rail is one of the most serious problems with the site. It prevents people from existing neighbourhoods from accessing the park and the transit stations.

We agree that it is a major barrier. We are looking at five rail crossings to get people connected east-west to transit. We are working with the City to develop a phasing plan, but we feel that the east-west crossing at the north end should come in the early stages, as it will also join the William Baker neighbourhood to the site.

- **Proposed connections could be challenging to implement.** Connections to the west are a great idea but going under or over the railway is not that simple; and just making the connection itself could be a barrier to achieving the vision. Connections to the east neighbourhoods through Allen Road might also be challenging because they will require slowing down Allen Road, which is practically a highway, and will take some coordination with the City of Toronto.

Yes, crossing the track will be challenging whether over or under. It will require great urban design and a significant investment to create an underpass that looks and feels like public realm. We do have an opportunity to cross at Allen Road into CreateTO's Allen District, as there is a planned crossing there just south of Sheppard Avenue.

- **Look at past examples of low-cost redevelopments to avoid their mistakes.** Examples include Regent Park, Thorncliffe Park, and others.

Be the leaders in sustainability and stormwater management.

- **How is microclimate being modelled and calculated?**

We start by understanding wind directions throughout the year and designing the buildings to create safe shelter from the wind. At the same time, we are looking at the daylight and shadows, constantly trying to achieve a balance between the two. We are especially looking at how to create a comfortable microclimate on the runway – to have ample daylight and a scaled shelter from the wind. Human scale and existing conditions are being balanced continuously and will continue to change as one building will have an effect on the next. It is an iterative process. We design for different systems – connectivity, biodiversity, water – to create a network of support.

- **What is the approach to water management? Is it going to be traditional, or will there be water gardens, water collection, water treatment?**

We are taking an innovative approach to stormwater management system on the site with an integrated design of blue-green systems. Our goal is to exceed the Toronto Green Standard

(TGS) Level 3 and provide 90% or more of water retention and reuse on site. That means that our green spaces and public infrastructure will perform double duty, where the pathways are actually water engineering systems. We are setting a new bar for leadership around stormwater management on large sites and we're excited about that.

- **It is important to include e-infrastructure to support sustainability, such as electric car charges and green roofs.**

We are setting ourselves up to integrate such technologies in the future. The first thing we have to do is make sure that we create something safe and healthy, and then layer in technology when the time comes.

- **Consider district energy and geothermal infrastructure.** District energy would ensure that it is not just the individual buildings that meet Toronto Green Standards Level 3 but it is more of a community integrated approach to energy and sustainability.

It is definitely of interest to us, and we are looking at broader districts than just building-by-building energy systems.

- **It's important that mature trees are not felled during the development.** It is disturbing to see mature tree log on the side of paths in Downsview park. It's important that mature trees are preserved when developing the site and the community centre. Mature trees provide important shade and nice views for local residents.

More affordable housing is needed in the area. There is also need for a shelter.

- **Downsview is already unaffordable.** Every year housing gets more expensive, but salaries are not raised. All the new builds have very small units that are not suitable for young families and even young professionals. Currently, the rent for a "shoe box" of 600 sf is upward of \$2,700. If you make an average salary of \$45,000 a year and you factor in groceries in addition to the rent, it is very hard to afford anything at Downsview.

Those are all great points. We will be meeting the City's affordable housing requirements and also following the City's Growing Up Guidelines that have a set of standards for family-sized units.

- **A neighbourhood that is affordable and accessible to all is paramount to the vibrancy of the neighbourhood, including younger and less privileged individuals.** It's important that they are not excluded from the planning process. The neighbourhoods need to be affordable and accessible to them.
- **I worry that developers don't care, are very greedy, and that the affordable housing crisis will be perpetuated here.**

I'm happy to say that I respectfully disagree. We do care a lot and that's why we're here tonight.

- **It is important that landowners, as Crown Corporations, support the National Housing Strategy on transit-oriented lands and exhibit a much higher standard of affordable rental commitment – beyond the minimum 20% of residential lands threshold required by the City.** In particular, the area around the interchange of the GO station and the subway owned by Canada Lands, as these are the lands the federal government held for a long time. HousingNowTO has a team of volunteers that are happy to connect further with the id8 Downsview team.

Canada Lands is working closely with CMHC to deliver lands into this federal initiative. We are also looking at Downsview lands as they come into development to participate in this initiative. We are mindful that in addition to affordable housing, we are looking to provide community benefits based on community priorities, including parks, schools, and major infrastructure improvements. We appreciate the offer of HousingNowTO volunteers for assistance and we are looking forward to delivering affordable housing at Downsview.

- **Consider cooperative living -- a model used in Europe with short-term lease, where renters act as their own property manager.** Every three years the renters either move or renew.

We are open to exploring a range of housing options, including tenure, affordability, ownership. Given the site's location and proximity to transit, we are looking forward to being a part of the solution to the city's affordability crisis.

- **There is an urgent need for a shelter in the area. Given the scale of the development, it is important that there is at least one shelter in the area.** Consider dedicating a building with 100 to 150 beds on former Bombardier lands to an emergency shelter for adults, a family shelter and/or a shelter for people with disabilities. With the history of Sunrise Propane explosion at Downsview, it's important to have emergency shelters near factories and plants, so if something happens, people in the surrounding area have a place to go to.

We envision a place that is welcoming to all people of all ages and all abilities. Safety is paramount. We want to create a place with parks, open spaces, and public infrastructure that produces better, healthier outcomes for people. The shelter locations are sited by City staff. One of the key considerations for shelters is to be close to supports and services, and currently the Bombardier lands is an industrial area, which may not be suitable for shelters at this point.

Answer from Councillor Pasternak: When it comes to shelter locations, it's taken out from the hands of politicians and developers and put in the hands of civil servants. In the surrounding area we have two shelters – a women's shelter by Sheppard Station and Canadian Mental Health Association shelter by Wilson Station, which is steps away from the Downsview lands. When it comes to affordability and accessibility to housing, it is something that the Mayor is committed to through a number of initiatives, including Housing Now. This development is so large and could include such concepts going forward. Some of the things you suggested could be solved in William Baker, as we create a seniors' village over there.

Ensure community amenities in every neighbourhood.

- **Each community should have community amenities because they help make the community.** Community amenities such as basketball courts, splash pads, tennis courts should exist in each community, so that people do not have to go to other neighbourhoods with amenities or the

park and feel connected to their respective neighbourhoods.

- **It is important that the planned community centre gets built with or without any concessions made by the City.** For example, Liberty Village is a great place to be, but it is lacking community facilities to support those who live there.

We are enthusiastic to see the community centre realized. We are providing land and contributing to the municipal funding component through Section 37 and development charges. There is also federal funding and provincial funding. We are working to bring it all together and it will take some time to do so.

Answer by Councillor Pasternak: The community centre is supposed to be the heart and soul of the community, other than the people themselves, and necessary for a complete community. Building it is not cheap – somewhere between 65 and 85 million dollars; but it is an investment with a return in a healthy community. So, it's important we advocate with the federal and provincial governments to come to the table to support our people.

- **Will there be a pool? This area lacks an indoor/outdoor pool.** *We know that pools are popular, and we know people do not have access to backyard pools. We're open to discussing specific recreational facilities and amenities further with the community.*
- **Plan and design for a daycare.** It is extremely difficult to find a proper location and space for a daycare that is compliant with zoning, building code, and safety regulations.
- **Work with and provide affordable space for community services and facilities.** There are many local and city-wide service providers who are looking for space outside of Downtown, as Downtown has become unaffordable. The Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf is looking for a new home with easy access to public transit.

Make Downsview a vibrant destination by creating unique experiences and spaces to support arts and culture.

- **Put Downsview on an international map.** Visitors from around the world come to see Toronto and it is seldom that there are 500 acres of land in the city to make something outstanding for everybody. Design it in a holistic cohesive way – beautiful affordable housing (it doesn't need to be ugly), nice shops, hotels, conference spaces and other places that provide unique experiences. Meeting and convention spaces have a span of 3 to 5 years and the global trend is to have a space that offers many different things to do and unique experiences.
- **Given the size of the development, consider a space for theatre, dance, and performing arts.** A space like that would also help make it a destination.
- **Consider affordable studio options for musicians, designers, artists, as well as smaller studio and music venues.** Small arts and music venues disappear from the city and so does culture. You cannot achieve vibrant neighbourhoods without culture.
- **Consider work-live spaces dedicated to those working in creative industries.** In addition to the community centre, it would be great to see a space like the Centre for Social Innovation, Daniels Spectrum, or Evergreen Brickworks with an emphasis on living space.
- **Consider Global Black and African Festival for Arts and Culture as an interim use.** The first festival was held last year online and was well attended. In the future when the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted it could take place in Downsview. It would require open space and facilities for live performances.

Prioritize local community and local businesses through opportunities for training and jobs.

- **It is important that small local businesses are given preferential support through new commercial space opportunities.**
- **What type of employment opportunities are anticipated with this project? How can we ensure that local and diverse communities are prioritized in these opportunities?** The federal government has the Community Employment Benefits program that looks at how underrepresented groups can be supported into economic opportunities on federal infrastructure projects. The City of Toronto has the Community Benefits Framework that seeks to leverage workforce and apprenticeship opportunities, as well as employment opportunities for local diverse small businesses on public lands. Toronto Community Benefits Networks supports many local diverse individuals through apprenticeship and training programs and is interested in community benefits opportunities of this project as well.

Inclusion of local communities is important to us. We recognize the opportunity to significantly contribute to local economic development and local employment with this decades-long project. There are potential opportunities for employment and training with one of the biggest film studio campuses in Downsview, as just recently announced by Northcrest. We are also planning to build on the incredible constellation of existing assets and create a thriving tech and economic hub, and it will need to involve local community both in terms of workforce development and access to jobs. As we are 3 to 5 years away from having shovels in the ground, we are just starting to put our minds on how to look at local employment opportunities as a key priority in construction, operations, through animation, arts and culture, and so on.

- **Consider a strategic alignment with the Jane-Finch Community Hub.** Explore opportunities for collaboration.
- **Consider bringing in electric airplanes as a commuter service.** The electric airplanes have a short vertical take-off capacity and are very quiet. They would only need a small part of the runway and could be ideally located by the railway near the public transit hub or be located on the top of the roof of one of the buildings. Electric planes could be another transportation option that would allow a faster commute during the rush hour across the GTA. Some of the companies working on electric airplane development include Solar Impulse, Alpha Electric, Pipitrel, Ampaire, Elroy Air, Kitty Hawk, Joby Aviation H2Fly, Waymo, Zunum Aero, and others.

We are interested in continuing the legacy of innovation on the site and exploring new technologies. A big consideration would be how much of the runway is required. At this point, such a service seems unlikely, as the runway is key to providing connections, opening the site for buildings and green space. We also have a fantastic world-renowned facility – the Downsview Park Aerospace Campus with Centennial College. There could be opportunities that relate to developing and testing electric planes.

Process-related advice and questions

- **Diversify the expertise.** Work with doctors, epidemiologists, climate crisis specialists, and not just architects and planners. Go beyond the built form and design for people as the greatest asset. Consider charades for meaningful community involvement.

We are putting together a [Community Resource Group](#); organizations in and around Downsview

are welcome to apply. We also have focus groups coming up looking more deeply at a range of topics, including aging in place and health. It is something we have spoken about with the York Centre Senior Steering Committee, as well as Humber Hospital and other healthcare providers.

- **Local seniors need to be engaged.** There are 100,000 people in York Centre; 50,000 of them are on the south side by the site; and a great deal of them are seniors who are not aware of this project and need to be engaged.

We totally agree. We are doing our best in these circumstances: we've mailed 62,000 meeting flyers; there are options to participate through mail and via phone; we offer materials in five languages based on community advise; we try to reach people through social media; we are looking forward to in-person meetings and pop-ups as soon as we can. We have also invited over 500 different organizations to participate; local resident association and BIAs are paying close attention to this process and helping spread the word about this consultation. We are always open to suggestions on how to do better.

- **Promote public engagement process in Downsview Park through boards.** It will be a good way to attract park users and local residents who use the park on a regular basis. Consider placing a board near a playground. When the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, consider handing out flyers in person at the park.
- **Can individuals participate in the Community Resource Group?**

The Community Resource Group is designed for organizations, but we might need to revisit it as there have been a number of individuals interested in it.

- **Flyer in the mail is an important tool to get people engaged and it needs to come to residents well in advance of the meeting.**
- **Organizations that expressed interest in further discussions:** Business Planning World Group for the Jane and Finch Community Hub's Arts Organizing Committee, Housing Now, Toronto Community Benefits Network, and York Centre Seniors Steering Committee.

Summary of Comments and Suggestions from the Chat

This section includes a summary of comments and suggestions from the chat not shared verbally at the meeting. Please note that the list of questions asked in the chat that were not answered verbally during the meeting is attached.

- **Concerns about new development.** It is concerning is that the small area of the park for us residents is being surrounded by buildings and the corridors of breezes and fresh air are being blocked from us current users. Any new building should be mandated to have a street level parkette saving at least 2 old trees.
- **Work with the community to implement the vision.** Keep going, working more inclusively with existing community members to make sure implementation of your project will be bigger and better success to all York Centre Ward 6 citizens.

NEXT STEPS

Northcrest and Canada Lands thanked everyone who joined the meeting and encouraged participants to continue sharing their feedback and staying in touch.

Remarks by Councillor Pasternak to Open the Meeting

Councillor James Pasternak kicked off the meeting with the following remarks:

- Thank you for joining this evening.
- In the not-too-distant future, we will be gathering in person, which I think is vital for the ongoing discussion.
- Building vibrant neighbourhoods is what we all want. Neighbourhoods that are liveable and safe – to raise a family, start a business, send kids to school and enjoy community assets, including a community centre.
- A community centre is required at the corner of Keele and Sheppard and should include a lot of other community facilities, including a multi-purpose room, fitness areas, and a daycare.
- Parks are essential to the health and safety of all communities, and this plan calls for another 100 acres of parkland to the 200-acre Downsview Park and 5-acre Stanley Greene Park.
- I am here to listen, and I always appreciate the comments and the wisdom of our local communities. I look forward to your comments and ideas. Thank you again for joining today.

APPENDIX A. List of Chat Questions not verbally answered during the meeting

The chat function was used as a secondary option for those more comfortable sharing written feedback/questions with Northcrest and Canada Lands. The facilitation team monitored the chat during the meeting and verbally integrated highlights of feedback into the larger plenary discussion for all (including those on the phone) to hear. The integrated feedback and some of the questions that were covered during the plenary are included in the main summary. This list includes all the questions from the chat that were not verbally answered during the meeting. Answers will be provided by the id8 Downsview team and posted online shortly in a separate document. The video recording of the townhall is available on the project website at www.id8downsview.ca

Green space

- Are the 100 acres of new parks and green spaces included in the original 200 acres of Downsview Park?
- What exactly are the green spaces of Downsview Park that are not going to be used for development other than to develop the green spaces, trees, walking paths, etc.?

Community services, facilities, and amenities

- Any plans to revitalize the flea market?
- We already have those community centres in Downsview, why not improve those instead of felling those old trees to accommodate the new one?

Housing

- Where exactly will the above mid-range housing be built?
- Will there be any high-rises?
- Does the 20% affordable housing include all the condos already built or only those being planned to be built?

Sustainability, wildlife, and urban farming

- Where will the proposed community centre be located on the corner of Keele and Sheppard without upsetting the nature and wildlife?
- How much space is given to urban farming? Is it more than what already exists at the park?
- What about the old animal farms?

Community safety & parking

- Have you considered if the design of the new Downsview communities will accentuate the crime currently experienced in this area? What design considerations have you made to create safer and more interconnected communities?
- What about parking? Will there be more parking provided?

Crown Corporations and accountability

- Wasn't Canada Lands made into a Crown Corporation so that Downsview Park is maintained from self-supported income?
- Who is watching the expenses of these two Crown corporations, including salaries and benefits?
- What happens to the huge excess profits from all these income generating structures, like the Studio as one example? Where will the huge income go/be used for from all this planned

infrastructure? Is the annual excess income not projected for maintenance mandated to go to Federal/National Revenue?

Other

- I have sent several photographs of the Forest area of the Park where mature trees have been felled to create a pavement for walking pathways instead of using stones of some sort. Why were those mature trees felled? Then I also sent photos of just one spot of dead trees not being replaced in the green space of the park. Why are these trees not being replaced?
- How many foreign workers are being brought over by the sub-contractors?

Process

- Is there an email list to connect participants to each other?
- Are individuals from communities not welcome to apply at this juncture [Community Resource Group]?
- Why were flyers not distributed at the park, so actual users can participate in these Town Halls?
- Why was today's Townhall meeting link mailed to us residents only received today?