

On Tuesday, September 29th, 2020 approximately 150 people participated in the Round 2 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 and a copy of the slides presented are available at www.id8downsview.ca.

This 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 four upcoming virtual workshops: Parks & Nature (Oct 6), Getting Around & Across the Site (Oct 8), Jobs & Employment (Oct 13), People and Neighbourhoods (Oct 15), 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 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 2 Virtual Townhall

Tuesday, September 29, 2020, 6 – 8 pm

SUMMARY OF 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*.

Overall sentiment

- Considerable insight and advice shared, with many expressing support for the concept of a 15-minute city.
- Many discussed exciting opportunities to improve connectivity, build on the site history and heritage, bring more community services, and create more green and open spaces. Some emphasized the importance of respectful integration with existing neighbourhoods and compatibility of employment and residential uses.
- General interest to see more information and what decisions will be made as the process unfolds.

Needs to be connected, cyclable, walkable and respectfully integrated with the existing neighbourhoods

- Consider providing a dedicated cycling lane that goes through the interconnected green spaces. This is the best way to avoid conflicts with pedestrians and cars, and it's a good opportunity to be able to get to the extremities of the site on the bike in 15 minutes, cycle to York University, or the G. Ross Lord Park. As one participant said, "If you can put a six year-old on the trail to cycle safely, then it is a cyclable path."
- Consider putting natural trails across major barriers, such as the rail path and runway.
- Think about all ages, speeds, and mini-regional opportunities when thinking about connectivity. The roads need to be well-connected in all directions, to places based on interest, culture, age, and employment.
- Consider strengthening the connection between the site and Yorkdale Mall. Connectivity needs to be designed with different ages and speeds in mind. For example, from the seniors' perspective, walkability is an ability to walk and stop, walk and stop.

- Integrate new areas and roads with the existing neighbourhoods in a respectful way. Many of the local roads by the runway are dead ends right now as they back into the field. Opening areas and roads will bring more traffic and will need to be done in a way that respects existing neighbourhoods.
- Consider road markings similar to the ones at Bloor and Keele that were done recently. They are very clever in marking areas for driving, biking, and parking all in one space.

Think about connecting the water

- Explore opportunities to enhance connectivity of various waterways and water routes across North York. The pond is an amazing part of Downsview Park. Create water connections between the pond and the branch of Don River that goes by the Canadian Tire at Dufferin and Finch, all the way to Earl Bales Park.

Needs to recognize and build on the site history and heritage in terms of employment, architecture, and cultural uses

- De Havilland has a great history in the area. Look at and incorporate some of historic places, like the historic De Havilland park at Keele and Wilson.
- Given the aviation history of the site, consider bringing the Canadian Air and Space Museum back to Downsview (e.g. it could be located in one of the De Havilland buildings, once Bombardier wraps up its operations).
- Consider adaptive re-use of the buildings along Carl Hall Road – the Hanger, the market, and the Bombardier buildings. They have the 1920s architectural feel and it would be a shame to lose their character.
- Explore opportunities to continue building on the legacy of aerospace by creating more industry-related jobs. *We are thrilled with the incredible legacy of aerospace on the site and the historic presence of De Havilland. We are working with Centennial College and the Downsview Aerospace Innovation and Research (DAIR) hub and will continue discussions on how to build on this legacy.*

Provide employment uses that are compatible with residential neighbourhoods

- There's concern over impacts on the neighbouring residential community of air, light, noise pollution and traffic caused by the existing industry on the site. Residents living near the Bombardier site cannot sleep at night and live next to a huge parking lot. *When it comes to the types of future jobs here, we're thinking about the industries that will help us continue the legacy of innovation and what are the industries that are already strong. We are looking at film, tech, and aerospace research and development. These are not heavy, polluting industries. We are looking to create jobs for people in the community, the city, as well as the region. Also, we are looking at how to improve the transition between where the work happens and where you live. We realize there is no transition today, and parking lots are a good opportunity to provide the needed buffer and strengthen integration of the site.*
- The existing industrial buildings are ugly. Consider changing them so they can be repurposed for employment uses that are more compatible with residential uses.

Need for more community facilities and spaces

- There's a need for space to provide community programming, particularly for middle years kids, and seniors. *Community infrastructure, such as libraries and community centres, is an important part of this planning process. Canada Lands has space available for community use*

at 70 Canuck Ave. You can also get in touch with the Downsview Park Education Team for opportunities to develop special programs.

- There is a plan for a tennis facility on the east side of Allen Road. Are there any plans for a community centre or is it just for the tennis facility? *The tennis centre is part of a different project, the Allen District Plan being led by CreateTO. As part of this work, we are looking at community infrastructure that will respond to the population needs. It is not an “either/or” situation.*

Need more green and open spaces

- Use the runway as an opportunity to provide open space that takes advantage of the high ground and is not dedicated to organized sports. It would be a beautiful place to fly kites, have open air concerts, and special events. *An important consideration for us is how to traverse such a large space on a human-scale, so eventually the runway might become more smaller spaces. However, once the airport closes, there will be interim opportunities for land activation, and we would love to continue the discussion.*
- Consider creating more smaller local parks. COVID-19 showed us the importance of green spaces.
- Water management will be an important factor. Flooding is a great concern.

Density, particularly around transit stations, is important

- There should be “massive density”, especially by the subway stations. Right now walkability in the area is very low because there are not enough services; and services need density. So, condo towers around subway stations are welcome. Consider “walk scores” to be a development metric of success.
- Consider gentle density – the land of midrise around transit stations. Have a work component and an entertainment component within the 15-minute neighbourhoods.
- There needs to be integration, not separation, with the Allen District planning process. Densities around the site will be important to the 15-minute city. Are there any plans for the Secondary Plan amendments to integrate these two areas? *We are at different planning stages. But we stay in touch and coordinate with CreateTO, TTC, and all neighbouring landowners. We are always interested in improving these lines of communication and in knowing what is happening around the site and how it could be addressed as part of this process.*
- When will the community know what portion of the land is dedicated for a residential use and where will the new residential areas be located? *The Framework Plan that we are working on right now looks at land uses at a high-level. Specifics will happen at the district planning stage which is a few years out from this point. We are looking to create places with inter-mixed land uses, where different places are accessible in the 15-min city. Phasing will play an important role, both in terms of development and infrastructure, as different areas of the site will have different timelines.*

Process-related advice and questions

- Consider consulting with Bathurst Manor and Clanton Park communities in a more focused way. *Thanks for this suggestion. We have been in touch with both the Bathurst Manor and Clanton Park representatives since the beginning of the process.*
- Will the slides be available online? *Yes, they will be – along with the recording of the meeting.*
- What is the purpose of the four workshops? How is it different from this townhall? *Today is more about the Q&A and at the four workshops we will have an opportunity to have deeper discussions*

in smaller groups on the four key emerging themes for the Framework Plan – Parks and Nature, Getting Around and Across the Site, Jobs and Employment, and People and Neighbourhoods. You can find workshop-specific materials at the project website at id8downsview.ca

- I've been working in community development for a long time and have a lot of connections to this area. How can I help? *This is an important topic for us, send us an e-mail and we would love to talk.*

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:

- Thank you everybody for joining this evening for this important conversation. In recent months it has not been easy for Toronto, Ontario, and the country. The focus of the evening today is daunting – what we are looking for is opinions on the future of 500 acres of land in the Downsview area, probably one of the biggest parcels of land up for development in the country.
- These consultations are vital for the vision of the future of the site. We all know that these are now employment lands, and it is the position of the City that these lands continue to provide employment. With any new changes, whether it's new employers or new residential uses, we need to make sure we advocate for the crucial community assets lacking in recent years, such as daycare, community centre, library, affordable housing and retail.
- My responsibility is to listen, to learn, to advocate for community, and to make sure that the integrity and history of the community is protected and that we receive long overdue community assets. At the same time, we also need to keep an eye on unreasonable development, traffic and congestion, aging infrastructure, and community safety.
- This is a long process – nothing happens overnight, and nothing can happen without community support.
- I thank the organizers for having this meeting today. Ideally, it would be in person, but to keep everyone safe we are doing it virtually.
- I wish you a lively discussion and looking forward to your comments. Remain safe and remain engaged in the months and years ahead.