Downsview West District Plan

Round Two Integrated Engagement Report

February 2023 – February 2024

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Note to Reader

This Integrated Engagement Report was written by Third Party Public and Nbisiing Consulting, independent facilitation firms retained by Canada Lands Company to support public engagement and Indigenous engagement for the Downsview West District Planning Process. The intent of this report is to capture the range of perspectives shared, not to assess the merit or accuracy of any of the perspectives. This report also does not indicate an endorsement of any of these perspectives by Canada Lands Company.

This report contains three parts. Part one provides an executive summary with a high-level overview of the engagement activities and key messages that emerged from participant feedback during the Round Two Engagement Process. Part two includes detailed information about the engagement process, including the engagement activities and materials used. Part three provides a summary of the feedback heard from the different audiences engaged with in the Round Two Engagement Process.

Part One: Executive Summary

As part of the engagement process for the Downsview West District Plan, Canada Lands Company (Canada Lands) held the second round of community engagement from June 2023 to January 2024.

The Downsview West District is an emerging neighbourhood located within the Downsview Area Secondary Plan area, bordered by Sheppard Avenue West to the west and north, the Barrier GO Train line to the east, and Carl Hall Road to the south. It

Sheppard Ave West

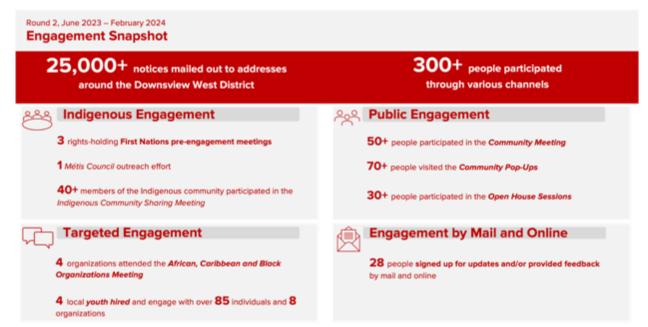
Downsview West District

is approximately 70 acres (30 hectares).

The purpose of the second round of engagement was to provide information about the District Planning process, share the latest updates and get the community's feedback on emerging ideas for the Downsview West District Plan that will guide the future development of the neighbourhood. For a look at the presentation shared at the Community Meeting, please click here, <u>Virtual Community Meeting Presentation</u>.

Snapshot of Engagement Activities

The second round of engagement for Downsview West District happened in two parts, with the first part taking place from Winter to Summer of 2023, and the second part taking place in the Fall of 2023 and Winter of 2024. Community engagement had both targeted engagements to reach specific audiences, and broader public engagement to reach the community as a whole. Over 300 people participated in the second round of engagement through various activities, which can be seen in the following chart.



Key Themes of Feedback

The following are the key themes of feedback commonly shared by participants across all engagement activities. These key themes should be read along with the more detailed summaries that follow in part three of this report.

Support and excitement for the Downsview West District Plan. Participants at various touchpoints of engagement shared excitement for the future plan, were curious about different elements of the plan, and wanted to be kept in the loop on the future process.

Mixed opinions about the planned density and proposed heights. Participants with concerns were primarily worried about the impacts to traffic and parking congesting the local street, and with the existing school capacity for incoming families. Some participants said the tall buildings proposed in the northeast part of the district won't fit in with the surrounding area. Others were supportive of the planned density and proposed tall buildings, especially along the transit lines and discussed a need for providing more housing.

Excitement for the proposed connectivity across the area. Participants like the idea of bike paths and pedestrian walkways to connect them to other districts and greenspaces.

Affordability is important for many in the area. People, especially youth, said they want to be able to remain in the area and not get priced out, as well as have opportunities to invest in the area. Participants were generally supportive of providing affordable housing. Many wanted to know what type of affordable housing will be coming to the area and advocated for different types of housing.

Continue targeted engagement with different audiences in the Downsview area, such as African, Caribbean and Black communities, Indigenous peoples, and youth. Participants suggested meeting these groups where they are, and through organizations or social media to ensure their voices are heard and included in the planning process. Indigenous participants expressed optimism for continued planning and development for Indigenous placekeeping.

Including retail uses and employment opportunities is important to many.Participants were interested in learning about the types of retail spaces coming to the area, and suggested the plan include local bakeries and cafes. Youth in the area advocated for more youth employment opportunities in different fields, including co-op opportunities. There were also suggestions to look into Black business innovations in other areas, to see how it could be brought to Downsview.

40 Carl Hall Road (The Supply Depot) remains an important piece of the Downsview area for the community. Many want to see the Merchant's Market remain open, while others would like the see how the team will further animate the space for community use and amenities. There was also interest in the building's heritage and how it will be preserved.

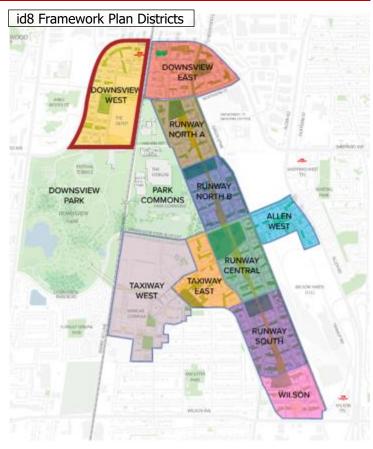
Community space, programs and amenities are important and needed in the Downsview community. This District can impact the surrounding areas positively, if it provides things that are missing in the area, such as commercial spaces and community facilities. Youth also advocated for creating free and affordable program space both inside and outside where they could meet with others.

Round Two: Engagement Process

Project Background

The Downsview West District is an emerging neighbourhood bordered by Sheppard Avenue West to the west and north, the Barrie GO Train line to the east, and Carl Hall Road to the south. It is approximately 70 acres (30 hectares) in size, a little bigger than the nearby Arbo Neighbourhood. While currently Downsview West has mostly vacant lands, it includes Downsview Park TTC station, Downsview Park GO station and the Supply Depot – a large warehouse that hosts the Merchant's Market, Film Studios, and other activities. The Downsview West District Plan, once ready, will help quide redevelopment of these lands to build on what already exists in and around the District and provide more ways to work, live, get around, invest, and play in this area.

One of Canada Lands' objectives for the Downsview West District Plan is to



ensure it is informed by the diverse local communities. As such, an important part of planning this district is hearing from Downsview residents, businesses, community organizations, youth, seniors, as well as African, Caribbean and Black communities, and urban Indigenous voices. First Nations Rights-holders are also being engaged in an ongoing dialogue with Canada Lands, led by Nbisiing Consulting. This report describes the engagement process and outreach tactics used in this round of engagement, and summarizes the feedback received through the various engagement activities. The report was written by Third Party Public and Nbisiing Consulting, independent facilitators hired by Canada Lands to support the engagement process.

Recap: First Round of Engagement

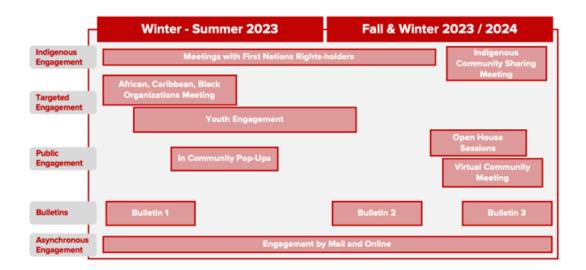
The first round of engagement for the Downsview West District took place in the Fall and Winter of 2022. It also included various engagement activities, including pre-consultation conversations, a separate but integrated Indigenous engagement process, open house sessions at the Downsview Hub, a virtual community meeting and asynchronous feedback opportunities. For a detailed look at the first round of engagement report, visit the following link Round 1 Integrated Engagement Report. A snapshot of what was heard in Round 1 includes:

- Excitement for what Downsview West can become.
- The importance of engaging and planning with rights-holders and urban Indigenous populations.
- Equity and inclusion need to be an essential part of the process.

- The importance of planning for and creating affordable spaces.
- Establishing safe and accessible connections.
- 40 Carl Hall Road "the supply depot" is an important place and presents a great opportunity to support the local community and define the district.

Round Two Engagement Process Overview

The second round of engagement took place over approximately twelve months from February 2023 to February 2024. The public process included, a Youth-led Engagement process, Community Pop-Ups, a meeting with the African, Caribbean, and Black organizations (ACB) and a Bulletin Series, Open House Sessions, and a Virtual Community Meeting, and asynchronous engagement via the project webpage and emails. The Indigenous engagement was led by Nbisiing Consulting and included meetings with First Nations Rights-Holders as well as an



Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting to engage urban Indigenous communities. The Graphic below provides of snapshot of the activities and when they took place.

Engagement Objectives

- Provide information and updates about the District Planning process;
- Share the latest updates to avoid a lull in information;
- Connect with different communities, especially those not typically involved in the planning process; and
- Seek feedback on the emerging ideas for the draft District Plan.

Engagement Activities Overview

The following sections describe the various engagement activities and materials used in detail.

1. Indigenous Engagement

All Indigenous engagement was lead and facilitated by Bob Goulais of Nbisiing Consulting. Indigenous engagement activities included:

Engagement meetings with First Nations rights-holders

Nbisiing Consulting and Canada Lands connected with designated consultation staff for three rights-holding First Nations.

Outreach to the local Métis Council. Nbising Consulting reached out to the Toronto-York Region Métis Council. It is expected that engagement with the local Métis Council will take place in 2024.

Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting. On January 24, 2024, Canada Lands Company and Nbisiing Consulting organized an Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting. Invitations were sent to First Nations Rights-holders and most Indigenous organizations and agencies in the City. Invitations were also shared on local Indigenous social media channels and by email to community members. Bob Goulais of Nbisiing Consulting facilitated and reported on the meeting with support from Third Party Public. Canada Lands Company and their lead planning consultant, Urban Strategies Inc., presented at the meeting and answered questions.

2. African, Caribbean and Black Organizations Meeting

On Tuesday, June 20, 2023, Canada Lands hosted an in-person meeting at their office (70 Canuck Avenue) to connect with African, Caribbean, and Black organizations and introduce the Downsview West District planning process and team, present and seek feedback on the proposed vision for the Downsview West District and seek feedback on potential opportunities and challenges related to developing the district. Four organizations attended the two-hour meeting which included a presentation and a facilitated questions and answers period and discussion.



3. <u>Youth Engagement</u>

From May to September of 2023, Canada Lands recruited and hired a team of four youth from the Downsview area to engage their peers and other youth in the Downsview Area. The youth team connected with individuals and youth centred organizations to share information and get feedback about the Downsview West District. The youth team engaged over 85 individuals and over 8 organizations over the span of approximately four weeks.

The topics of focus youth engaged on included: Housing, Transportation, 40 Carl Hall Road, Parks and Green Spaces,

Youth Engagement and Jobs and Employment.

The youth engaged their peers and community through:

- Online surveys to collect feedback on the Downsview West District;
- Flyers to promote their survey;
- Social media posts to promote their surveys;
- Incentives to attract engagement (e.g., Draws for gift-cards once a survey was complete);
- In-person engagement in the local neighbourhood, including their workplaces, public spaces, and schools; and
- Attending Canada Lands Pop-up events to engage with the public.

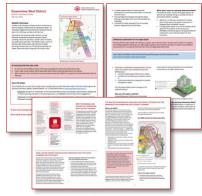
4. Bulletin Series

During the second round of engagement, Canada Lands shared information through a series Bulletins. In June & October 2023 and February 2024, three bulletins were released and shared on the project webpage and via email to those who were signed up for updates. The purpose of the bulletins was to:

- Update people on the engagement process and the feedback received;
- Share information about specific topics (i.e., 40 Carl Hall Road, the Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP), etc.); and
- To share information about upcoming engagement activities and other important project milestones







Bulletin 1 Bulletin 2

Bulletin 3

5. Community Pop-ups

On July 1 and July 16, 2023, the Canada Lands team hosted two pop-ups at the Downsview Park Canada Day celebration and at Play on the Runway. The purpose of the pop-ups was to raise awareness about the process, share information and collect feedback. Approximately, 70 people attended both pop-ups, and interacted with the engagement team. Materials used during the pop-ups included:

- Boards (5) that introduced the Canada Lands team, the Downsview West District Plan, and had an interactive map for people to write what they love about Downsview; and
- Sign-in sheets that people could leave behind to sign up for updates on the process.



6. Open House Sessions

On January 18 and January 21 of 2024, Canada Lands hosted open-house sessions at the Downsview Hub, 70 Canuck Avenue, inviting the community to drop in and learn about the Downsview West District Plan. The purpose of the open-house sessions was to provide an update, answer questions, and seek feedback on the emerging ideas and concept plan for the Downsview West District. Approximately 30 people attended both open-house sessions.

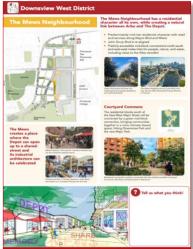
On January 18 from 6 - 8pm and January 21 from 1 - 3pm, the open house was staffed by the



Canada Lands team, subject matter experts, the engagement team, and the youth team members to answer any questions and walk people through the information presented. Other than the staffed times, the open-house boards were displayed for one week at 70 Canuck for any community member to drop in. Materials used in the open house included:

- Boards (15) in English and French, that showed the Downsview West District process in detail;
- Sticky notes for participants to leave their comments on each of the boards;
- Sign in sheets for people to sign up for updates on the process; and
- A community meeting notice for participants to take home.







Examples of the Open House Session boards

7. Virtual Community Meeting

On January 23, 2024, Canada Lands hosted a virtual community meeting to share and get the community's feedback on emerging ideas for the Downsview West District Plan. The meeting was held virtually over Zoom and was attended by approximately 50 people. The purpose of the

meeting was to share updates on the Downsview West District Plan and get feedback on the emerging ideas presented. The meeting included a presentation by the project team, followed by a question and answer period, small group discussions and a plenary discussion. The meeting materials included presentation slides and an online feedback form to collect additional feedback after the meeting.

8. Asynchronous Engagement

Throughout the second round of engagement, community members were able to sign up for project updates at various points of engagement, such as at the pop-up, open house sessions, via the webpage and through email contact. A feedback form was also available online for additional comments and feedback.

Part Three: Summary of Feedback

The following section provides a high-level summary of feedback of engagement, by audience. Detailed feedback summaries for these audiences can be found on the project webpage, www.DownsviewWest.ca.

Feedback from Indigenous Engagement

The following section provides a summary of the feedback received through meetings with Rights-holders and the Indigenous Community Sharing meeting.

Downsview represents a unique and exciting opportunity for collaboration. First Nations expressed that Downsview represents one of the few opportunities in the modern age to build a "city within a city of this magnitude". A collaborative approach is important in planning and development for Downsview West. Participants expressed that they are open to, and interested in, opportunities to collaborate and build something innovative together. Indigenous inclusion and collaboration need to begin with the planning and development phases of the Downsview West District.

Indigenous placekeeping is fundamental for Downsview West. Indigenous participants expressed optimism in continuing planning and development with respect to Indigenous placekeeping. There are considerable opportunities in the District to have new spaces to express Indigenous culture, including ceremonial areas, public art, spaces that support language development, as well as opportunities for naming or co-naming of public spaces. Participants expressed that they would like to see Indigenous arts, culture and, Indigeneity reflected throughout the District. All of these considerations are fundamental, central to the planning, and should not be considered an afterthought.

There is a need for a spectrum of affordable housing options. Participants in the Indigenous community sharing meeting expressed that these spaces (for example, the "Depot Building") are so large that they could be part of the solution to house people experiencing homelessness. Also, Indigenous youth are up-and-coming in their careers and are seeking diverse opportunities for affordable home ownership. There may be a need for other diverse affordable housing options including rent-to-own programs and options for people coming out of the shelter system. An elder made the point that affordable housing should be non-segregated so people can come together in order to be healthy.

Community members value Indigenous-specific spaces and local Indigenous-specific services. Among the most innovative ideas to come out of the Indigenous community sharing meeting was the idea of Downsview having an "Indige-town" – an Indigenous

neighbourhood in Toronto akin to Little Italy or Chinatown. Participants also suggested it would be ideal to have several Indigenous organizations (Friendship Centres, health, and social agencies, etc.) within the community so Indigenous people can access services in the neighbourhood. There is also a need for affordable commercial spaces and teaching spaces including developing an Indigenous languages hub.

Consideration of Mother Earth and giving land back to nature. Indigenous people have concerns for wildlife, habitat and the environment and have a number of questions with regard to infrastructure. Throughout community engagement, the concept of creating naturalized, green spaces has been consistent amongst Indigenous participants. Giving land back to nature is a priority. They want to see a place where animals can come back to the land. Participants want to see more greenery and for birds to thrive in the area. To work with scientists and landscape architects to create new habitats and perhaps a bird sanctuary where birds can congregate. A participant suggested building an animal crossing in the District.

Consideration of Indigenous food sovereignty and growing traditional medicines. Indigenous participants said that there may be existing spaces for a large greenhouse to produce seasonal fruits, vegetables, and Indigenous foods. This would support Indigenous people with access to traditional foods. This would also be a good interim use during the development phases. They would also like to see consideration of growing traditional medicines.

Appreciation of the relationship between Canada Lands Company and First Nations.MCFN in particular showed an appreciation for developing a formal relationship between the First Nation and Canada Lands Company. This emerging relationship is not specific to any one project but can benefit the development and First Nation's involvement in projects across their traditional territory. According to MCFN: "they are always pleased to work with CLC, and they've always appreciated their approach."

Planning processes should prioritize treaty rights-holders. The Downsview West district is in the treaty territory of Mississauga Treaty No. 13 signed in 1805. As such, the treaty-rights holders are the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. During the pre-engagement dialogue with them, MCFN officials indicated that as the treaty holder, it is critical that the level of consultation is at an "elevated level" compared to other First Nations and Indigenous communities. MCFN expects more meaningful, and more deep engagement throughout the Downsview West District Planning process and would prefer to come together on a regular basis.

The Downsview area is on Six Nations treaty territory as well. Six Nations representatives stated that the Downsview West District is on Six Nations treaty territory asserting that these lands are subject to the Nanfan Treaty which includes the rights, in perpetuity, to hunt, fish, and harvest. This treaty, called the "Deed from the Five Nations to the King, of their Beaver Hunting Ground" was signed between representatives of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the acting British Governor in July of 1701. This deed agreement references a vast stretch of land – eight hundred miles long and four hundred miles wide – from the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, northeast to present-day Toronto.

There is interest in opportunities for economic development and partnerships. There is a high level of interest in exploring investment opportunities and partnerships with First Nations and Indigenous businesses as part of the development of Downsview West. First Nations have made business development and investment a priority to ensure prosperity for seven generations ahead. This will lead to further collaboration, economic benefit, jobs,

contracting, and considerations for stewardship. Employment and training, in particular, continues to be an important priority for consideration at Downsview.

Capacity funding is needed to support community engagement. Project consultation, such as the engagement process with respect to Downsview West District, places a lot of pressures on First Nation's staff and resources. Thus far, there has been no funding to support the staff time for meetings undertaken with various proponents at Downsview. First Nations are also surprised that the City does not provide such funding. Meanwhile, other proponents in the territory proactively provide funding to support engagement activities. Six Nations of the Grand River has requested a meeting to discuss these needs.

Designing on a "human scale" to create open and welcoming spaces. "Human scale" is important to create communities that are not divided by built form or infrastructure. You cannot have proper neighbourhood life without enabling people to walk where they need to be – a library, a grocery store, etc. Further, it is important that the space is designed to be open and welcoming, enabling movement across the district and not being limited to just one block (ex. around the subway area). All the new districts need to have their own kind of flavour, it shouldn't just look like different phases of the same project. For example, one area could emphasize the film industry and the other the aerospace industry by looking futuristic.

Cultural heritage is an important consideration for the Huron-Wendat Nation.Cultural heritage is always important for the Huron-Wendat Nation. Representatives have asked Canada Lands Company to keep them informed if they find any archaeology resources. They may want to send someone to monitor any archaeology work. The woodlot by the William Baker neighbourhood is of interest to the Huron-Wendat. Here, the woodlot could be an open, flowing area where the Wendat could showcase their culture while being surrounded by a highly developed, urban area.

Downsview West can be an important place for healing, wellness, and connectedness. Indigenous people value connectedness. It is important for people to stay and be supported in their community. Especially those who may be vulnerable. Downsview West should include healing spaces for mental health, addictions, and people experiencing homelessness, so they don't have to leave the area for these supports. It would be important to have an outdoor space for ceremony and sacred fire. Also, to consider opportunities for elders and youth to learn, work and interact together.

Feedback from Youth Engagement

Below are the key themes of feedback that the four youth collected over their engagement period in the Summer of 2023.

Create diverse employment opportunities. There are many youth in the area ready to work. Youth are interested in different types of jobs like, retail, educational, technological, co-op-based, etc.

Increase transportation options to help youth get to/from and around the **Downsview area.** Youth are interested in seeing more transit lines, bike paths and walking paths to connect the area with each other.

Affordable housing is important. Many youth are concerned that they are being priced out of the area. Youth are interested in various types of housing types, especially subsidized townhomes, or condos.

Increase access to green spaces and create dedicated youth spaces, where youth can learn and connect with one another. Youth would like spaces to use that are free and accessible, including parks, greenspaces, playgrounds as well as inside spaces.

Continue to connect and engage with youth in the area. The team could connect with local community organizations to give local youth opportunities to learn and participate in these development projects. Youth engagement can be also done via social media or through the schools they attend.

Feedback from African, Caribbean and Black Organizations

Below are the key themes discussed in the ACB meeting, on June 20, 2023.

Affordability is critical for Black communities and businesses to be able to live, work, play and "invest" in Downsview. The Downsview Lands need to be a place where communities can also invest in and bring their vibrant cultures. Explore opportunities for partnerships with financial institutions and others to make it easier for people to own, live and invest in these lands.

Continue to engage with African, Caribbean and Black organizations and communities. Meet Black-led organizations where they are to integrate them into the process and build partnerships. The Afro-Caribbean Market would be a great place to connect with diverse interests.

Integrate art as the intersection of healing, food and culture. Art is an important element in celebrating the diversity of Black communities and creating connections with their ancestors. This is an opportunity to make the new development warm, welcoming, and interesting.

Downsview's biggest asset is greenspaces and community spaces. Downsview has a beautiful tree canopy that communities, wildlife and many others access.

Explore innovation in different business models for Black businesses. Look at examples of what has worked in other places and see how it could be integrated into the Downsview Lands. One suggestion is creating an incubation kitchen to help small businesses scale up their production and be ready to go to market.

Feedback from Pop-ups and Open House Sessions

Below are the key themes from the community Pop-ups (Summer 2023) and Open House sessions (January 2024).

Participants generally liked the emerging ideas for the Downsview West District, and spoke to being interested in new parks, connections, housing, and in local businesses in the area, like coffee shops.

Some asked questions and shared concerns with the density set for the area, and how prepared the area is to take in residents. There was concern that more people mean more vehicular traffic and congestions. Additionally, they are concerned about the availability of parking spaces for incoming residents or during community events. Others were concerned that the current school systems in the area do not have the capacity for additional children and strongly suggested adding new schools to the area.

There were mixed opinions on proposed building heights. Some supported having tall buildings in this district, especially near the subway and GO stations in the northeast portion of

the district. Others were concerned with the tallest buildings being proposed (60-storeys), while others suggested the maximum height be 40-storeys.

Interest in the new connections coming to the community. Many were excited for the new pedestrian pathways and cycling connections, making it easier to access different places in the area.

General support for the affordable housing being proposed in the area. Many wanted more information on the types of affordable housing coming to the area as well.

Support for and interest retail options being created in the area. Some suggested local bakeries and cafes.

Learn from others in the area. Participants suggested seeking feedback from people living in newly built communities in the area to understand what is and is not working (e.g. residents of Stanley Greene).

Feedback from the Community Meeting

Below are the key-themes discussed during the Community Meeting. Visit the project's webpage http://www.downsviewwest.ca/ to view the Community Meeting summary for the detailed feedback.

Support for the proposed connections, walkways, and cycling infrastructure.Participants said they support more pedestrian space, as the area transitions into a more walkable community.

Consider how adding more people will affect the driving and transit systems in the area. It is important to think beyond this district to the future area as a whole.

Support for the proposed densities in the area. Some said the density makes sense around the transit stations. Others shared suggestions for the team to increase density and go beyond the proposed FSI. Some said that there should be more density, and higher buildings along the transit areas, especially if it allows for more affordable housing.

Provide examples of successful higher density and mixed-use developments. It is important for people to understand what higher density and mixed-use developments look like and how they can function successfully. In the future public materials could use visuals including videos to provide real-world examples.

Participants liked the idea of making the buildings "architecturally beautiful", and pedestrian areas that people can enjoy. Some said there should be a cohesive architectural identity for the District.

This District can impact the surrounding areas positively, if it provides things that are missing in the area, such as commercial spaces and community facilities.

Participants were supportive of the proposed school. Participants said that many schools in the area are at capacity already. Some said it is also important to think about adding other institutional amenities to the area to help create an identity for Downsview West. Suggestions included schools for art and music and a museum.

There was support for affordable housing. Some participants discussed the City's housing crisis and the urgent need for affordable housing. They shared strong support for Canada Lands using this district go beyond the minimum requirements for affordable housing. Participants

encouraged Canada Lands to connect with local organizations and partners that can help provide affordable housing in the district.

There was a range of opinions shared about the east-west road connection identified as the preferred option in the City of Toronto's Master Environmental Servicing Plan. Some participants shared support for the new east-west road that will go through the Supply Depot. Participants said it brings opportunities for better connections to the surrounding area and will bring the Supply Depot to a human scale. There was also concern that having a road cut through the Supply Depot does not respect the history and heritage of the building.

Interest in the future use of the Supply Depot. Participants discussed the significant size of the Supply Depot and the opportunities it presents to bring additional community uses and facilities to the area. There was interest in providing space for existing uses in the future version of the Supply Depot (e.g., the Merchants Market). Participants also said Canada Lands should examine how the roof of the building can be used to support different community uses.

Next Steps

Canada Lands and the project team will review and work to incorporate and respond to feedback from the second round of engagement into the planning and development of the draft Downsview West District Plan.

Canada Lands will continue provide updates as planning and progress continues for the Downsview West site towards Plan approval from the City of Toronto. To stay up to date visit the Downsview West website (www.downsviewwest.ca) and/or email the team at westdownsviewouest@clc-sic.ca