

Backgrounder

Tenant Liaison Committee - January 20, 2020

1. Why is the City doing this now? What is the Master Plan for?

Establishing a Master Plan for Exhibition Place would meet a number of city-building objectives. The purpose of this exercise is to:

- **Develop a long term vision**, to be realized over 20+ years, providing a high-level planning framework to guide future decision-making for the physical development of the site.
- **Support the economic benefit** that Exhibition Place brings to the City, by improving the way it looks, feels and functions to **enhance the visitor experience**.
- **Restore the site's heritage buildings and cultural landscapes** to recognize their significance as a key component of the identity of Exhibition Place.
- **Ensure local and regional transit investments** can be tied in to improve access and connections to the grounds.
- Consider how **Exhibition Place can be coordinated** with the future redevelopment of Ontario Place.

The Board of Governors has developed documents like this in the past to help guide their decision-making, including: a Program and Development Concept Plan (1998), a Development Concept Plan (2004), and most recently a Structure Plan (2010).

This Master Plan would act as an update to these documents, taking into account recent developments in and around the site, investments in transit accessing the site, and the Province's Call for Development at Ontario Place. As future capital projects come forward incrementally, the principles and opportunities identified in the Master Plan will shape the way they can contribute to the overall vision.

2. What will be the role of the Exhibition Place Master Plan (developed by the City) versus the Exhibition Place Strategic Plan (developed by Exhibition Place)?

MASTER PLAN:

provides the vision, guiding principles and framework to guide **physical change and usage** of the Exhibition Place grounds.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Provides goals and objectives to meet the emerging needs of Exhibition Place and its stakeholders, and guides its **operation, management and maintenance**.

These two documents must work together to ensure a coordinated approach to long-range planning and operational requirements.

3. What does "long term" mean? When is this happening?

In planning terms, once a plan is adopted it can take many years for the vision to fall into place as individual opportunities come forward. For Exhibition Place, it may take 20 or more years for the Master Plan elements to be implemented. How it unfolds will largely depend on whether there is funding available for major capital projects or construction. In any event, no individual project would proceed without a full technical or feasibility study.

Certain projects may happen sooner than others if they are tied to other initiatives already in progress by other agencies. For example, as design work proceeds on the Exhibition GO station, or the Dufferin bridge reconstruction, it may make sense to link them to related potential improvements on the Exhibition Place grounds – this kind of project may be achievable within the next 5-7 years. More complex ideas like building a land bridge over Lake Shore Boulevard West, or an elevated walkway, could take closer to 10-15 years or more once approvals, design work, engineering and construction are taken into account.

Backgrounder

Tenant Liaison Committee - January 20, 2020

At this time, there is no known funding for the ideas presented during Phase 1 of the Master Plan study. Budget allocation as part of the Exhibition Place Capital Works program would be required. Previous Exhibition Place Capital Works Budgets have included some public realm improvement projects, such as Festival Plaza, which has been identified in previous plans and continues to form part of the vision for the Exhibition Place Master Plan.

At the end of this phase of the Master Plan study in Spring 2020, a draft Structure Plan for the site would be the basis for further detailed analysis over the next two years. City Planning staff will be asking Council to approve future phases of the study that would involve technical and feasibility studies, phasing strategies, and ongoing public and stakeholder consultation to test the ideas of that Structure Plan. If this future work is approved, a recommended Master Plan is targeted for end of 2021.

4. **Isn't this premature until we know what is happening with Ontario Place?**

The redevelopment of Ontario Place will be a major influencing factor and the City is committed to collaborating with the Province so that the two sites can work together and complement each other. The Master Plan exercise will help the City set its priorities for Exhibition Place so that they can be taken into account as the Province continues its process for Ontario Place. The City has been keeping the Province informed of our work on the Master Plan.

5. **What is happening with the Exhibition GO Station?**

Metrolinx is planning improvements to the station including reconfigured boarding platforms, extended platform canopies, the installation of new tracks for future use, completion of the north station entrance building and new pedestrian tunnels to help better connect Exhibition Place to Liberty Village. The City and TTC are working with Metrolinx and other stakeholders to coordinate the design. Metrolinx expects improvements to the station to be completed by 2024.

6. **What is happening to the parking lots on site? Many of our patrons come from across the GTA or out of town, and tend to make purchases that can't easily be taken on transit. How can you expect them not to drive here?**

It's clear that the existing parking lots are valued spaces that accommodate major event staging, swing space, storage and vehicle parking for patrons and exhibitors. We understand that these areas are essential and need to remain flexible to support the core business of Exhibition Place. On the other hand, expansive paved areas do not allow rainwater to be absorbed, leading to overland flooding. They also detract from the overall physical appearance of Exhibition Place and do not contribute to a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.

Through the Master Plan exercise, City Planning wants to explore opportunities for the surface parking lots so that they can serve a variety of functions year-round. This does not mean that all parking lots will be converted to green parks. Our goal is to work with the users of Exhibition Place on possible solutions:

- to improve the look and feel of these areas to provide gathering places and additional outdoor programming opportunities;
- while maintaining hard surface as necessary to accommodate parking and "back-of-house" operations.

We think there is value in designing hard-surface plazas that can be attractions in their own right when not in use for the essential operations of the tenants and grounds.

The City would not take steps to remove parking spaces unless it can be demonstrated that they can be accommodated elsewhere on the site, or that the demand for parking has decreased overall because more people are arriving by transit, walking, cycling, or taxi/rideshare. At the same time, to fulfill the objectives of heritage conservation, discouraging private auto use and improving the public realm between buildings, City Planning will not be recommending the creation of additional parking spaces above the current supply.

Backgrounder

Tenant Liaison Committee - January 20, 2020

7. How can we be assured that we can continue to operate our events and businesses and that our logistics will be accommodated?

Exhibition Place was founded to be used for parks, trade and agricultural fairs, as well as various kinds of displays, sporting events exhibitions and trade shows. We recognize that the site continues to serve these core functions and its tenants have unique logistical requirements that will need to be studied in depth, before any recommendation to change the current configuration can be made. City Planning is proposing that a detailed operational review form part of future phases of the Master Plan project, subject to Council approval.

8. Before and after major events at Exhibition Place/Ontario Place there is significant traffic and peak crowding on site and in the surrounding neighbourhoods. How will the Master Plan help to resolve these growing concerns?

The Master Plan would identify ongoing strategies to manage transportation demand for the site and surrounding areas. Prioritizing improvements to transit, walking, and cycling will be critical to easing that demand. Introducing new destinations such as restaurants, improved open spaces and other amenities, give people reasons to come earlier or stay longer. This can help to disperse the crowds and reduce the traffic peaking effects associated with major events.

9. What is the Ontario Line and its current status?

In April of 2019, the Province introduced its proposed "Transportation Vision" for Toronto, which was included as part of the 2019 Ontario Budget. As part of this vision, the Ontario Line is proposed to connect from the Ontario Science Centre at Eglinton Avenue and Don Mills Road, to Ontario Place/Exhibition Place. Ontario Line is in the early planning phases identifying a terminal adjacent the Exhibition GO Station/TTC Exhibition Loop Area.

The City and TTC are in discussions with Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario looking at potential alignments, station locations and maintenance facilities to

provide relief to the TTC's Line 1. City staff reported to Council on their preliminary assessment of the Ontario Line proposal in October 2019, and public open houses for the Ontario Line are scheduled for late January 2020.

10. Will you be proposing any new development?

The purpose of the Master Plan is not to recommend new buildings, but to identify the most appropriate places on the grounds where development could be located. The Phase 1 study assumes the expansion of the Enercare Centre and a potential future phase of Hotel X, as identified in the Strategic Plan. Other potential areas for new buildings or structures, should they be deemed necessary, have been identified in the northwest quadrant of the grounds.

11. If the primary purpose of Exhibition Place is to be a tourist destination and economic driver for the City, why are you consulting with the community?

Community consultation is an important piece of any planning process to understand how potential changes can affect surrounding areas. This is especially important because of the size, value, and economic importance of Exhibition Place to the entire City as a public asset. Throughout Phase 1 our consultation has gathered input from across Toronto, from various advisory panels, and from our previous meetings with Exhibition Place tenants and stakeholders. All of these have shaped the way we've looked at the site and the diversity of interests that need to be balanced.

Future phases of the Master Plan study, if approved, would continue to involve public and stakeholder consultation.

Backgrounder

Tenant Liaison Committee - January 20, 2020

12. Why has the Master Plan process been moving so quickly?

The Master Plan was originally envisioned to be completed by year-end 2019 in an effort to coordinate with the Call for Development of Ontario Place and its redevelopment. Staffing and budget resources were assigned to the Master Plan project for this timeframe.

Findings from the ongoing study have identified the need to extend the study timeframe and complete future phases of more detailed work, as shown below. Future phases of study are subject to Council direction.



13. What are the next steps for the Master Plan process?

The Exhibition Place CEO, in conjunction with City staff, will report back on this tenant meeting at the **February 11, 2020** Board of Governors meeting.

A staff report outlining this phase of study, including public and stakeholder consultation to date as well as an Exhibition Place Master Plan Directions Report is anticipated at the Toronto and East York Community Council meeting (TEYCC) on **March 12, 2020**, with a report to City Council anticipated for **April 1, 2020**.