



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: June 25, 2024

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION REPORT, Visioning Exercise Workplan for the Bayview Avenue and John Street Area, Thornhill (Ward 1)

PREPARED BY: Rick Cefaratti, MCIP, RPP, Senior Planner, West Planning District, Ext. 3675

REVIEWED BY: Stephen Lue, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Development, Ext. 2520

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the report titled, “RECOMMENDATION REPORT, Visioning Exercise Workplan for the Bayview Avenue and John Street Area, Thornhill (Ward 1)”, be received;
2. THAT Development Services Committee endorse the proposed work plan to complete the Visioning Exercise for the Bayview Avenue and John Street Area;
3. AND THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

This report outlines the proposed work plan for the Bayview Avenue and John Street visioning exercise (“The Subject Area”), which details the process for retaining a moderator for public and stakeholder consultation through three topic-specific meetings.

BACKGROUND:

Figure 1 shows the Subject Area, containing a mix of land uses. The Subject Area is bound by Drake Park to the north, the CN Rail Corridor to the south, the Employment Lands and the Otto townhouse development to the east, the Shouldice Hospital and Glynnwood Retirement Residence to the west across Bayview Avenue.

At the June 7, 2021, the Development Services (“DSC”) directed staff to report back on an estimated cost for the studies, timing and financial resources, engage consultants to complete a secondary plan stud for the Thornhill Centre Area. These concerns were raised with the proposed additional traffic volumes resulting from recent development proposals in the area, including the Tridel towers on the eastern edge of the Ladies Golf Club lands adjacent to Royal Orchard Boulevard and Bayview Avenue, the now withdrawn Liberty Development proposal on the Shouldice Hospital lands at 7750 Bayview Avenue, and the Timbercreek (now Hazelview) proposed development of the Thornhill Square Shopping Centre lands at 300 John Street.

On February 7, 2024, the DSC provided a modified direction for Staff to undertake a visioning exercise, in lieu of a secondary plan, for the Bayview Avenue and John Street area that would identify potential new public roads, multi-use connections including, but not limited to, active transportation network, local trail

network, new public parks, and an assessment for the need for additional community services and commercial amenities to support an appropriate mix of land uses for the Subject Area. The DSC further directed Staff to retain a moderator to facilitate a public and stakeholder consultation process comprised of a series of three topic-specific meetings on various aspects of the plan to seek public input on the visioning work.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The Subject Area is a key development corridor of Thornhill and contains an important local node (Thornhill Local Centre) that serves as a focal point for the surrounding community and a stable Employment Area, which are essential in achieving appropriate levels of employment. Existing notable cultural and natural heritage resources, including the resources on the Shouldice Hospital property, are also found in the Study Area.

The Subject Area has an existing and well-developed network of parks and open space, a range of housing types, employment opportunities, and places that offer shopping and personal and human services. However, Staff also identified opportunities for the Subject Area to evolve, which requires further analysis of the existing road and active transportation network including new public and or private streets and more connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Staff prepared a draft visioning exercise in July of 2023

To provide a baseline for public and stakeholder consultation towards a final vision for the area, Staff prepared a draft visioning exercise titled “John and Bayview Visioning Exercise”. The document was prepared by staff to identify potential new public roads, multi-use connections such as the active transportation network, local trail network, new public parks and an assessment for the need for additional community services and commercial amenities to support existing and future area residents (see Appendix ‘A’). Staff prepared the above-noted visioning exercise to provide a baseline for public and stakeholder consultation towards a final Precinct Plan that will develop a vision for the Subject Area.

The work plan proposes the DSC approve a Precinct Plan for the Subject Area by Q2-2025 within the following three tasks

- a) Task 1: Staff retain a moderator to facilitate the three topic-specific public and stakeholder consultation meetings for input into the vision exercise (Completed: Q2-2024)
 - Staff retained the services of Third Party Public Inc. to facilitate the consultation

- b) Task 2: Public and stakeholder consultation, community outreach, and engagement (Target Completion: Q4-2024)
 - Post information on the City’s online engagement platform (“Your Voice Markham”) about the visioning exercise, including upcoming public and stakeholder consultation meetings
 - Community Notices to area residents and all stakeholders within boundary of the Subject Area shown on Figure 1 and in consultation with the Local Ward Councillor
 - Schedule the following topic-specific public consultation meetings:
 1. Height and Density

The sub-topics for discussion would include the hierarchy of housing form in the Subject Area, evaluation of existing heritage resources, and opportunities for intensification through future redevelopment proposals that may also include affordable and rental housing.

2. Transportation and Mobility

The sub-topics for discussion would include the existing road network and opportunities for improvement, and active transportation.

3. Community Uses

The sub-topics for discussion would include an evaluation of the current parks and open space network and future opportunities to expand these amenities in the Subject Area, and opportunities for intensification/enhancement of the Thornhill Community Centre.

- Staff will target the Fall of 2024 to undertake the community consultation process.

c) Task 3: Approval of a Vision for the Bayview Avenue/John Street Area (Target Completion: Q2-2025)

- Staff will prepare a status update to the DSC (Target Completion: Q1-2025) on the result of the public and stakeholder engagement
- Staff will present the final Precinct Plan to the DSC that takes into consideration public input, establishes future local street and block patterns, parks and open spaces, and urban design and streetscape guidelines to provide direction for future growth of the Subject Area (Q2-2025)

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Staff solicited three bids to facilitate the public and stakeholder consultation meetings. Two bids were received and the approximate cost of retaining the moderator to prepare for and facilitate the three topic-specific public and stakeholder consultation meetings and assist on reporting feedback from these meetings is approximately \$25,000, through a non-competitive procurement.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

N/A

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The proposed Visioning Exercise aligns with the Goal 3 of the Building Markham's Future Together Strategic Plan – to build safe, sustainable and complete communities.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Staff from Planning and Urban Design and Financial Services were consulted in preparing this report. Planning and Urban Design Staff and Engineering and Transportation Staff will be engaged throughout the development of the final Precinct Plan.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Darryl Lyons, RPP, MCIP
Deputy Director, Planning and Urban Design

Giulio Cescato, RPP, MCIP
Director, Planning and Urban Design

Arvin Prasad, RPP, MCIP
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Aerial Photo of Bayview Avenue/John Street Visioning Area (the "Subject Area")
Appendix 'A': John and Bayview Visioning Exercise July 2023

Figure 1: Aerial Photo of Bayview Avenue/John Street Visioning Area (the “Subject Area”)

