



TOPCA Deputation - October 26, 2015

To: Planning & Development Committee, Mississauga Council

Re: **Metrolinx Master Plan - Port Credit GO Station**

TOPCA wishes to reinforce the Staff Comments on the Metrolinx Master Plan for the Port Credit GO Station. The City, through Planning Staff, needs to be rigorous in evaluating the Metrolinx Plan and ensure this becomes a model mobility hub! A community with a stated Vision of 'Evolving the Urban Village' is lucky that development can take place to assist the vision, and here is an opportunity to show we mean it when we talk about creating a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and cohesive area with improved transit facilities, mixed use and activities, an engaging and attractive public realm, a minimized ecological footprint, and design excellence; AND to "respect and complement the character of the surrounding area."

Concern that public process has been insufficient with late release of the plan (instead of beginning of Summer) – TOPCA representatives have participated in the PCLAP (Port Credit Local Advisory Panel) stakeholder group, which gave Metrolinx significant input, but we're not seeing it reflected in the Metrolinx Master Plan, although some points are in the Staff comments. The Community (and TOPCA) first had access to the Master Plan on October 8 (2.5 weeks ago) instead of prior to this past Summer, as announced at the June 16, 2016 public meeting (co-sponsored by the City and Metrolinx). This precluded the local RAs (residents' associations) holding their own public meeting early this Fall in preparation for tonight's meeting. It seems like we have missed a step. We have been recently told by the Port Credit Policy Planner, Paul Stewart, that "should Council endorse the master plan, staff will prepare an Official Plan Amendment which will provide additional opportunities to comment." Much fuller discussion is required than we have had to date. This plan is for far more than a parking structure; it is a comprehensive development plan for the central neighbourhood of Port Credit.

Connections – Transportation is about connections. The province's Smart Growth documents speak about need for safe cycling and pedestrian access to GO Stations to get people out of their cars. We are all well aware of the benefits of active transportation. The uptake on our suggestion of a foot/cycling bridge over the Credit River at CNR makes eminent sense to connect to the neighbourhoods to the west of

the Credit River. Residents from the west must now clog Lakeshore Road only to warehouse their car for the day at the GO parking lot. There is already traffic gridlock in the immediate GO Station grid area, which a study shows will get worse (as well as traffic on Lakeshore to get there) – tweaking traffic signals etc, which we have been promised, won't do it. A pedestrian/cycling bridge directly into the GO Station is practical, affordable and quick, and needs to be part of the Lakeshore Corridor Transportation Study in 2016, as well.

Parking Structure – As has been pointed out at the Stakeholder meetings and the Public Meeting in June, building more parking is antithetical to the goal of supporting and increasing active transportation and relieving car traffic gridlock. What happens when 400 more spaces aren't enough? Not everyone will use the Hurontario LRT; east-west traffic on Lakeshore Road, and the neighbourhood around the GO are already gridlocked. Building the Parking Garage only encourages more driving. Why not open more GO stations, e.g. behind the new Walmart in Lakeview, or in Lorne Park. We concur with the Planning Dept. recommendation that the parking structure be smaller and that other strategic parking solutions be considered. Plastering the side of the giant structure with public art isn't a solution in our view: a smaller, well-designed structure that stands on its own merits would be more appropriate to the village bone structure.

We need to maintain a neighbourhood context (and green space) for the populous central core neighbourhood – This is a neighbourhood with many children, elderly, new Canadians and those in need of affordable housing. Approximately 80% of Port Credit residents live in the high-density area around the GO station, and they are highly pedestrianized – their experience is the SPACE BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS. The Master Plan we see is monolithic and geared to attaining uber density. This central Port Credit neighbourhood works now because there is a unique mix of high-rise with pockets of low rise, and considerable open space and set backs with mature trees. The Bowling Green (now owned by the City) is a precious green space in this area. The City should pay special attention to ensure that it, a) remains public; b) contributes to the liveability of the neighbourhood; c) is surrounded by development which enhances this role. Do not assume more land can be assembled later for green open space.

We have always said density should go near the GO Station and not on the Mainstreet (Lakeshore Road) – We note there is already enough density in the central neighbourhood to warrant a transit mobility hub and the LRT. Heights will be determined, and are already generous in the Port Credit Local Area Plan. Our concerns are: the prospect of impermeability on the ground (of redeveloped blocks), the high rises growing *above* the 6-storey parking garage, and the wall effect of the parking structure on Hurontario Street: a fortress, a monolith. The Port Credit Urban Design Guidelines, written as an adjunct to the Port Credit Local Area Plan, should guide Metrolinx with the placement, spacing and massing of the towers to ensure walkability and personal security.

Economic development – There is an opportunity for significant and much-needed office development here, providing jobs and daytime density. We need to ensure this happens, and that the plan doesn't revert to the easiest, most profitable format to build and sell: condos. We note that Port Credit is competing with the Mississauga City Centre (where we haven't seen any new office structures built in 20 years) and the revitalized business parks, such as Sheridan Research Park on tonight's Agenda. We are really considering two issues here – built form, and *built function*, and these need to be balanced and designed together to ensure the use is viable and the built form is appropriate. Retail use also has a place here and the Master Plan needs to be intentional. As a transit hub, this needs to be developed as a complete community.

Oversight – Our greatest concern is the same as for the other 100 acres of land set for redevelopment in Port Credit: making any agreed Master Plan “stick” (including architectural and open space considerations) once developers are selected. We concur with the staff comment that the City must be directly involved with the Metrolinx RFP and the chosen developers. We accept that PDC is approving the Master Plan to proceed, with the provisos laid out in the Planning Report and we look forward to participating in a City-driven public process.

Presented by:

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