

# New 55 Division Station, Toronto Police Service

1627 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, ON

## Community Resource Group (CRG) Meeting 01

Meeting Date: October 26, 2021, 6:30 – 8:30 pm VIA WEBEX

Report Date: January 12, 2022

Report by: Doug Giles, Sr. Project Coordinator, FCM, Toronto Police Service

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## Meeting Summary

### Overview

On October 26, 2021 the Facilities Management Unit of the Toronto Police Service hosted the first Community Resource Group (CRG) Meeting for the new 55 Division Station. Fourteen (14) local residents or representatives of community groups/local organizations that had expressed interest were invited to attend, along with representatives from Councillor Bradford's office (Ward 19), Councillor Fletcher's office (Ward 14), and CreateTO. Members of the project design team attended and participated in the meeting. The Participant List is attached to this summary as **Appendix A**.

The purpose of the first meeting was to kick off the series of Community Resource Group meetings by introducing the project team, describing the project (status, scope, development schedule, its position within the larger Danforth Garage Redevelopment, etc.), describing the community consultation process, and reviewing and confirming the terms of reference for the CRG.

Once these introductory matters were discussed, the CRG had an open discussion to generate Design Guiding Principles and Big Moves (Design Goals), so as to create a project vision.

The meeting agenda is attached to this summary as **Appendix B**. This summary is intended to reflect key topics of discussion:

1. CRG Terms of Reference/Housekeeping Items
2. Design Guiding Principles
3. Big Moves (Design Goals)
4. Next Steps

This summary is not intended to be a verbatim transcript; rather it summarizes key points of discussion shared by participants during the meeting. A draft of this summary was made available to participants for review before being finalized.

## Key Feedback Received

The following key points were shared by CRG members during the discussion. These key points are intended to be read along with the more detailed feedback that follows in the remainder of the summary.

1. No objections to the CRG terms of reference/housekeeping items were made.
2. CRG members jointly developed a number of Design Guiding Principles. Overall, CRG members expressed support for the proposed Design Guiding Principles.
3. CRG members emphasized that the new police station needs to be accessible and inviting to all community members, yet thoughtfully designed so as not to negatively affect those members of the community that may be sensitive to a police presence/overlook as they use other areas of the redevelopment (bus garage or parkette).

## Summary of Discussion

The following is a summary of questions, answers and suggestions shared at the meeting. Responses from the project team (where provided) are noted in *italics*.

### 1. CRG Terms of Reference/Housekeeping Items

Doug Giles reviewed the Terms of Reference/Housekeeping Items with the CRG. Key points from the review:

#### Membership:

- Currently 14 membership positions are filled. A few more members may be added after the public town hall meeting to be held in the new year, where we will do the last public call for CRG membership.
- The following people are also invited to these meetings in an *Ex-Officio* capacity:
  - a representative from Councillor Bradford's office (Ward 19),
  - a representative from Councillor Fletcher's office (Ward 14), and
  - a representative from CreateTO.

#### Mandate:

- The CRG is an advisory body to the Design Team (the TPS and the consultant team), and is not a decision-making body -- the CRG is not responsible for the decisions made by the TPS on this project.
- The mandate of this group is to provide advice on key decisions during the consultation process, so that these key decisions that the TPS is making are informed by the perspectives of local residents or representatives of community groups/local organizations.
- Any CRG members representing agencies or groups are tasked with a two-way communication – to both share their own/their group's perspectives and advice, and

relay back some of the key meeting discussions and outcomes to the group they are a member of.

- Individual perspectives should be shared through the broader public engagement process.

#### Participation in Other Processes:

- Membership in this group does not limit members in any way in participating in other democratic processes through any other channels.

No objections to the Terms of Reference/Housekeeping Items were noted.

Following an overview of the project and its context, Gabriella Sicheri clarified that CreateTO was not “refining” (or “finessing”) the redevelopment – rather they were continuing to understand the opportunities for the new development parcels and the bus garage. They are developing a development concept that adheres to the framework and grid of the Master Plan approved by City Council and the development principles that were previously developed. What has changed is that the TTC administration function intended for the development Block E adjacent to the TPS site will now be located in another Housing Now site (not part of this redevelopment).

## 2. Design Guiding Principles

To start the discussion, a summary of the *Final Guiding Principles* that were previously developed during the community consultation for the Danforth Garage Master Plan were presented (*Public Meeting #3 Presentation, Dec. 13, 2018 (CreateTO + City of Toronto)*). DG suggested that Principles #4, #5, #6 and #7 might be appropriate specifically for the TPS development. During the discussion it was suggested that Principles #2 and #9 would also be appropriate. These referenced Danforth Garage Master Plan *Final Guiding Principles* are listed below:

2. Create an **integrated civic hub** that will be home to a diverse mix of uses that will establish, activate, and **animate** an **inclusive** development for the community.
4. Development to be guided by a comprehensive planning and design process that **aligns with other City initiatives, studies and policies** (including the design guidelines for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study and the Toronto Green Standard) with **community consultation throughout**.
5. Appropriately integrate design with the existing **neighbourhood context**.
6. Future development of the site will promote the culture of **universal accessibility** and ensure universal access to all of the site, its buildings and spaces.
7. Create a vision and built form that exemplifies **design excellence** in architecture, landscape architecture and urban design.

9. *Develop strong connections with the surrounding area that will improve and encourage public transit and active transportation access and use.*

Discussion ensued, with comments which can be categorized under the following themes:

1. **Integration (Within Larger Redevelopment):** Aside from the opportunity to integrate with the parkette, there may be opportunities in the interface with the existing south bay of the bus garage. CreateTO is planning for public pedestrian movement through the site in an east-west direction through the bus garage. It is possible that this may be through the existing south bay of the bus garage. The Masterplan has lots of moving parts, so architects need to keep in close communication with CreateTO.

The police station will need to be appropriately integrated, and this will need to strike a balance. The extent to which the police station is integrated with the larger redevelopment vs. independent of it was suggested to be “The Issue”. There are precedents for integrated police stations (although it was noted that some people want police stations in their community and some do not). The proper balance is required between these opposing approaches.

- a. **Maximizing Integration & Permeability:** Designing so that the public can informally encounter uniformed officers as the public uses the rest of the development might break down barriers and help animate the overall development.

Are there spaces in the police station (not duplicated or being planned by the library or within the garage) that might be shared with the community? TPS should be prepared to creatively provide shared spaces with other parties so that people can informally encounter uniformed officers in their use of the rest of the development (Opportunities for sharing? Parking? Coffee shop? Gym? Cafeteria?). The Community Room is one opportunity for doing this (Community Room is free to use). Permeability from bus garage? Can the Community Room combine with the community hub planned for the bus garage?).

Where is the open face of the site? Entry should be from as many elevations as possible. Gabriella advised that in the masterplan the parkette location was in part chosen to give the police station more of a presence and an opportunity to integrate with the parkette. The south bay of the garage, if used as an east-west pedestrian connector, could allow for further integration.

- b. **Minimizing Integration & Permeability:** For some community members that visit the redeveloped bus garage or the parkette, overview by the police station and permeability of the police station may be perceived negatively, as intimidating and

triggering. Not every community member feels welcome at a police station, depending on their experience. A community space might be a welcome community asset, but if filled with uniformed officers may be intimidating to some. “What is seen” is important: care will be needed to “curate” the view of visible police activities to make only the “benign” aspects of policing transparent to the community to highlight that the police are “here to help” (e.g. not arrests etc.). *It was noted that this is a workplace with legitimate needs for security, confidentiality and privacy, so most areas of the station may not be made accessible or “porous”.*

The design challenge is to have a station that is integrated but respects the TPS’s need for security, confidentiality and privacy. The perimeter interface will be important, as the community cannot be brought deep into the building to share spaces within the police workplace; it will be important that the front of the site, the front elevation of the building, the lobby and the community room (together, metaphorically the “front porch” to the building) be inviting, transparent, porous etc.

2. **Inclusive:** People need to feel welcomed to the site. The police station should not be intimidating. Security features of the building and police activities displayed should be selected with regard to their visual impact and impression on the community; secure but not a fortress, e.g. no ugly fences.
3. **Animated:** Animation can be provided, through art, conversational seating arrangements, landscaping, provision of gathering place(s). Use murals by artists (Black or indigenous artists). Design for the deaf community so they could be in continuous conversation with each other.
4. **Community Safety and Police Work:** Within the community some residents might be comfortable and welcome a police presence, while others might be uncomfortable with a police presence so close to their homes. For those uncomfortable with a police presence, there might be two aspects to their discomfort:
  - a. **Uniformed Officers are a Trigger:** Officers in uniform may be a trigger for some individuals. Some residents at Tobias House for example have anxiety and psychological issues.
  - b. **Perceived Danger from Arrested Individuals:** Some residents may have a concern about potential danger from arrested individuals on their release. Don’t allow someone being detained to be seen from others outside. Communication is critical. *Police would not release dangerous individuals at the station. Superintendent Stroble should meet with Tobias House residents to describe the process for the release of individuals prior to next meeting (or discuss at the next CRG meeting).*

5. **Alignment with Other City Initiatives, Studies and Policies:** Danforth Avenue Planning Study and Toronto Green Standard for example. *These are mandatory standards that City Planning will insist on.*
6. **Community Consultation:** Engage with the community at every opportunity. Set up a dedicated 55 Division web site. *Doug Giles will speak to TPS's IT department to set a website up.*
7. **Universal Accessibility:** Meet not just the Ontario Building Code (OBC) but, but also Ontario Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements (see Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance). *The City of Toronto has its own mandatory Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines (2021 version) for City-owned buildings which set a very high standard for accessibility far in excess of the OBC minimums.*
8. **Design Excellence:** Set the design standard and precedent for the rest of the redevelopment. The design will be presented to the City of Toronto's Design Review Panel (DRP) – a CRG meeting was suggested after the project is presented to the DRP to review comments/any revisions with the CRG. In the landscape design, plants should be selected that have ecological value. *Recent 11 and 14 Division stations are example of stations sensitively built within residential neighbourhoods (scale, setbacks, materials). Doug Giles to set up a tour of recently built 14 Division station (possibly 11 Division station).*

From this discussion, the Guiding Principles for the 55 Division Station will be:

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE 55 DIVISION STATION**

### ***The 55 Division Police Station Development:***

1. *Will be part of an integrated civic hub that will be home to a diverse mix of uses. The police station will be **thoughtfully integrated within the larger redevelopment, striking a balance** to:
  - i. *help to establish, activate, and **animate** an **inclusive** development for the community, yet*
  - ii. *be mindful that not every community member feels welcome at a police station or with police overlook of public and semi-public areas, and that as a workplace the police station will be **provided with security, confidentiality and privacy.****
2. *Will be an **inclusive building** for all members of the community.*
3. *Will be guided by a comprehensive planning and design process that **aligns with other City initiatives, studies and policies** (including the design guidelines for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study and the Toronto Green Standard) with **community consultation throughout** via Community Resource Group meetings, Town Hall meetings, a website and social media.*
4. *Will be thoughtfully **integrated** with the existing **neighbourhood context.***
5. *Will promote the culture of **universal accessibility** and ensure universal access to the site, the building and its spaces.*
6. *Will create a vision and a built form that exemplifies **design excellence** in architecture, landscape architecture and urban design.*
7. *Will develop **strong connections with the surrounding area** that will improve and encourage public transit and active transportation access and use.*

### **3. Big Moves (Design Goals)**

Other than the Design Guiding Principles generated during this discussion, no specific Big Moves (Design Goals) were generated from those Principles.

## 4. Next Steps

1. All: The next meeting (CRG Meeting 02) will review and confirm a draft summary of the Guiding Principles that were generated at CRG Meeting 01, and then focus on Site Design constraints and opportunities.

Moving forward, the proposed time and date for the upcoming meeting will be provided to CRG members at least one week in advance of the meeting. Meetings will continue to be held online, using WEBEX, until it is safe to do otherwise.

2. Doug Giles will set up a dedicated website for the new 55 Division station design project to assist in community engagement and will post construction progress photos once construction starts.
3. Doug Giles will look into setting up a tour of the recently built 14 Division station (possibly 11 Division station) so that interested CRG members might see an example of a new police station designed to fit within a residential neighbourhood. (Alternatively, CRG members may wish to visit these building on their own, as access is restricted to the exterior and lobby/Community Room only).
4. Superintendent Stroble will be asked to meet with Tobias House residents to describe the release process (or discuss this at the next meeting (CRG meeting 02)) to allay concerns about the release of individuals from the new police station.
5. Doug Giles to schedule a CRG meeting after the project is presented at the City of Toronto's Design Review Panel (DRP) to review comments and any revisions resulting from the DRP so that the CRG members are aware of any changes to what they may have seen prior to the DRP review.

## Appendix A: List of Participants

The following individuals applied to participate in the Community Resource Group. All that applied for membership in the CRG were accepted. Those able to attend are shown below:

Name	Organization	Present	Regrets
Alex Shum ( <i>alt. Tom Maclean</i> )	Woodrow Avenue Neighbourhood Assoc.	X	
Anne Babcock	WoodGreen Community Services	X	
Audrey Kvedaras	Danforth East Community Association (DECA)	X	
Bill Harrison	Greenwood Danforth Residents	X	
Billy Dertilis	Danforth Mosaic Business Improvement Area	X	
Bob Abrahams	Resident	X	
Brian Spratley	DECA Visioning Committee	X	
Denny Petkovski	Michael Garron Hospital		X
Jack Fallon	Woodrow Avenue Neighbourhood Assoc.	X	
Jade Woodruffe	Danforth East Community Association (DECA)	X	
Katy Aminian	DECA Visioning Committee	X	
Peter Gray	Resident	X	
Peter Themeliopoulos	Community Police Liaison Committee (CPLC)		X
Susan Cavanagh	Tobias House (Vibrant Healthcare Alliance)	X	
Councillor Brad Bradford	Ward 19, City of Toronto	X	
Rishab Mehan	Chief of Staff to Councillor Bradford	X	
Madison Leisk	Planning & Constituency Advisor, C. Bradford	X	
Councillor Paula Fletcher	Ward 14, City of Toronto		X
Susan Serran	Exec. Assistant to Councillor Fletcher	X	
Gabriella Sicheri	Vice President, Development, CreateTO	X	
Superintendent Reuben Stroble	55 Division		X
Inspector Dave Ecklund	55 Division		X
Constable Robert Muller	55 Division		X
Harrison Chan	Managing Principal, WZMH Architects		X
Nicola Casciato	Design Principal, WZMH Architects	X	
Sean Fung	Project Architect, WZMH Architects	X	
Terry Huang	Architect, WZMH Architects	X	
Tony Veneziano	Chief Administrative Officer, TPS	X	
Enrico Pera	Manager, Facilities Mgmt., TPS	X	
Douglas Giles	Sr. Project Coordinator, Facilities Mgmt., TPS	X	

## Appendix B: Meeting Agenda

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### October 26, 2021

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Project Overview
3. Community Consultation Plan
4. Your Community Resource Group (Housekeeping Items):
  1. Membership & Purpose
  2. Work Plan & Meeting Dates
  3. Roles and Responsibilities
  4. Recommendation-Making
  5. Meeting Management & Reporting
  6. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
5. Presentation:
  1. 55 Division Site within CreateTO's Danforth Garage Redevelopment
  2. Guiding Principles from Prior Consultations
6. Today's Discussion Focus:
  1. What would your Guiding Principles be, specifically for the 55 Division building?
  2. What should be the "Big Moves" (Design Goals) for the 55 Division building design?
  3. Drafting the Vision and Principles
7. Next Meeting: Site Design (Date TBA)
8. Adjourn