

Hello

Thank you for allowing me to speak at the Public Participation meeting on the Victoria Park Secondary Plan. Below is a written copy of my comments. Thank you.

I am encouraged by Climate Change considerations being integrated into the Victoria Park Secondary Plan. We need to make sure all our decisions take into account the Climate Emergency we find ourselves. One part of the response to reduce our green house gas emissions is the intensification of our City. In particular intensification should occur along all transit corridors and in the downtown and surrounding area. However, we should not simply allow maximum intensification or maximum heights at the expense of creating an enjoyable and livable space for all.

I commend staff for integrating into the secondary plan the principles of encouraging active transportation and preserving, strengthening and creating new view corridors.

Focusing on public places and placemaking is critical to the long term success of the intensification efforts for the City. As a result, the Victoria Park Secondary Plan is critical not just for the properties immediately adjacent to it but to all properties within an easy walk from it.

The concept of "inner park" and the "outer park" is extremely relevant to Victoria Park given it's relatively small size. The built area in the Victoria Park Secondary Plan boundary needs to be treated like the 'outer' park.

Victoria Park needs to be easy to get to and easily accessible by foot. Surrounding streets should promote walking and cycling. Nearby traffic lights should be timed for pedestrians, not vehicles. Dufferin Street and Wellington Street are occasionally closed to car traffic for events in Victoria Park. I would recommend that without exception new development in the secondary plan boundary should not have parking access off of Dufferin, Clarence or Wellington. Consideration should be made to making these streets flex streets that would be closed to car traffic on a regular basis. With greater intensification throughout the downtown, the Flex street design would allow pop-up amenities that would help manage the additional anticipated intensive use of Victoria Park.

Accessibility and use of great public places are greatly affected by the buildings that surround it. Elements within Victoria Park should be visible from a distance, and the ground floor activity of buildings and building heights should entice pedestrians to move toward the park. Victoria Park massed and surrounded by 30 storey buildings is not open and welcoming nor would it draw in people from nearby streets. Having a mix of low, medium and high rise is important. Angular planes in design is somewhat helpful however given the size of Victoria Park a maximum of a 12 storey building, consistent with City Hall, would be more appropriate and enticing.

As the city moves forward with meeting the vision set out by the London Plan, the Strategic Plan and it's response to the Climate Emergency, maintaining and enhancing key public places will be key to the long term success of intensification efforts. Let's keep Victoria Park a jewel for all Londoners.

Regards

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