

**Lincoln Fields Secondary Plan: Feedback on Draft Plan**  
Application # D01-01-24-0009  
Submitted by the Queensway Terrace North Community Association

## **Introduction**

On behalf of the Queensway Terrace North Community Association (QTNca), we would like to express appreciation for the careful attention to important elements of successful intensification in the draft Lincoln Fields Secondary Plan. We acknowledge and appreciate that many of the questions and suggestions we made earlier have been addressed in the final draft.

The need for intensification in this area is accepted, and we agree with the guiding principles in 1.1 and the stated objectives in 1.2. The questions and concerns below relate to specific means to implement the objectives of complete communities, connectivity, healthy neighborhoods, and designs for an engaging public realm. We also suggest some additions to achieve the goal of complete communities and healthy neighborhoods. The specific concerns are organized by important goals for QTN residents.

### **1. Safety and pedestrian friendly space along Carling Avenue**

The stated goal for Carling Avenue is a “*vibrant and human-centered Mainstreet*” environment, but the specific policies are inadequate to achieve that goal and some are likely to work against it. Our community concerns include the following:

#### **1.a. Maximum height of podiums, policy 2.2.**

The maximum height for the podium/base of high-rise buildings is 4 storeys everywhere in the plan area, except Carling Avenue, where it is 6 storeys (2.2.2). Six storeys seem less than consistent with the goal of encouraging a “vibrant, human scale” environment along Carling. We also agree with the concern about a potential canyon effect raised by the Britannia Village Association. The slightly wider right-of-way along Carling is not enough to prevent the negative impacts that could result from allowing 6 story high podiums along Carling.

**Recommendations:** Given the importance of Carling Avenue for the growing number of residents in the south side of the study area to access services and the Lincoln Fields station, a maximum podium height of four stories, similar to Richmond Road, is more appropriate to achieve the stated goals of the plan.

In general, the use of “storeys” as the metric for maximum height is subject to variability. We suggest using the more objective metric of “metres,” especially for describing maximum podium/base heights.

#### **1.b. Public use space at street level on Carling**

While we understand the decision to put the commercial focus on Richmond Road and develop a different character on Carling, we suggest that this reflects a current environment that is rapidly changing. The very large increase in density expected for this area and the service needs for the

growing number of residents on the south side of Carling should provide adequate justification to require some inclusion of commercial or public use spaces on the ground floor of any new buildings along Carling. To support the development of 15-minute neighbourhoods and build habits of shopping locally when new residents arrive, there is a need to have shops and services available. In addition, Carling serves the whole region as a significant pedestrian link to services and the LRT station. If the connections are not appealing, new residents will build habits that are not in line with goals of the secondary plan.

**Recommendation:** The inclusion of some public-oriented uses on the ground floor of new buildings is an essential element to ensure that Carling serves the residents on the south side. This will contribute to achieving the goal of being a pedestrian-friendly link to LRT and local services.

### **1.c. Site and Building Design**

We appreciate the strong street-orientation in the design guidelines. We question whether the guideline for passive supervision of the street in 2.1.17 is adequate. Our experience with the new Rexall store at 2525 Carling suggests that these criteria can be met without achieving the desired results from the perspective of persons on the street. For example, while the plan permits glazing as one of the means for contributing to a sense of safety, there are no further criteria to limit how this is applied. The current construction has the appearance of an active entrance along Carling, including glazing, but the door is not in use and the glass is frosted. A wall of frosted glass does not offer benefits for the safety or visibility of residents.

**Recommendation:** Providing further specifications for the use of glazing is a minimum improvement; requiring some form of active entrance is preferable to ensure the kind of development that is needed for Carling to achieve the stated goals in the plan.

### **1.d. Pedestrian crossing west of Alpine**

We appreciate the identification of a future pedestrian crossing to connect Alpine with Richmond Road. We continue to advocate for a new, protected pedestrian crossing between Alpine and the unfriendly intersection of Pinecrest, Richmond Road, and Carling. Currently, crossing Carling to travel to Britannia Village involves a significant detour for pedestrians; to avoid the additional distance, people are frequently observed crossing Carling between the 2 signalized intersections, particularly when trying to catch a westbound bus.

### **1.e. Safe Active Transportation Facilities**

Safe active transportation facilities are needed along Carling in the near term, as well as the long term, and they need to provide complete, useful connections, rather than piece-meal improvements that only protect short stretches. Without a complete connection to popular destinations, it is unlikely that more QTN residents will choose active transportation. For example, while a new sidewalk is being built along Connaught Avenue as part of the LRT project, once pedestrians reach Carling the quality of the sidewalk is not up to current standards. Walking along the Carling Avenue sidewalk can be particularly unpleasant when Carling fills with puddles that splash onto people with every passing vehicle. With half of the route to the LRT being so unpleasant for pedestrians, there is a significant disincentive for residents to begin to use the LRT when Lincoln Fields station opens.

**Recommendation:** To better achieve the goal of safe streets, we recommend that 3.1.1d) be merged with 3.1.1c) and completed by a set reasonable date, no later than the removal of the Kichi Zibi Mikan ramps.

In summary, more attention is needed to all the factors that affect Carling Avenue in order to meet the desired goal. That includes concerns also raised in the following sections on connectivity and new development along the south side of Carling.

## **2. Mobility and Connectivity**

### **2.a. Traffic Study**

The benefits of the proposed change for the intersection between Carling and the Kichi Zibi Mikan are appreciated. The draft plan, however, does not make reference to a traffic study that was promised at earlier meetings. In particular, it was to study traffic patterns related to the planned changes to the intersection of Carling and the Kichi Zibi Mikan and the intersection of Carling and Connaught. We continue to think a multi-modal traffic study is warranted, including analysis of the origins and destinations of vehicular traffic, the feasibility for current vehicle drivers to switch to LRT, and the impacts of road reconstruction on neighbourhood side streets.

**Recommendations:** A careful traffic study is warranted to ensure the feasibility of the proposed changes to the intersection of Carling and the Kichi Zibi Mikan; adequately plan for feasible transportation alternatives for current users, and identify ways to reduce or eliminate negative impacts for residents living along this stretch of Carling and any local streets that connect to Carling.

In addition, we note that Annex I does not show a right-hand turn for vehicles traveling west on Carling to go north on the Kichi Zibi Mikan. Please confirm that there will be such a turn. Since the final location of the intersection is not yet decided, we also request further consultation with the community before it is finalized.

With regard to policy 2.3.3, we understand the desire to limit vehicular ingress via Carling; however, for properties on the south side of Carling, access from other streets means traffic through our neighborhood. Have the effects on local streets been assessed or estimated? This needs more consideration, as narrow neighborhood streets will already be absorbing more traffic from intensification along Carling.

### **2.b. Convenient bike and pedestrian access for QTN residents to Lincoln Fields Station**

We appreciate the commitment to maintain the MUP network, also through the redevelopments in the areas where the ramps between Carling and the Kitchi Zibi Mikan will be removed. In Schedule C we question why the MUP on the west side crosses over Carling while the one on the east side is a grade-separated MUP.

In order to achieve the modal switch goals of this plan, more convenient access to the Lincoln Field station is a high priority. The plan itself recognizes that 400 metres from the station does not equate to 400 metres walking distance. For many areas of proposed intensification in QTN, it is much longer and less than convenient and friendly, which acts as a significant disincentive for transit use.

**Recommendations:** Consider adding additional measures to shorten the connections that QTN residents will have to use and make them more convenient.

Another particular concern is the lack of explicit inclusion of active transportation access from the Hub area west of the LRT station. Annex 2, a concept plan, mentions a “Future Pedestrian Connection”, but this is not policy.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that a direct connection be explicitly named in the policy text and in Schedule C, “Mobility and Connectivity.” The form of the connection could be decided later, but requiring a connection is reasonable and essential to achieve the plan’s goals.

### **3. Development and Designations of Specific Areas**

#### **3.a. Future development area south of Carling and West of Kichi Zibi Mikan**

The benefits of removing the ramps and using the space for housing is understood. We question, however, the inclusion of the current condominium complex at 811 Connaught in the area to be zoned for Hub densities. That seems to violate the plan’s emphasis on gentle transition from Hub densities to the neighborhood.

While trees are suggested and shown in the artist rendering, mandating the planting of new trees as a requirement for redevelopment of this area would help to ensure that the highly valued green spaces will be preserved.

**Recommendations:** We recommend that the area known as 811 Connaught be removed from the area designated for Hub redevelopment.

We recommend that all buildings in the 3a space face Carling and all space to the south be designated green space.

#### **3.b. Designation of neighborhood lots along Carling**

While the draft plan specifically recognizes the neighborhood character of QTN, the proposed designation of residential lots that abut Carling Avenue as mid-rise I and II, with permissible heights of 7 and 9 storeys, is inconsistent with the stated goals for this area. (Schedule B: Maximum Heights). It also seems inconsistent with the commitment to appropriate transitions between higher rise developments and adjacent neighborhoods. If the plan is approved as written, it would result in some QTN residents with a 9-story building next door, which could greatly change the experience of living in the neighbourhood. The designated areas between Connaught and Forest and Ivanhoe and Dundee are integrated into the neighborhood and should remain so.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that the designation of these parcels on Schedule B be low-rise, with a maximum height of four stories, to have an appropriate transition to the adjacent low-rise nature of QTN and maintain the integration of these parcels into the QTN neighbourhood.

#### **4. Social Infrastructure**

The focus on ensuring adequate sewer and stormwater infrastructure and parkland is appreciated. We appreciate the inclusion of cultural and artistic spaces, even if it is only suggested. We want to emphasize the importance of planning now for the provision of adequate community and social infrastructure. This is entirely missing from the plan, even though the new Official Plan includes strong policy statements about the inclusion and integration of public health and well-being into the physical planning process.

Given the dramatic increase in density and the proposed provision of deeply affordable housing in the study area, it is important to plan now for services such as a health clinic, social services center, schools, libraries, etc. If the turnover of properties in this area accelerates, it will provide a welcome addition of new housing units, but place additional strain on the existing social infrastructure. For example, Severn Avenue Public School, our local school in QTN, is already at capacity - a portable was added this year. The closest library, at Carlingwood, is small and seems unlikely to meet the needs of a clientele several times its current size. The field house in Frank Ryan Park is past its useful life, but while Councilor Kavanagh has been able to support the planning of the replacement, there are no capital funds to replace the existing building. While suburban development may see this type of infrastructure built by the developer, the solution is less obvious for existing neighbourhoods like QTN and our neighbouring communities. This further raises the importance for early identification of the need for new social infrastructure.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that the draft plan add a chapter on social infrastructure; if that is not feasible under the current timeframe, the gap could be identified for addition during the final approval process. It is important that it be done before major redevelopment given the well-documented problem of long lag times in the provision of essential human services after increases in population.

Thank you for giving consideration to these suggestions. We are willing to discuss them in detail or provide more information. We look forward to the completion of this process later this fall.

For more information or discussion, please contact  
Kathy Vandergrift, President  
Queensway Terrace North Community Association