

January 24, 2023

Alejandra Perdomo
Municipal Services Office - Central Ontario
Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing
Province of Ontario
777 Bay Street, 16th floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2J3

Dear Ms. Perdomo:

**RE: SUBMISSION ON OPA 591 – ERO #019-5868; MINISTRY #20-OP-222176
3710 CHESSWOOD DRIVE, TORONTO
OUR FILE: 07132DZ-3**

On behalf of Montecassino Inc. (“Montecassino”), please accept this submission regarding the review by the Province of the City of Toronto’s Official Plan Amendment 591 (“OPA 591”) respecting the employment conversion of 3710 Chesswood Drive (hereinafter the “Subject Lands”) and shown below on **Figure 1**. **We are requesting designation of the lands as Mixed Use Area.**



Figure 1: Subject Lands (in red) showing proximity to the Downsview Park Subway and GO Station

The Subject Lands are located on the north side of Sheppard Avenue West, approximately 250 metres north of the Downsview Park Subway and GO Station. The Subject Lands are therefore located within a Major Transit Station Area (“MTSA”) which the City has recently recognized and designated through Site and Area Specific Policy 732 (“SASP 732”) in Official Plan Amendment 575 (currently with the Province for approval).

As noted in our submissions to the City, a significant consideration for the conversion request is the recent closure of Bombardier and the Downsview Airport. To this effect the City of Toronto recently settled the Official Amendment 231 (OPA 231) appeal relative to the original conversion request submitted for the former Bombardier Lands on Downsview Park via approval of Site and Area Specific Policy 596 (“SASP 596”), which designates most of the former Bombardier Lands as “Regeneration Area” and establishes the key parameters that will be addressed in the secondary plan process to follow to determine the specific future land use permissions. This is a key first step from the City that will recognize and begin to implement the future overall mixed use vision for Downsview Park through the “id8 Downsview” planning process, as this approval of SASP 596 confirms the departure from these lands being utilized primarily for airport/industrial purposes.

The combination of the proximity of the Subject Lands to the Downsview Park Subway and GO Station and the transformation of Downsview Park into a mixed use community are significant considerations which support the conversion request.

History of Request & The Proposal

On December 16, 2020, a request was made to the City of Toronto to redesignate the Subject Lands from General Employment Area to permit a mixed use development to occur. Further submissions followed, with an updated request being made on July 18, 2021. The request was supported by a Planning Justification, Economic Impact Assessment and a Compatibility Study which can be found at the following link:

[https://www.dropbox.com/home/3710%20Chesswood%20-%20Conversion%20Request%20\(July%202021\)/3710%20Chesswood%20Drive%2C%20Toronto%20-%20Conversion%20Request%20Materials](https://www.dropbox.com/home/3710%20Chesswood%20-%20Conversion%20Request%20(July%202021)/3710%20Chesswood%20Drive%2C%20Toronto%20-%20Conversion%20Request%20Materials)

The proposal provides for a high density infill development in the form of a “podium and tower” mixed use built form which now consists of two (2) 35-storey buildings (i.e. and east and west tower, 5-storeys less than the original proposal) connected by an 8-storey podium. The proposal consists of 100% affordable rental units and provides for a Newcomers Hotel component (144 hotel suites from floors 2 through 8, all within the podium component of the proposed development). Hotel offices, amenities and facilities are also provided on the ground floor. The revised proposal will now provide an overall total GFA of approximately 61,356 m² for a total FSI of 6.89.

The Newcomers hotel component to the proposed development will not only replace the existing onsite hotel, but will also serve to provide a hotel service that is focused on providing new immigrants to Canada with a place to stay (approximately 30 to 90 days), until such time that they can secure some form of permanent housing. Montecassino has begun discussions with Costi and other United Way organizations to partner in the Newcomer Hotel operations all of whom are recognized service providers under the Federal Resettlement Assistance Program.

Images of the proposed development are shown in **Figures 2** and **3** below.



Figure 2 – Conceptual Site Plan for Proposed Mixed Use Residential (Affordable Housing) & Hotel



Figure 3 – Updated Conceptual Massing of the Proposed Mixed Use Development

As noted above, provision of a “Newcomers” hotel serves the following two main purposes:

- It will replace the existing 104 hotel suites with 144 brand new hotel suites, and it will also replace the existing 18 associated hotel jobs that currently exist on the Subject Lands with 25 hotel jobs; and
- It provides a hotel service that is focused on new immigrants coming into Canada with a temporary living arrangement (approximately 30 to 90 days), until such time that they can secure some form of permanent housing. The service provider will be recognized pursuant to the regulations of the Federal Resettlement Assistance Program and will be charged with the duty to settle the Newcomers into the community. The goal is to turnover each hotel suite 6-8 times per year resulting in the settlement of some 864 to 1,152 families per year.

In addition, with respect to the residential component, the following represents the proposed residential unit count and mix for the Subject Lands (all of which will be affordable rental units):

- One-bedroom units: 312 (44%)
- Two-bedroom units: 328 (46%)
- Three-bedroom units: 72 (10%)
- Total Affordable Housing Units: **712**

The proposed ground floor of the podium building consists of approximately 1,221 m² of commercial/live-work uses that front onto Sheppard Avenue West (which will contribute to the animation and activation of this frontage and the adjacent public realm), as well as the main residential and hotel entrance/lobby areas and associated offices, mail room and indoor amenity space (including a gym, and hotel amenities, including a hotel laundry room and tuck shop). The proposed ground floor of the east tower will also consist of a +/- 321 m² day nursery and associated outdoor play area (fronting Chesswood Drive) to service the future residents, along with a maintenance room and bike parking facilities, storage lockers. The commercial / live-work uses along with the day nursery will add approximately 42 new jobs to the property.

We note that through the City process, support of the proposal was given by Councillor Pasternak (the local Councillor) as well as Deputy Mayor Thompson. There support letters are found in the support material Dropbox link.

Request of the Province

While our clients are appreciative of the efforts to date by City staff and the local Councillor on the conversion request, the delays resulting from this ongoing process are unnecessary. On behalf of our client, we are requesting that the Province utilize its powers as the approval authority to modify OPA 591 to grant the conversion request for 3710 Chesswood Drive. To this effect we request the following modifications:

1. We request **removal the Subject Lands from Employment Areas on Map 2** of the Official Plan as shown below.

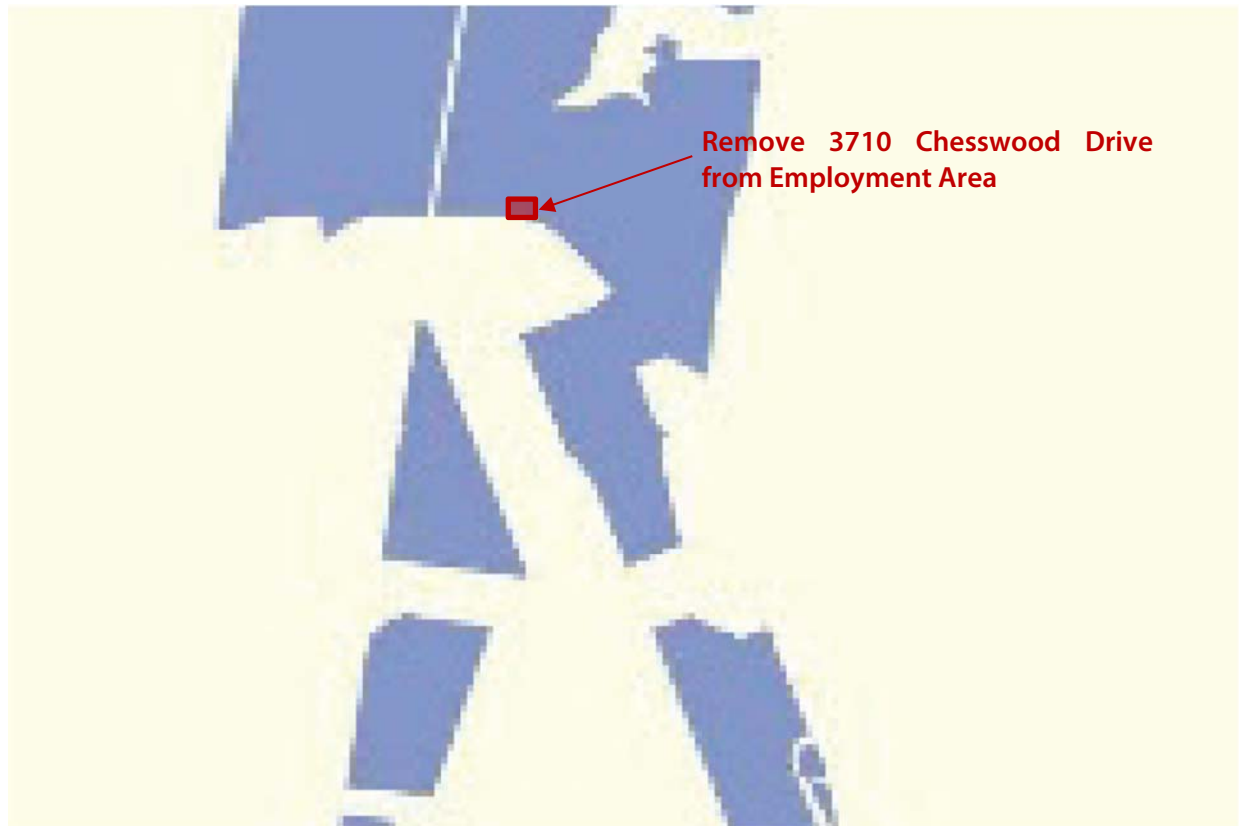


Figure 4 – Removal of Subject Lands From Employment Area as shown on excerpt from OPA 591, Appendix 1: Map 2

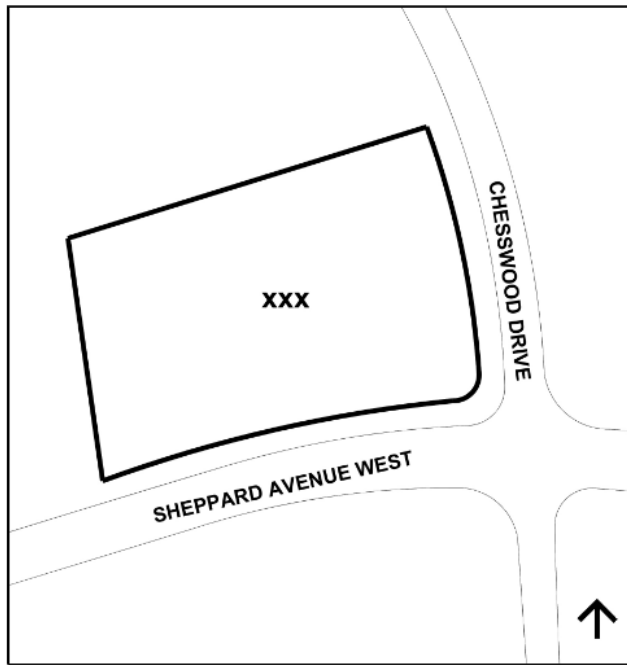
2. We request the Subject Lands be **designated Mixed Use Area on Land Use Designation Map 13** (part of Tile Index Map 4 of Appendix 2 of OPA 591) as shown below.



Figure 5 – Designate Subject Lands from General Employment Area to Mixed Use Area as shown on excerpt from Official Plan Land Use Designation Map 13 (Tile Map 4 of OPA 591, Appendix 2)

3. Add a **new Site and Area Specific Policy to OPA 591** as follows:

XX. 3710 Chesswood Drive



1. Development of Mixed Use Area of the lands shall include:
 - a. A minimum of 700 affordable housing units, with a minimum of 50% of the units being two bedrooms or more or which a minimum of 10% being three bedrooms or more;
 - b. A minimum 140 suite hotel;
 - c. A minimum 300 sq. m day care; and
 - d. A minimum of 1,200 sq. m of non-residential / live-work space.
2. A Compatibility/Mitigation Strategy that takes into consideration impacts from surrounding land uses and facilities and identifies mitigation measures to be implemented through Zoning By-law Amendment and / or Site Plan Control applications.

Overall Conclusion

The proposal envisioned on the Subject Lands is one that will contribute to an overall mixed use vision intended for Downsview Park to the immediate south. This proposal is in line with Provincial Policy and structured around the optimization of existing municipal services, infrastructure and transit services. The proposal contemplates a high-rise mixed use development that will provide ground-floor commercial, live-work and day nursery uses, as well as 100% Affordable Rental Housing Units, and 144 hotel suites and associated jobs/amenities onsite.

While it is acknowledged that the City is determined to preserve employment lands wherever possible, the Subject Lands represent a unique instance where a conversion is appropriate, given that the existing use of the Subject Lands represents an underutilization of the Subject Lands in comparison to the proposed high-rise mixed use development, and also considering the limited impact the removal of the 0.89 ha Subject Lands would have on the City's supply of employment lands.

The proposed conversion of employment lands to a Mixed Use Areas designation meets the intent and purpose of the policies with respect to employment land conversions as outlined in the Growth Plan and the City of Toronto Official Plan and has been demonstrated as follows:

- The revised proposal continues to support the Downsview Park TTC/GO Station MTSA, which is approximately 250 metres southwest of the Subject Lands.
- The transit-oriented development will continue to provide a 100% affordable rental unit residential development that is within walking distance to the noted higher-order transit options, which will also benefit hotel guests.
- The revised proposal for the Subject Lands remains compatible and complementary with an evolving transformative mixed use vision for Downsview Park.
- The location of the Subject Lands along the fringes of an existing employment area (and directly along a major arterial road) is more appropriate for the proposed mixed use development, but not ideal for attracting traditional industrial businesses, including manufacturing, processing, warehousing, and distribution. This may be attributed to parcel size limitations, recent shifts/trends towards service based employment uses, and the emerging mixed use vision unfolding relative to Downsview Park, which will gradually fully replace the traditional employment uses that have existed on these lands for decades, and which have shaped the surrounding land uses to date (given the presence of the active airport runway).
- The revised proposal will now provide for 712 affordable housing units in proximity to employment areas, thus supporting the economic base of the employment area to the north, as well as other employment areas accessible by the multi-modal transit services in the area.
- The revised proposal now provides a "Newcomers" hotel component that is targeted for immigrants into Canada looking to secure some form of permanent housing, and which consists of 144 brand new hotel suites, and the associated hotel amenities and employment opportunities (which also serves to replace the existing 104 hotel suites and an increase from 18 to 25 hotel jobs on Subject Lands).
- The proposal is compatible with surrounding land uses, with standard mitigation measures as identified in the SLR report which will be implemented to ensure adverse effects on adjacent employment uses does not occur.
- Overall, the revised proposal addresses two very significant City needs with respect to affordable housing and settlement hotel space for immigrants into Canada, which is otherwise very difficult and challenging to achieve if a landowner is unwilling to do so. Our client is willing and able to deliver an appropriate response through the proposal on these two City needs in a significant manner.

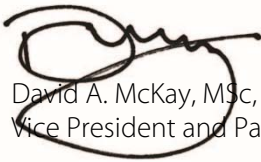
- The Subject Lands are fully serviced with water, wastewater and stormwater services that ensure the optimization and efficient use of existing municipal infrastructure for the proposed development.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or wish to discuss in further detail.

Thank you.

Yours Truly,

MHBC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. McKay', is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

David A. McKay, MSc, MLAI, MCIP, RPP
Vice President and Partner

cc: *T. Varone*