



705 Progress Avenue Site: Update

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 19 May, 2021

Report No.: 05-21-4095

Strategic Directions

- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on the 705 Progress Avenue site be received.

Context

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the 705 Progress Avenue site as requested by the Trustees at the Board meeting on April 21, 2021. The update includes an estimated timeline on when a new elementary school could be constructed on the site.

Description of the Site and Buildings

The 705 Progress Avenue site is located in central Scarborough immediately to the east of the Scarborough Town Centre at Progress Avenue and Bellamy Road North in Ward 19 (Trustee Patel). The site was jointly purchased in 1996 by the former City of Scarborough and the former Scarborough Board of Education to provide a future elementary school and municipal park. Each party holds a 50/50 undivided interest in the property.

The site is 10.89 acres in area. There are six industrial buildings on the site with a total gross floor area of 155,658 square feet. The buildings are divided into 63 industrial units and nine offices. Appendix A contains a map showing the location of the site. Appendix B contains a floor plan showing the layout of the buildings and the units.

Operating Agreement and Tenants

The City of Toronto and the TDSB have an operating agreement defining the partnership and management of the site. As agreed, the site is managed by an independent property manager, Compass Realty, under the direction of the City of Toronto in consultation with the TDSB through the Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC). All costs are shared 50/50 between both owners on an annual reconciliation basis.

Each lease agreement is co-signed by the City and the TLC. Each tenant is responsible for maintenance and caretaking of their respective unit. All industrial units are metered separately. Each tenant is invoiced directly by the utility companies (gas and hydro) for their consumption. The leases contain an early termination clause where the owners can provide six months written notice to the tenant.

Currently, the units are leased out to 33 different tenants. Most leases expire within the next two years. The longest lease expires in June 2025.

Temporary Homeless Shelter

In 2019, the City converted units 47 to 62 into a temporary homeless shelter. The temporary shelter is necessary to accommodate residents displaced by the George Street Revitalization project. In this project, Seaton House is being replaced and expanded. The City has implemented two other temporary shelters to use as transition sites while Seaton House is being rebuilt: Scarborough Village Residence located at 3306 Kingston Road; and Junction Place located at 731 Runnymede Road.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the temporary homeless shelter specifies that the shelter can occupy the space until December 31, 2023. The agreement contains a renewal option for five years.

Residential Development

The 705 Progress Avenue site is located within a mixed-use and employment area bound by McCowan Road, Ellesmere Avenue, Bellamy Road North and Highway 401. As per the City's Official Plan, the mixed-use lands allow for a broad range of commercial, residential, and institutional uses, in single-use or mixed-use buildings, as well as parks. The employment lands are places of business and economic activities vital to Toronto's economy and include core employment uses, such as manufacturing and processing, and general employment uses, such as restaurants, retail and service uses.

Residential uses started being introduced in this area more than a decade ago. Currently there are 343 elementary students and 75 secondary students living here.

Many of the industrial and commercial properties are being proposed for residential buildings. There are over 8,000 high-density residential units in the City's development approval process. These units have the potential to yield approximately 700 elementary students and 140 secondary students (note: not all of these students will choose to attend the local designated schools – approximately 15% of the elementary students and 50% of the secondary students will choose to attend other schools on optional attendance or to access programs like French). Some of these units could be constructed in the next five to ten years, but most are likely to be completed beyond ten years.

Holding Schools

It is the practice in Ontario for school boards to use holding schools to accommodate students while a new neighbourhood is emerging. Holding schools are utilized until a new school is built in the neighbourhood. The construction of a new school requires the school board to apply to the Ministry of Education for funding. The funding is secured through the Capital Priorities process in which a business case is submitted to the Ministry that presents the rationale for a new school. Holding schools play an important role in the rationale: they demonstrate that a sufficient number of actual students reside in the new neighbourhood to sustain a viable standalone school; they provide evidence of actual trends of families residing in the neighbourhood to support the projected enrolment; and they allow time for the full build out of the area to be known which is important for establishing the capacity of the new school.

The holding schools for the residential buildings in the 705 Progress Avenue area are Bendale Jr PS for JK-6 students and Tredway Woodsworth PS for Grade 7-8 students. A holding school is not being used for secondary students because there is already a local designated secondary school serving this area – David and Mary Thomson CI.

The junior students are provided with transportation to Bendale Jr PS because they are outside of 1.6 km to the school (approximately 3 km away). No transportation is required for the intermediate students attending Tredway Woodsworth PS because the school is within 3.2 km (approximately 2.7 km away). Of the 343 elementary students living in the 705 Progress Avenue area, 250 students are attending Bendale Jr PS and 50 are attending Tredway Woodsworth PS (37 for the Regular Program and 13 for French Immersion). The remaining 43 students are attending other schools for program or optional attendance reasons.

Bendale Jr PS has a current enrolment of 395 students, a building capacity of 376 students, and a utilization rate of 105%. The enrolment is projected to grow as the

proposed developments are approved, built, and occupied. The site is large at 6 acres and can accommodate multiple portables.

Tredway Woodsworth PS has a current enrolment of 777 students, a building capacity of 883 pupil places, and a utilization rate of 88%. The enrolment is projected to grow as the proposed developments are occupied. The site is large at 7 acres and can accommodate portables.

Enrolments of these schools will be carefully monitored. Additional holding schools may be identified in the future to limit the number of portables on the Bendale and Tredway Woodsworth sites. There are other schools nearby that have space available that could serve as holding schools: Heather Heights Jr PS is 77% utilized and Henry Hudson Sr PS is 63% utilized.

Pupil Accommodation Review

The Ministry of Education expects all space to be used in schools in a region before they fund the construction of new space. When submitting a business case to the Ministry through the Capital Priorities process to build a new school, it is important that it contain a plan that shows that all the schools in the area will be fully utilized after the new school is constructed. To achieve this, a Pupil Accommodation Review has been identified in the Long-Term Program Accommodation Strategy to study the elementary schools in central Scarborough and develop a plan that ensures that they will all be well utilized after a new school is constructed on the 705 Progress site.

One of the issues that will be addressed in the Pupil Accommodation Review is Bendale Jr PS. If a new school is constructed on the 705 Progress site and Bendale is no longer used as a holding school, Bendale's enrolment will plummet to 145 students and 39% utilization. The Pupil Accommodation Review will explore ways to resolve this such as consolidating North Bendale Jr PS and Bendale Jr PS.

The timing of this Pupil Accommodation Review has not been established due to the current provincial moratorium on school closures. However, once the moratorium is lifted, the review of the elementary schools in central Scarborough will be a high priority.

Capital Priority

The new elementary school for the 705 Progress Avenue site has been identified as one of the TDSB's top ten capital priorities. The Ministry will not consider funding the new school until the Pupil Accommodation Review has concluded, but by identifying it as a top ten capital priority the Ministry will be made aware of the TDSB's intentions.

Estimated Timeline to Build a New Elementary School on the 705 Progress Avenue Site

As described above, a Pupil Accommodation Review needs to be completed first before the business case for a new elementary school on the 705 Progress Avenue site will be approved by the Ministry. While it is not known when the Pupil Accommodation Review could begin because of the current provincial moratorium, the timeline outlined below is based on the premise that the moratorium is lifted in the summer of 2021 which provides the earliest timeline for constructing a school on the site.

Step	Task	Estimated Timeline
1	Conduct the Pupil Accommodation Review and receive Board approval of a student accommodation plan	Start in fall of 2021 and end in June 2022 (1 school year)
2	Work with the City to develop a plan for the 705 Progress Avenue site showing where the school and park will be located	Summer 2022
3	Submit a business case to the Ministry for funds to build the new school on the 705 Progress Avenue site through the next round of Capital Priorities funding	Unknown but estimated to be summer or fall of 2022
4	Receive funds from the Ministry for the new school	Early 2023
5	Give notice to the City that the lease for the temporary homeless shelter cannot be extended past spring of 2025	Early 2023
6	Give notice to the other tenants in the industrial units that the leases will be terminated by spring 2025	Early 2023
7	Design the new school and receive all municipal and Ministry approvals	Start in spring 2023 and end in spring 2025 (2 years)
8	Construct the new school	Start in spring 2025 and end in spring 2027 (2 years)
9	Open the new school on the 705 Progress Avenue site	September 2027

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

NA

Resource Implications

NA

Communications Considerations

NA

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

NA

Appendices

- Appendix A: Map – Location of the 705 Progress Avenue Site and Holding Schools
- Appendix B: Site Plan for 705 Progress Avenue

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