

Section II – Items for Board of Directors Action

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
Friday, September 8, 2023 Meeting

FROM: Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

RE: **TRCA AND CREATE TO COLLABORATION TO EXPLORE CITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES AT BLACK CREEK PIONEER VILLAGE PARKING FACILITY**

KEY ISSUE

To enlist the expertise of CreateTO to conduct a comprehensive feasibility analysis on the development potential within the parking lot of Black Creek Pioneer Village (to be formally renamed The Village at Black Creek in Q1 2024, as per Board of Directors RES.#A69/23) that contributes to revitalization of the Visitor Centre and overall sustainability of the Museum while achieving other municipal, provincial and federal city building and policy objectives.

RECOMMENDATION:

WHEREAS TRCA is committed to an ongoing strategy of assessing and leveraging its extensive real estate portfolio for opportunities to further shared goals with its municipal, provincial, and federal partners;

AND WHEREAS Black Creek Pioneer Village has been undergoing a process of revitalization and re-imagining as a museum and tourism attraction to restore its prominence in place in the cultural eco-system of Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area, including renaming to The Village at Black Creek in Q1 2024;

AND WHEREAS Black Creek Pioneer Village is of significant importance to TRCA and the residents of Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area as a museum that showcases and encourages visitors to explore the past while reflecting on the present;

AND WHEREAS Black Creek Pioneer Village is located in both the Black Creek Neighbourhood Improvement Area and the University Heights Neighbourhood Improvement Area;

AND WHEREAS context sensitive development of the Black Creek Pioneer Village parking lot can serve as a catalyst for, and contributor to, ongoing revitalization of the Black Creek and University Heights Neighborhood Improvement Areas, including providing both economic, social and community benefits;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT TRCA enlist the expertise of CreateTO to conduct a developmental feasibility analysis for the Black Creek Pioneer Village parking lot to examine additional community and economic benefits;

THAT the development analysis benefit from stakeholder input and consider a

variety of future uses with a focus on transforming the parking facility into a more livable, sustainable, and inclusive space that better integrates and connects the existing historical fabric, and the new Head Office, with the surrounding community;

THAT the development analysis ensures that it retains a portion of the site for staff parking, and significantly contributes to a revitalized Visitor Centre and Museum at Black Creek Pioneer Village;

AND THAT once draft development options are completed, that staff report back to the Executive Committee for approval of the concept which would inform subsequent planning, funding and development applications, due diligence, and value enhancement strategies which may require future agreements and approvals.

BACKGROUND

Established in 1960 through a partnership between TRCA, Metropolitan Toronto, local municipalities and the Government of Ontario, Black Creek Pioneer Village is one of Ontario's leading living history museums, boasting over forty (40) heritage buildings of local, provincial, and national significance, and caring for 50,000 artifacts of material culture.

With over 140,000 visitors annually to Black Creek Pioneer Village, TRCA is transforming this museum into a community hub that leverages the collection of buildings and artifacts into a world-class museum and cultural district that tells the multitude of stories in the Toronto region through an inclusive lens and significantly grows programming and visitation at this attraction. However, TRCA recognizes that the parking lot as a single use at Black Creek Pioneer Village, while providing valuable functions to visitors and neighbouring uses, is relatively underutilized during certain portions of the year. In addition, the existing parking surface does not meet today's standards for stormwater quality or quantity treatment. The study would look at how existing parking capacity and accessibility can be achieved through many forms or mechanisms, including parking within or below new development and enhanced connections to local and rapid transit service and bike options on-site and nearby.

To this end, the intent is to develop a clearer vision that leverages the existing parking lot site and visitor centre in integrating redevelopment into the fabric of a revitalized and reimagined Visitor Centre and Museum. This development would be required to make significant contributions to the overall vitality of Black Creek Pioneer Village and integrate seamlessly into the fabric of the museum and the adjacent community as a whole. TRCA also envisions the site providing a greater mix of public and private amenities to the surrounding community, Black Creek Pioneer Village and TRCA's new Head Office.

To realize the above vision, TRCA is enlisting the specialized expertise and services of CreateTO. CreateTO was formed in 2018 as the City of Toronto's real estate agency. The organization brings together stakeholders, partners, and community members to

ensure the best use of the City of Toronto's real estate by ensuring a balance of both community and economic benefits. CreateTO, in close consultation with TRCA, will collaborate with a lead architect and a diverse team of consultants to generate a range of draft development options for the abovementioned vision on the parking lot at this site. This comprehensive process will encompass reconnaissance and feasibility analyses, as well as consultations with City of Toronto staff, the local Councillor, neighbours including York University, Tennis Canada, etc. and other community stakeholders and tenants (e.g., Foodshare).

Once draft development options are completed and analysed, the TRCA will proceed to recommend a preferred development option to its Board of Directors for approval of the concept which would then inform subsequent planning, due-diligence, funding and development applications, and value enhancement options that could be pursued for the site.

RATIONALE

Through working with and leveraging the expertise of CreateTO, this project has the potential to transform a relatively underutilized area of Black Creek Pioneer Village into a more livable, sustainable, and inclusive space. Should it proceed, development on this site will be required to integrate into the fabric of the museum and heritage village and contribute to the long-term vitality, vibrancy, and sustainability of Black Creek Pioneer Village. Furthermore, this project will complement TRCA's new Head Office that is currently being constructed and advance community development goals within the adjacent Neighbourhood Improvement Areas of York University Heights and Black Creek by investing in services and facilities that deliver a local impact.

Relationship to TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following Pillars and Outcomes set forth in TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan:

Pillar 1 Environmental Protection and Hazard Management:

- 1.4 Balance development and growth to protect the natural environment ensuring safe sustainable development

Pillar 4 Service Excellence:

- 4.4 Transparent decision making and accountable results

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Funds for engaging CreateTO will come from account code 006-62, Asset Management Implementation.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

In this first phase of work, the project team will further refine TRCA's aspirations for the Site, engage with City staff on the development potential of the Site, and prepare high-level development options. By the end of this phase, a preferred development option for the Site will be presented to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for endorsement to inform future work.

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Date: September 8, 2023

Attachments: 2

Attachment 1: BLACK CREEK PIONEER VILLAGE Subject Site – Ortho

Attachment 2: BLACK CREEK PIONEER VILLAGE Subject Site