

Sherway study

RETHINKING GROWTH

By Edward LaRusic

With the planning framework for the Sherway area dependent on an extension of the Bloor subway line that isn't on anyone's priority list, the city wants to rethink the policies in order to revitalize the area and facilitate growth. But the local councillor asks, "Where's the transit?"

"I'm excited to develop a broader scheme around the Sherway area, especially with the investments that Sherway Gardens [shopping centre] has put in. It's an interesting opportunity to intensify a little bit more," Ward 5 Etobicoke-Lakeshore councillor **Justin Di Ciano** told *NRU*. "My main concern is transit... [if we] say like we've done in the past 'build it and transit will come,' under my watch that ain't going to happen. I want a solid transit plan before a single rezoning takes place, or I won't support it."

While the existing policy framework limits growth in the area, demand to develop underutilized sites is creating pressure for residential and commercial intensification. Aside from the Sherway Gardens shopping centre, which is roughly in the middle of the area, big-box retail stores and the parking lots that serve them dominate the area.

"Currently retail and residential development is at or nearing the maximum development

CONTINUED PAGE 4 ▶

50th anniversary of iconic building

CELEBRATING CITY HALL

By Leah Wong

Toronto's New City Hall isn't so new anymore. The city is preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the building's opening in September, recognizing the iconic design's influence on architecture locally and internationally.

Architect **Viljo Revell's** design for a new city hall and public square was selected as part of an international competition, which received more than 500 submissions from 42 countries. Throughout September there will be a number of events, lectures and exhibitions celebrating the building's legacy.

"The square has continued to be, along with City Hall, the centre of civic life in Toronto," **Ryerson University** Department of Architectural Sciences associate professor **George Kapelos** told *NRU*. "You saw that most recently in the Pan Am Games celebration. You also saw that looking back at the Jack Layton outpouring. It's a place where people gather and express their civic pride."

Kapelos has written a book on the 1958 design competition for Toronto's new city hall and public square, which looks at its impact on the design of public institutions and urban spaces in Canada. Kapelos said the selection of Revell's design inspired public institutions to embrace

CONTINUED PAGE 6 ▶

INSIDE

Anchor strategies

Leveraging investments for local benefits

p 2 >

Scarborough rental towers

Too intense?

p 3 >

In session

Community council meetings resume

p 8 >

RETHINKING GROWTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

levels as set out in the site and area-specific policies for this area,” said city planner **Natasha Laing** in an email to *NRU*. She added that there is particular pressure to add new residential and retail uses north of the Queensway, with an application by **Horner Developments** for three 27-storey, mixed-use buildings currently under review.

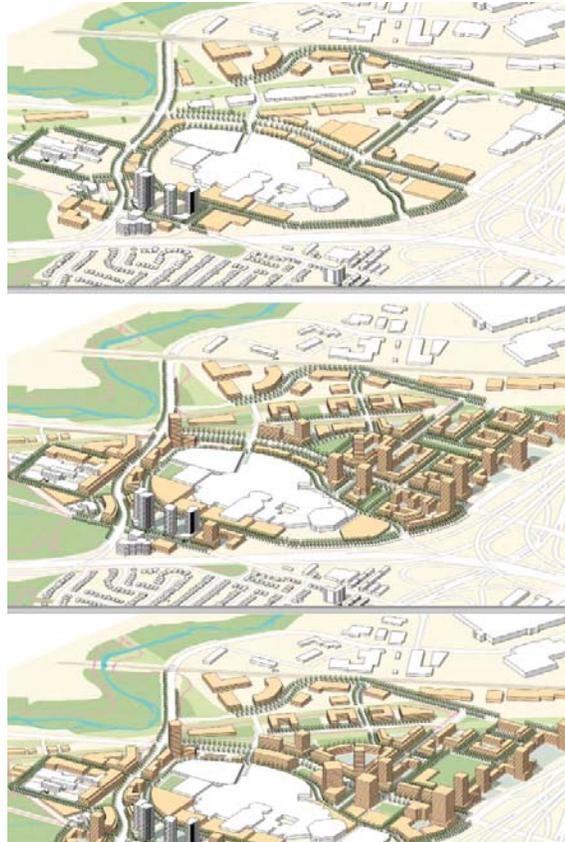
The site and area-specific policies are a legacy of the 1994 Sherway Centre Secondary Plan. One policy limits the amount of residential development to 1,350 units—1,130 which have been approved. Another policy limits retail and office development to 250,000 m² gross leasable area, which is at capacity. The development limits were put in place until an extension of the Bloor-Danforth subway could be built, but that project is unfunded and not included in **Metrolinx’s** regional transportation plan.

Staff are analyzing three development scenarios for the 200-ha. study area—bounded by the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor to the north, Etobicoke Creek and Mississauga border to the west, QEW to the south, and Highway 427 to the east. All remove the existing caps.

Scenario 1 permits development under the current zoning. This would result in mostly low-rise development around existing roads, with scattered mid-rise development.

Scenario 2 encourages residential intensification. This would result in the addition of a series of new roads that would carve up the larger blocks currently occupied by the big-box stores to permit a substantial amount of new residential development. Mixed-use, mid-rise buildings would dominate, with 12 towers ranging from 19 to 33 storeys contemplated. As well, a new trail, the greenway, is proposed along the south side of the Queensway.

Scenario 3 encourages residential intensification but has a



Three development scenarios for the Sherway area, looking northwest
SOURCE: CITY OF TORONTO

greater emphasis on office and commercial uses than scenarios 1 and 2, particularly along the Queensway. Mid-rise, mixed-use buildings would dominate, with 13 towers between 16 and 31 storeys contemplated.

The three scenarios, along with urban design recommendations, will be presented to the city’s design review panel at its September 10 meeting.

“The options that [staff has] brought forward talk about a lot of density. Serious, serious density,” said Di Ciano. “Before any of that flourishes into reality, we’ve got to make sure that we’ve looked at the traffic situation and the transit scenario. We somehow have to connect that future residential component to the subway line. If we don’t, we’re not thinking to build a city that’s capable of connecting people through transit.”

Di Ciano said that he would like to see development charges increased to help pay for transit to connect the Sherway area to Kipling Station. **CONTINUED PAGE 5**

BUILDING COMMUNITY WEALTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

So far there has been positive response and the school is considering making Hammerheads a contractual requirement for future construction projects.

Other examples of institutions developing anchor strategies include **Ryerson University's** food management contract, which requires more than 25 per cent of the food it purchases to be locally and sustainably sourced, and the **City of Toronto's**

work on a social procurement framework.

While these are positive examples of anchor strategies at work in Toronto, Dragicevic said there are many more opportunities for organizations to work together and coordinate their strategies.

"The more institutions you have coordinating and aligning their strategies the greater the impact will be," said Dragicevic.

nrU

RETHINKING GROWTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

He has also asked staff if a development permit by-law would be appropriate for the Sherway area to help bring transit to the area.

Laing agrees that the absence of higher order transit in the area is a challenge that needs to be solved.

Meanwhile, "the area remains highly dependent on vehicular use for commuting. Hopefully, this will be augmented by increased bus service over time."

In addition to creating a policy framework that will facilitate growth, the Sherway study will produce a transportation master plan, servicing master plan, urban design guidelines, community services and facilities strategy and a public space and streetscape plan. The community services strategy and public space/streetscaping plan are particularly important elements, integral to adding more residential units in the area. , Aside from the Trillium Health Centre, there are no community services and facilities within the area, very little pedestrian infrastructure and no public parks or open spaces. However, Laing said that the area, with its abundance of surface parking, offers the opportunity to add new streets and blocks, open space, parkland and redevelopment.

Staff will present the recommended scenario at a public meeting in the fall. A final report on the Sherway Area Study is expected to be considered by the Etobicoke York Community Council by the end of the year.

The Sherway Area Study is being led by **Gladki Planning Associates** along with architecture firm **DTAH**, transportation

consultant **ARUP** and engineering consultant **The Municipal Infrastructure Group**. **nrU**