

David Dunlap Observatory Lands Planning and Conservation Management Study Concept Plans

Interpretation Guidelines

The David Dunlap Observatory Lands Planning and Conservation Management Study will provide two distinct yet inter-related products.

The first is a Conservation Management Plan that identifies how the cultural heritage attributes (observatory dome, administration building, Elm's Lea etc.) will be managed, conserved and celebrated into the future.

The second product which is the focus of the draft Concept Plans attached is a Land Use Planning Framework. This Land Use Planning Framework will be used to inform and shape the policies of the Town of Richmond Hill's new Official Plan as it relates to the David Dunlap Observatory Lands. The Town's new Official Plan will be presented to Council in the spring of 2010.

Since the commencement of the Study, two consultation events were held. The first Open House held in October provided an overview of the study, project process, and a review of the existing site context emphasizing the cultural heritage significance of the property. The second public event, held in November, was in the form of a design charrette, where the community was invited to participate in a visioning exercise for the lands.

Following these two events, the Town is now providing a number of land use concepts for public input. The draft Concept Plans show the following:

- options for future land use on the property;
- areas where development could not occur due to cultural heritage features;
- potential areas where development could not occur due to natural heritage features;
- potential major roads into the site;
- options for a pedestrian and cycling trail network; and
- options for community-level public park land on the site.

Comments generated by the public on these concepts will be used to assist in the development of a preferred concept plan that will be presented to the Town's Committee of the Whole on January 18, 2010.

These concepts, by way of road access and view corridors, all aim to celebrate the cultural heritage features of the property. It is important to note that these concepts do not represent any sort of final land use designations for the site and are intended only to inform the policy framework. They outline a number of important principles that can be translated into planning policies for the Town's new Official Plan.

The resulting planning polices will be used to direct and guide any development application submitted by the property owner in the future.

Work on the cultural heritage assessment of the “Panhandle Lands” (the strip of land running north from 16th Avenue to the DDO lands that contain the Elvis Stojko Arena and Observatory Park) is on going. Results of this study will be used to inform the preferred concept and development of the Official Plan policies.