

**Business Case:** 

## **Canadian Tire Lands Elementary School**

**Business Case for a new 435 Pupil Place Elementary School** 

## **Toronto District School Board**

February 25, 2022



# 2022-23 Capital Priorities Program Business Case – Written Component

School Board Name: 12 - Toronto DSB

Project Name: Canadian Tire Lands Elementary School

Project Ranking: NEW PROJECT #2

Project Description: A new 435pp JK-5 Elementary School

Panel: Elementary

Municipality: Toronto (North York)

Project Category: Accommodation Pressure

Project Type: New School

Child Care: No

If yes, CMSM / DSSAB Name and number:

Choose an item.

Joint-Use: No

EDC Eligible: No

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### 1.0 RATIONALE FOR ACCOMMODATION NEED

#### <u>Part A: Project Rationale</u>

A new 435 pupil place JK to Grade 5 school is required to meet the current and long-term accommodation requirements of an emerging high-density neighbourhood in North York.

The area, known as the Canadian Tire Lands, is a large former industrial/commercial property that was first identified as a redevelopment initiative in 2000. The area is roughly bounded by Highway 401 (south), Rail corridor (east), Sheppard Avenue East (north) and Bessarion Road (west) and is approximately 20 hectares (50 acres) in size. A map of the area and site is contained in Appendix A.

The approval of the Bessarion-Leslie Context Plan in 2002 provided the framework for how the lands would be developed, and included language recognizing that new TDSB and TCDSB elementary schools were necessary to support a complete community. The need for an elementary site was identified by TDSB staff based upon a review of the density and urban structure proposed for the emerging community as well as the accommodation pressures being experienced at local elementary schools.

The Canadian Tire Lands has been planned to accommodate over 5,000 new residential units in a series of mid and high-rise towers. Construction on a series of residential towers began in 2006 and occupancy of these new units began in 2011. To date, nearly 2,500 units have been built and occupied. As of October 2020, there were approximately 90 Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5 students residing within these occupied dwellings.

Immediately west of the Canadian Tire Lands is the New York Towers development, situated southeast of Bayview Avenue and Sheppard Avenue. This community contains over 3,500 new residential units in a series of mid and high-rise towers. As of October 2020, there were approximately 160 Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 students residing within this area.

Situated between the Canadian Tire Lands and the New York Towers area sits a community of low-rise single family detached and semi-detached dwellings. As of October 31, 2020, there were approximately 35 students residing in this area.

The planned attendance area of the future Canadian Tire Lands school would include all three areas described above, within which a combined total of 280 JK-5 students currently reside. This is sufficient to generate the critical mass of students required to support a new elementary school.

Further, there are 1,153 residential units currently under construction within the immediate Canadian Tire Lands area, along with another 1,507 proposed. See Appendix B for a plan of subdivision highlighting the occupied, under construction and planned developments within the Canadian Tire Lands.

#### Site Acquisition

In May 2018, the Ministry of Education allocated \$24M to support the purchase of a school site within the Canadian Tire Lands area. The site is approximately 1.8 acres in size and is situated along the western boundary of the Canadian Tire lands at 50 Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Lane.

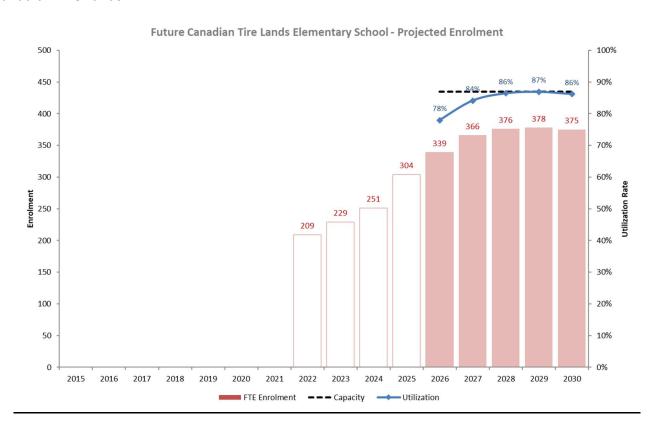


The site was reserved for a future school use when the context plan was first developed in 2002 and confirmed when the Plan of Subdivision was approved by the City. An agreement was established in July 2014 that provided the TDSB with an option to purchase the lands by May 2018. The allocation of the funds by the Ministry of Education to support the purchase of the site was a recognition that a school presence in the area is required to meeting the long-term accommodation needs of the community.

## Projected Enrolment at the Canadian Tire Lands School

The new Canadian Tire Lands Elementary School is anticipated to open in September 2026. Upon opening, the school is projected to have an enrolment of 339 students in JK to Grade 5, operating at 78% utilization. As new residential developments in the area continue to become occupied, enrolment will increase year over year. By 2029, enrolment is projected to reach approximately 380 students, with the school operating at 87% utilization.

The working boundary for the school is identified in Appendix C and includes the area south of Sheppard Avenue between Bayview Avenue (west) and the Rail corridor (east). This includes the three individual neighbourhoods described earlier in the business case: the New York Towers area, the low-density area, and the Canadian Tire Lands.



Students attending the Canadian Tire Lands school would be directed to Bayview MS for Grades 6-8. The projection in the chart above reflects a relatively moderate pupil yield applied to new residential developments in the area. In other instances, where the Board has opened a new elementary school within similar high-density neighbourhoods, the actual number of elementary students residing within the surrounding dwellings has increased dramatically. This occurred at the neighbouring Avondale PS when the school was opened in 2019. The Board is now seeking options to address rapid enrolment growth at that



school beyond what was anticipated. This trend was also experienced at Jean Lumb PS, an elementary school that was opened along the City's waterfront area in 2019. Enrolment at the school has surpassed the projection in each year since it opened. These increases are despite the pandemic whereas most elementary schools across the City have experienced a decline.

#### **Current Accommodation of Students**

Due to historical accommodation pressures at the local schools, Elkhorn PS (JK-5), Bayview MS (6-8) and Earl Haig SS (9-12), in June 2002 the Board approved that new development within the Canadian Tire Lands and New York Towers area be redirected to Crestview PS, Woodbine MS and Georges Vanier SS. This grouping of schools is located near Don Mills Road, south of Finch Avenue East. This redirection continues into the current school year.

Currently there are approximately 140 students being bussed to Crestview PS from the Canadian Tire Lands area at an annual cost of approximately \$150,000. Students attending Woodbine MS are provided with TTC tickets. Students attending Georges Vanier SS are required to make their own way to the school as it is within the 4.8km walking distance as per TDSB policy.

Crestview PS is a JK to Grade 5 school located 101 Seneca Hill Drive in North York, southwest of the intersection of Don Mills Road and Finch Avenue East. In 2021-22, the school was operating at 79% utilization with 426 students. The facility has a capacity of 536 pupil places. Projections suggest that enrolment will increase over the long term because of the ongoing holding arrangement whereby students are bussed into the school from new residential developments outside of the area.

As the holding school for development within the Canadian Tire Lands and the broader area surrounding it, there will be an impact to the enrolment at Crestview PS when the new Canadian Tire Lands school is constructed. The school will become underutilized as students are removed from Crestview PS to attend the new Canadian Tire Lands school. To this end, there may be a future Pupil Accommodation Review to address the underutilization at the school. Crestview PS is situated within very close proximity to Don Valley Middle School, only separated by a municipal park (Linus Park), presenting an opportunity to explore a single TDSB presence in this location rather than two. Other accommodation solutions would be sought through the process as nearby schools would also be included in the review.

At present, there is no Pupil Accommodation Review identified in the Board's Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS).

Students in Grade 6 to 8 assigned to Woodbine MS, located just south of Crestview PS, due north of Fairview Mall on Don Mills Road. Given the distance of the Canadian Tire Lands area from Woodbine MS, there are very few students in Grade 6-8 who attend. Students are exercising their ability to attend other TDSB schools through the Optional Attendance process. For this reason, staff are already examining opportunities to return these students to a closer Grade 6-8 school in the neighbourhood, Bayview MS. This is already the planned pathway for students graduating from the Canadian Tire Lands school.

Given the very small number of students who attend Woodbine MS from the Canadian Tire Lands area, there would be only a minimal impact on enrolment at Woodbine MS if the pathway for Grade 6-8 students was changed to Bayview MS. Given that this pathway change is already being explored outside of the Capital Priorities process, it is inconsequential to the proposal for the new school.



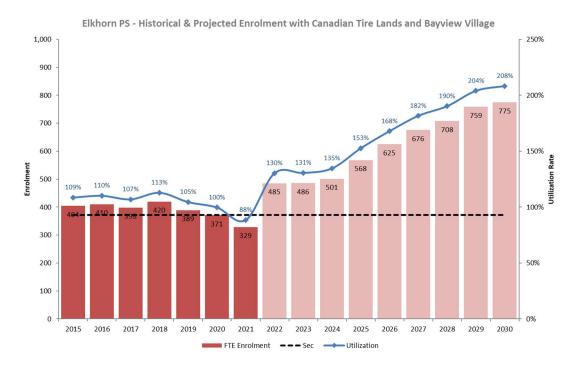
Woodbine MS is currently operating at 68% utilization with 410 students. The capacity of the school is 607 pupil places. Enrolment at the school is projected to grow over the long term as new developments are completed within its attendance area. There are currently over 3,000 new residential units planned or under construction within the school's attendance area, not including those within the Canadian Tire Lands. By 2026, the school's enrolment is projected to rise to approximately 480 students, or 80% utilization.

There are no changes proposed to the secondary school pathways at this time. It is anticipated that students will continue to be accommodated at Georges Vanier SS until capacity at closer secondary schools becomes available.

#### Part B: Alternative Accommodation Strategies

The provision of a new elementary school to meet the needs of this emerging community is the best approach to achieve the guiding principles of the Board's Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy, as well as the vision and objectives of the City's Official Plan in relation to complete communities and vibrant neighbourhoods. The current situation whereby students residing in these new high-density dwellings are bussed to schools far outside of the neighbourhood is and has always been intended to be an interim solution until a local school presence could be achieved. For this local school presence to be achieved, a critical mass of students to support a fulsome elementary school program is required – that benchmark has been reached and this school is now a much-needed resource in this growing community.

Accommodating all the students locally in the absence of a new school would mean overloading the existing junior school, Elkhorn PS, with portables until an expansion and/or replacement school could be constructed. By 2030, enrolment at Elkhorn PS would increase to 775 students (208% utilization). The site would require 18 portables to accommodate students that would have otherwise been accommodated at the new Canadian Tire Lands school. This alternative solution would require a replacement school on the Elkhorn site of over 850 pupil places. The graph below illustrates the projected enrolment for Elkhorn PS if all existing and future students residing in the Canadian Tire Lands and Bayview Village area were to attend.





Elkhorn PS was constructed in 1956 and has a 5-year renewal backlog of \$5.4M and a 5-year FCI of 67%. The school is not accessible from an AODA perspective. Further, the school's gymnasium is substandard compared to other schools of that size, and when compared to Ministry benchmarks for a new school build (10ft2 per student). The gym at Elkhorn PS is only 1,700ft2, which is less than half of what is required to support a school of 400 students.

Elkhorn PS is also situated in the low-density neighbourhood north of Sheppard Avenue whereas most students who require permanent accommodation now reside on the south side of Sheppard Avenue. From the perspective of complete and walkable communities, a school on the south side of Sheppard Avenue provides for a more equitable distribution in terms of access to a neighbourhood school.

As described, the capacity available at Bayview MS is required to address another need in the broader area, which is the relocation of Avondale Alternative School from the Avondale PS building. Avondale PS is projected to experience significant enrolment increases over the next 10 years that will require all available spaces in the 861 pupil place facility. Bayview MS is located within a reasonable distance of Avondale PS and can accommodate the Alternative school within available space. With this potential relocation, which is currently being explored, the school's utilization rate is projected to reach 100% by 2031.

There are no other sites within the immediate area that provide a feasible opportunity to accommodate these students. Given that the TDSB was allocated funds to purchase the site in 2018, there was a case made at that time that the site was required to provide a local neighbourhood school opportunity within this rapidly intensifying area. This is still the preferred approach to providing the most appropriate long-term accommodation plan for this community.

## 2.0 SCHOOL ENROLMENT AND CAPACITY OVERVIEW

School Name	Current Utilization	Distance to Nearest School	School Summary
Elkhorn PS	88%	600m (from Canadian Tire Lands site)	Elkhorn PS is a JK to Grade 5 school situated on the north side of Sheppard Avenue East. Historically, Elkhorn PS has experienced enrolment growth that has resulted in accommodation pressures at the site. There are currently 5 portables onsite.
			The school's capacity is 372 pupil places. The school's current enrolment is 329 students, leaving it operating at 88% utilization. The school's enrolment has declined since 2018 when it was operating at 111% utilization with 414 students. As has been noted in this business case, there have been ongoing redirections of residential development from Elkhorn PS over the past two decades to manage enrolment growth at the school. Given the number of JK-5 students residing in new developments within the redirected areas (including the Canadian Tire Lands and New York Towers areas), there has not been an opportunity to return these students to Elkhorn PS without requiring an unsustainable number of portables on the site. If all redirected JK-5 students were returned to Elkhorn PS, a total of 15 portables would be required on the site (5 existing plus 10 more to accommodate more than 200 JK-5 students).
			Board with an opportunity to return all these developments to a local school; some will be assigned to Elkhorn PS to balance enrolment and eliminate the



			need for ongoing bussing of students to schools far outside of the neighbourhood. A small pocket of single-family and semi-detached homes on the south side of Sheppard Avenue East would be assigned to the new Canadian Tire Lands school. This loss of enrolment would then be backfilled by providing new developments in the Elkhorn PS attendance area with an opportunity to attend the local school.  One of these developments is the redevelopment of Bayview Village at the northeast corner of Bayview Avenue and Sheppard Avenue East. This proposal consists of six mid and high-rise buildings for a total of 1,030 units. Further to the east is a proposal to redevelop 680 Sheppard Avenue East into a 22-storey building with 487 units. Combined, these 1,500 units would be provided with an opportunity to attend Elkhorn PS if this proposal was approved. As per current boundaries, these future students would be bussed over 4km away to Crestview PS.
			If the Canadian Tire Lands school is opened and enrolment/developments are balanced across the two schools, long-term projections for Elkhorn PS suggest that the school's enrolment will increase to 294 students by 2025, operating at 79% utilization. By 2031, the school's enrolment is projected to increase to 362 students, resulting in a utilization rate of 97%. This results in a balanced accommodation plan across the two schools with no portables required.
Bayview MS	63%	1.8km (from Canadian Tire Lands site)	Bayview MS is a Grade 6-8 school situated north of Sheppard Avenue, east of Bayview Avenue. Similar to Elkhorn PS, historical accommodation pressures have resulted in new residential developments in the area being bussed to another school outside of the area. For students in Grade 6-8 residing in these new developments, their designated school is Woodbine MS, located roughly 3.6km away. The school is currently operating at 63% utilization with 396 students. The capacity of the school is 629 pupil places.
			Enrolment at Bayview MS has declined in recent years, meaning that space has been available at the school to serve other needs in the area. Most recently, Avondale PS and Avondale Alternative (Alt.) PS were accommodated at Bayview MS while their new facility was constructed. The new Avondale PS/Alt. PS was opened in early 2019, at which time Bayview MS was vacated.
			Given that space is currently available at Bayview MS, there are two accommodation studies underway to address issues in the surrounding area. The first, as mentioned earlier in this business case, is a potential chance to middle school pathways for students residing in new residential developments in the area that are currently assigned to Woodbine MS. The proposed change would see these students accommodated locally at Bayview MS.
			The second issue is the potential relocation of Avondale Alternative Elementary School. This school of approximately 140 JK to Grade 8 students is currently accommodated at the new Avondale PS, situated south of Sheppard Avenue, east of Yonge Street. The new Avondale building was opened in early 2019 and has a capacity of 861 pupil places. The school's enrolment has grown beyond what has been projected for the school, which has begun to place accommodation pressures on the school. As the site is highly constrained and cannot accommodate multiple portables, the only way to create space for local students is to relocate the Alternative school to another location.



			Bayview MS is located within relatively close proximity and already has spaces fit up to meet the needs of younger students (created to accommodate Avondale students during construction). The proximity, availability of ageappropriate space makes Bayview MS an excellent candidate for this purpose.  Projections suggest that if the pathway for Grade 6-8 students is changed from Woodbine MS to Bayview MS, and the Avondale Alt. PS is relocated into the
Crestview PS	79%	4.5km (from Canadian Tire Lands site)	building, the school's utilization rate will reach 90% by 2025 and 100% by 2031.  Crestview PS is a JK to Grade 5 school located near the intersection of Don Mills Road and Finch Avenue East. This school has been historically designated to be the holding school for students residing in new residential developments within the Canadian Tire Lands and surrounding areas.
			The school is currently operating at 79% utilization with 426 students. The capacity of the school is 536 pupil places. Projections suggest that the school will continue to grow as students residing in new residential developments outside the area are bussed into the school. By 2031, the school is projected to be operating at 103% utilization with 554 students.
			If the new Canadian Tire Lands school is constructed, then enrolment at Crestview PS will decline as students holding there will be removed. This means that enrolment at the school will decline.
			Depending on the impact, a Pupil Accommodation Review involving Crestview PS and surrounding schools may be identified in the Board's Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy and undertaken once the moratorium is lifted.
			This future review will allow the Board to develop and consider a wide range of accommodation scenarios that could address the underutilization at the school. One potential outcome could be a consolidation whereby a school in the area is closed and enrolment distributed amongst the remaining schools.
Woodbine MS	68%	3.4km (from Canadian Tire Lands site)	Woodbine MS is a Grade 6-8 school located on Don Mills Road north of Sheppard Avenue. The school has been designated to accommodate students in Grade 6-8 that reside in new residential development in the Canadian Tire Lands and surrounding area.
			The school is currently operating at 68% utilization with 410 students.  Projections suggest that enrolment at the school will increase over the midterm as new residential developments within the school's attendance area are constructed and occupied. By 2025, the school's enrolment is expected to increase to 518 students, operating at 85% utilization.
			Despite being the designated school for Grade 6-8 students residing within the Canadian Tire Lands, there are very few students who follow this pathway; they seek out other opportunities through the Optional Attendance process. The Board is currently exploring ending this pathway for Grade 6-8 students and returning them to a closer middle school, Bayview MS. The impact on Woodbine MS would be minimal given the reasons outlined above.
			As Bayview MS is proposed to be the middle school pathway for the future Canadian Tire Lands school, there would be additional impact on Woodbine MS.



Avondale PS / Avondale Alternative PS	102%	12km	Avondale PS/Alt. PS is being included within this business case due to the potential relocation of the Alternative school into Bayview MS.
Attemative 13			The Avondale PS/Alt. PS facility has a capacity of 861 pupil places, 720 are associated with the Avondale PS and 141 with the Avondale Alt. PS. Avondale PS has a current enrolment of 735 students and is operating at 102% utilization (within their allocated pupil places). Year over year, enrolment at the school has surpassed the projection. This is due to increasing numbers of young families residing in the attendance area (supported by higher-than-normal pupil yields), and ongoing residential development. Projections suggest that enrolment at the school will increase to 974 students by 2025 (135% utilization), and all the way up to 1,025 students by 2031 (142% utilization).
			The site is 5.4 acres and is oddly configured in a triangular shape. This makes the accommodation of portables quite challenging. There may be an opportunity to place up to 3 on the site to help address the growing accommodation pressure. However, the Avondale Alternative School could also be relocated to free up classrooms in the building for Avondale PS. The Alternative school has a capacity of 141 pupil places and an enrolment of approximately 135 students (held at that level each year). The Alternative school uses 6 classrooms in the building (1 FDK and 5 regular). These could be made available to address the growing enrolment at Avondale PS if the Alternative school was relocated to another site.
			Bayview MS is located within close proximity to the Avondale site and has sufficient capacity available to accommodate the Alternative school. A study is currently underway to explore this relocation. If the school is relocated into Bayview MS, the school's utilization will improve quite substantially, reaching 100% by 2031 – this, combined with the proposed pathway change for Grade 6-8 students, will address the surplus capacity at that school.

## 3.0 PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

## **Part A: School Project Scope**

The proposal for the new Canadian Tire Lands Elementary school is to construct a 435 pupil place facility to accommodate students in JK to Grade 5. The site is only 1.8 acres in size, meaning there are constraints and challenges that make it better suited for a junior school.

The facility will include the following:

- 4 Full-Day Kindergarten Rooms
- 8 Primary Classrooms
- 3 Junior Classrooms
- 1 Instrumental Music Room
- 1 Art Room
- 1 Science Room
- 1 Special Education Room
- 1 Regular Classroom Dedicated to a self-contained ESL allocation



• Gymnasium, Library, administration, storage, and other support spaces as per Ministry benchmarks reflected in the Facility Space Template

Facility Services staff at the TDSB have examined the feasibility of constructing a future elementary school on the site and have confirmed that it is possible to build a standalone 435 pupil place Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5 elementary school. A schematic diagram can be found in Appendix D. That said, there are constraints associated with the site that may require additional items/costs including:

- A retaining wall at the west edge of the site, eliminating an existing sloped grade transition, to allow maximum use of the site area for school building program, parking, site service, access, and outdoor play.
- Extension of retaining wall as screen from adjacent homes. This is a security and acoustic barrier (this barrier will also exist at southerly edge as acoustic protection from Hwy 401)
- Covered/ below-grade parking as required by City and by school function. Related service access & driveways
- Allowance for Type G loading facility & garbage storage per City requirements
- Active roof/ planted roof over parking to allow for required outdoor play adjacent to school building.
- Active roof on top of school. This has been identified as an opportunity to engage the adjacent Community Centre as well as for outdoor learning. This is seen as compensating for a lack of open site area
- The main recreational area for the school is seen as being the public park. This will allow for arrival/dismissal assembly. The roof-top areas described above are intended to allow for school athletics – options for running track/ roof-top playing field

The anticipated cost of this project has been evaluated by TDSB based on an analysis of active projects and recently completed schools.

This approach allows TDSB to understand the anticipated value of work as well as the impact of the City of Toronto initiatives that will be imposed on the project during the Site Plan Approval process. The total estimated cost of the project, inclusive of all extraordinary items and contingencies, is estimated to be approximately \$24M.

A breakdown of these anticipated costs can be found in Appendix E.



## Part B: Child Care Project Scope, if applicable

Is the board requesting child care funding to support child care space with the Capital Priorities project request? No

TDSB staff met with representatives from the City of Toronto's Children's Services Division to understand the need for new child care spaces within the Ward and the immediate area. The new Bessarion Community Centre, situated on the north side of the future Canadian Tire Lands school, accommodates a new 52-space child care centre that serves the community.

Further, the constraints on the 1.8 acre do not allow for additional functions to be added to the project. There are already extraordinary costs associated with constructing a school on the site, as described above. For this reason, the Board and City have agreed not to pursue an exclusive child care as part of this build.

Further, the municipal ward within which the Canadian Tire Lands site is situated is the lowest priority for the City in terms of alignment with the Capital Priority projects identified by the Board for submission in 2022.

What will be explored in partnership with the City would be opportunities to augment the Bessarion Community Centre child care through partnerships at the future Canadian Tire Lands school, along with establishing a Before and After program for local students. These measures do not directly require funding from the Ministry of Education but do support the need for elements of the project that are required to support active play such as the roof deck play areas for younger students.

## Part C: Site Selection and Acquisition

Does the school board already own a site for the requested project? Yes Does the school board have an option agreement for the site? No Is the project within an education development charge (EDC) eligible area? No Will the school board be seeking Land Priorities funding for a site acquisition? No Will the school board be seeking additional ministry funding for any unique site costs? Yes

Land priorities funding was allocated to the Board in May 2018 to support the purchase of the Canadian Tire Lands site. The site has been purchased and is currently under the Board's ownership.

#### PILOT FOR MODULAR CONSTRUCTION BUILD 4.0

Is your board interested in participating in a pilot for Modular Construction Build for this project? No



#### 5.0 **Joint-Use School Project Considerations**

There was no interest in pursuing a joint venture on this site. Further, the site is only 1.8 acres and highly constrained, limiting its ability to accommodate any additional functions.



Appendix A: Location Map

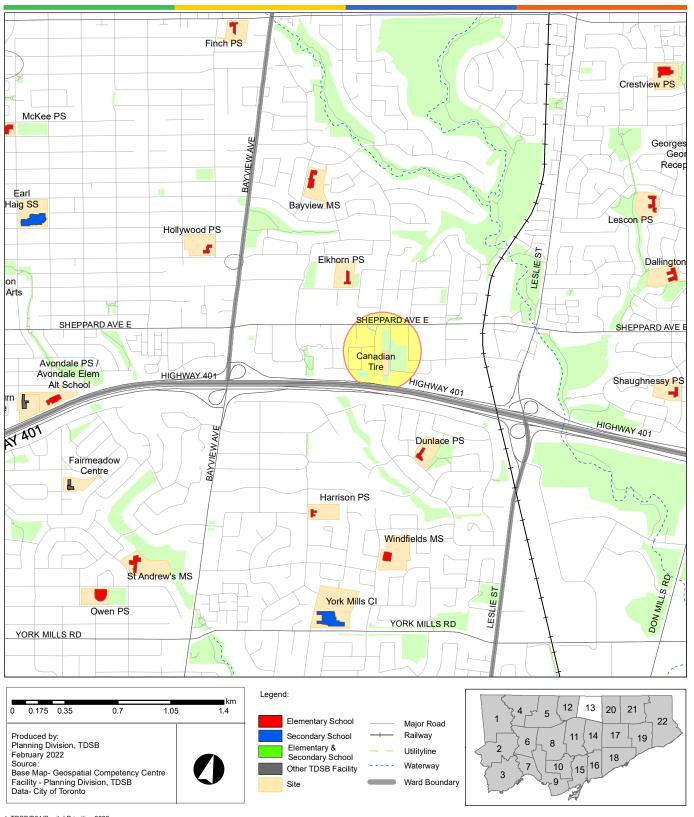
Appendix B: Plan of Subdivision Showing Development Blocks

Appendix C: Working Boundary Map

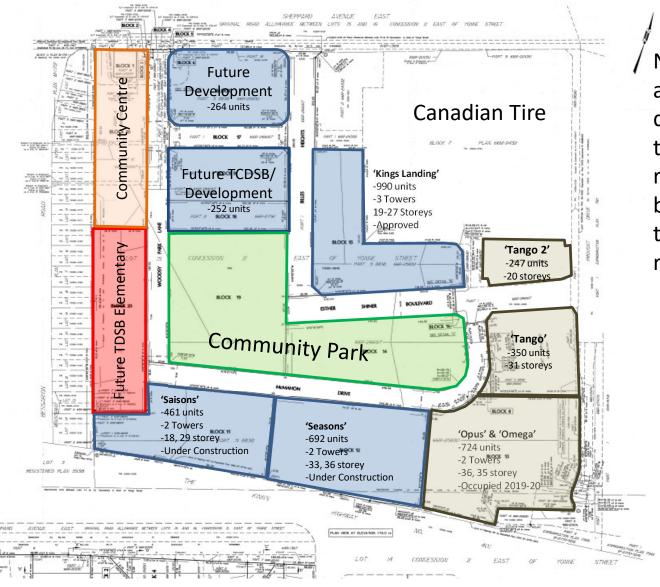
Appendix D: Schematic Diagram

Appendix E: Estimated Cost Document

## Location of Canadian Tire Lands



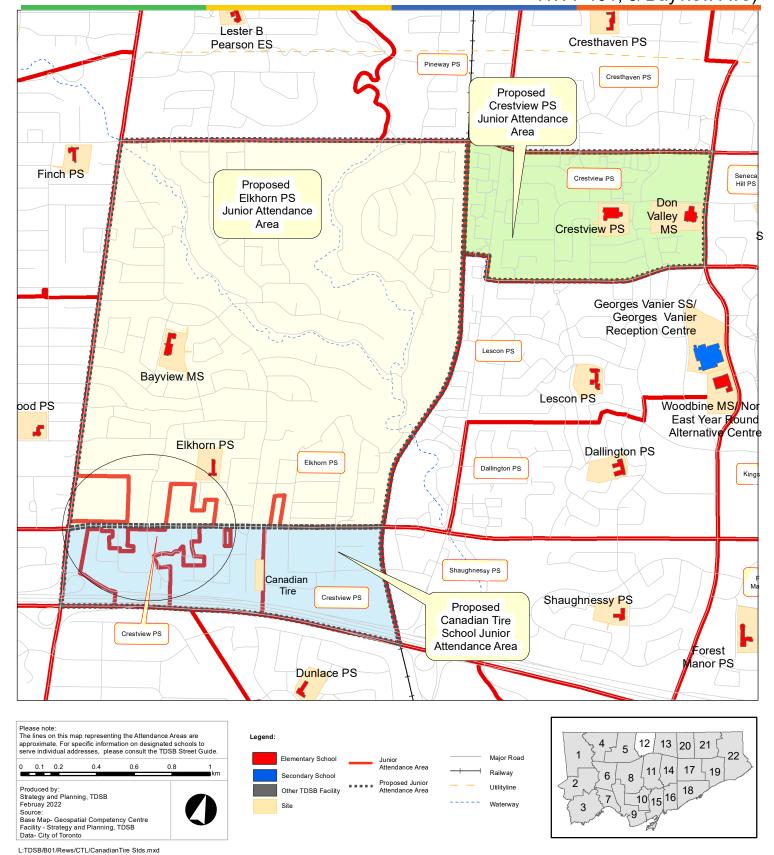
## Appendix B – Plan of Subdivision Showing Development Blocks



Note that there are additional occupied dwellings that exist to the east. They are not reflected on this Plan but are accounted for in the total number of residential units.



Proposed Canadian Tire Lands
Junor Attendance Area
(Area bounded by Sheppard Ave, Leslie St,
HWY 401, & Bayview Ave)



## Appendix D

## **Schematic Diagrams**





## **Appendix E: Estimate Cost (2026 Dollars)**

The anticipated cost of this project has been evaluated by TDSB on the basis of an analysis of active projects and recently completed schools.

This approach allows TDSB to understand the anticipated value of work as well as the impact of the City of Toronto initiatives that will be imposed on the project during the Site Plan Approval process

ITEM	TITLE	PROJECTED COST
1.0	School Base Building - stand-alone school	\$15,800,000.
2.0	Parking Structure/ Active Roof with Planting	\$ 3,370,000.
3.0	Retaining Structure with Risk Allowance for Shoring Tie-Backs to Protect Adjacent Houses	\$ 2,457,000.
4.0	Building Structural Premium – Active Roof on School Also Includes Premium for Structural Isolation – Acoustic Protection from Hwy 401	\$ 850,000.
5.0	Toronto Site Plan Approval Premiums – Storm Water Management Grey Water Systems Type G Loading + Service Landscaping + Site Improvements	\$ 1,710,000.
	TOTAL	\$24,187,000.

Cost
Projection
Table:
Proposed
School: 435
Pupil Places;
46,890sf
(4,356sm)

Note that these are Project Costs – allowing for both Design & Construction aspects

Also note that these costs are projected forward and include contingencies for construction after 2026.

