

2021-22 Capital Priorities Program

Business Case – Written Component

School Board Name: 12 - Toronto DSB

Project Name: West Donlands Elementary School

Project Ranking: 9

Project Description: e.g. New 455pp Elementary School

Panel: Elementary

Municipality: Toronto

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

Board Contact Information: *Daniel Castaldo (416)-428-1857*
daniel.castaldo@tdsb.on.ca

1.0 RATIONALE FOR ACCOMMODATION NEED

Part A: Project Rationale

The downtown waterfront area between Yonge Street and the Don Valley is planned for significant residential intensification over the next 20 years. This area is composed of four precincts referred to as Lower Yonge, East Bayfront, Keating Channel, and West Don Lands. More than 25,000 residential units are proposed to be constructed in these precincts. In total, approximately 1,000 elementary students are forecast to reside here. The Board's top Capital Priority project for the 2021-22 school year is a 455pp school embedded within a mixed-use development within the Lower Yonge Precinct.

To accommodate future students residing in these emerging communities along the City's waterfront, a minimum of two new elementary schools are needed: one school in the western portion of the waterfront area closer to Yonge Street (Lower Yonge Precinct) and one in the eastern portion closer to the Don Valley (West Donlands).

New schools are recommended because the closest existing TDSB elementary schools to this intensifying area are either beyond 1.6 kilometers walking distance and/or do not have sufficient space to accommodate the projected number of students and/or are on constrained sites that cannot accommodate expansion (i.e. Downtown Alternative School, Market Lane PS, Nelson Mandela Park PS, The Waterfront School, and Jean Lumb PS). This has been reflected in the business case for the Lower Yonge Precinct and will be reiterated within this business case.

History of the Block 9 Site

In 2006-07, meetings occurred between staff of the City of Toronto, the TDSB, and the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) to identify potential school sites in the eastern portion of the waterfront area, focusing on the West Don Lands Precinct. A feasibility study was conducted to determine the ability of specific blocks to accommodate schools. The feasibility study concentrated on a 1.63 acre block known as Block 9).

This block has several encumbrances that limit the available land area for development due to its adjacency to a rail corridor and proximity to the Don River. However, the major advantage of this block is that it is immediately adjacent to a City park, Corktown Common, that can be shared with the school for soft service play area. In September 2011, Block 9 was reserved as an elementary school site for the TDSB.

The feasibility study concluded that the block can accommodate an elementary school provided the adjacent park is used for soft surface play, but extraordinary costs will be incurred to provide safety and sound barriers along the rail corridor and to manage air quality and vibration. Appendix A contains a map of the downtown waterfront area showing the location of Block 9.

In 2016, the Board of Trustees directed the Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) to initiate the disposition of two non-operating sites, Silver Creek PS and McNicoll PS through Ontario Regulation 444/98. The sites were to be disposed with the condition that the external organizations continue to operate at these two locations.

The TLC investigated the proposed land exchange with Infrastructure Ontario, acting on behalf of the provincial government. Through this land exchange, the Province gained ownership of Silver Creek PS and

McNicol PS and the TDSB gained ownership of Block 9. The TDSB now has full ownership of the lands to support a future elementary school to meet the needs of this emerging community.

Current Situation – Metrolinx

Although the new school is a critical requirement for the long-term accommodation needs along the central waterfront, the Block 9 site may not be available for construction in the near term.

The Block 9 site is situated adjacent to the future Ontario Line rapid transit corridor. Metrolinx, the provincial transit authority responsible for the construction of the Ontario Line, has indicated that the Block 9 site is required as a laydown area. The laydown area will be used for the receipt, storage and partial assembly of equipment and materials associated with their construction project.

Conversations with Metrolinx have determined that due to this requirement, the Block 9 site is not going to be available for construction until January 2027, which is beyond the Ministry's 2024-25 timeline for project completion. Metrolinx has expressed that they have explored all other options in the area, and that the Block 9 site is the only available and appropriate location due to the proximity of the site to their future project.

TDSB and TLC staff will continue to work with Metrolinx on ways to ensure the new school can be delivered as soon as possible upon completion of their construction activity.

Current Situation – Student Accommodation

In June 2015, the Board of Trustees approved a holding strategy to accommodate the elementary students who will be living in the new developments in the downtown waterfront area. Like the Lower Yonge Precinct, students residing in the West Donlands are accommodated at Dundas Street Jr PS and Queen Alexandra MS until sufficient numbers are achieved to support a viable elementary program and justify the construction of a new facility.

As of October 31, 2020, there were 114 TDSB elementary students residing within the West Donlands. The area consists of a total of 1,265 dwellings, resulting in an elementary pupil yield of 0.09, which is quite high for the built form that currently exists. For comparison purposes, the pupil yield applied to the Lower Yonge Precinct is .023. This likely reflects the prevalence of built affordable housing units within the West Donlands, which aligns with the policy direction established by the City. This same policy framework applies to the Lower Yonge Precinct.

When contemplating a boundary for the future school, there are new development areas directly adjacent to the West Donlands that would likely be included. The Distillery District is a historic landmark that has been rejuvenated into a vibrant neighbourhood that contains a number of mid and high-rise buildings. At the north end of the West Donlands there is a new development known as River City, which contains 8 TDSB students. Directly to the west is a Toronto Community Housing development that contains 243 units and 37 students. Considering all of these components there are a total of 153 students residing in the area currently. Altogether, there are 2,071 occupied dwellings in the area under consideration.

Appendix B provides an overview of the development blocks within the West Donlands Precinct, including the unit counts, estimated year of occupancy and estimated elementary yield. Note that there have been recent provincial decisions around the West Donlands through Ministerial Zoning Orders (MZO's) that allow for increased density beyond what is identified here. There are also blocks within the West Donlands, like the

foundry site, that have not yet been tagged with future density targets. These future developments are not reflected in the current projection for the school.

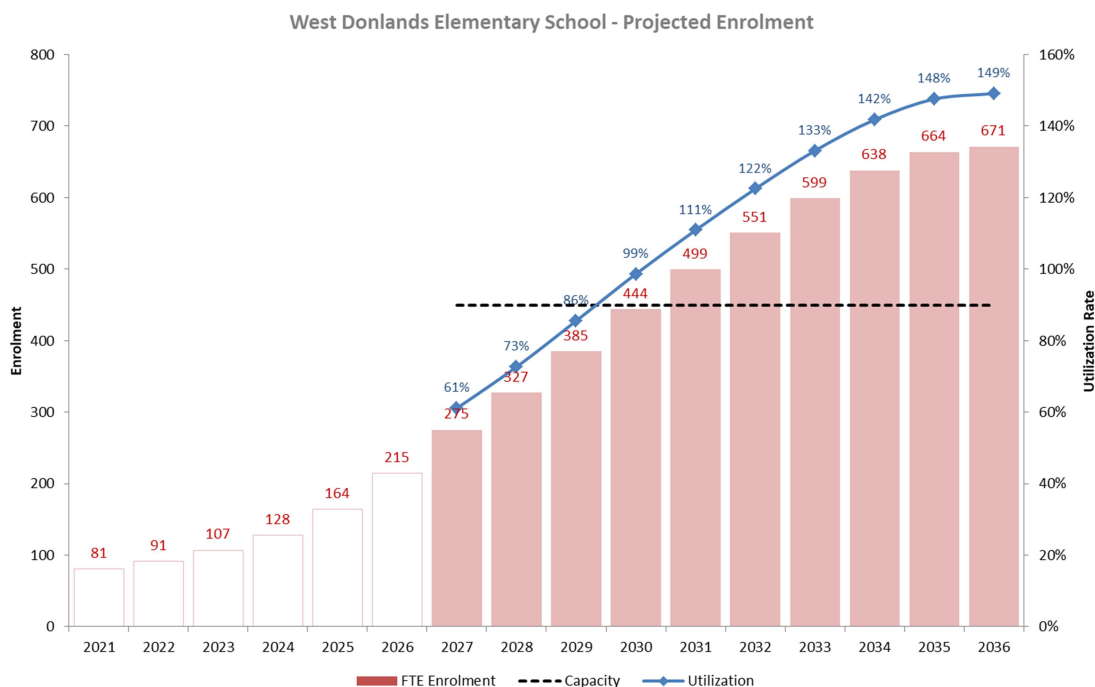
Projection for the New West Donlands Elementary School

Due to the inability to access the site as a result of Metrolinx the estimated opening of the new school is September 2027.

The graph below illustrates the projection for the future West Donlands school assuming an opening date of 2027. The working boundary for the new elementary school for this projection includes the entire West Donlands Precinct, Keating Channel Precinct and the remaining 50% of the East Bayfront Precinct that was not accommodated at the new Lower Yonge Precinct school.

The school's capacity has been identified as 455 pupil places to recognize the extreme challenges that are present at the site, particularly the 30m setback from the rail line to the south. Enrolment is projected to exceed capacity after 2030 as residential development within the Keating Precinct is anticipated to continue. The TDSB has secured an opportunity for a future elementary school within the Keating Channel Precinct over the long-term, which will likely be required if these projections materialize.

This future school is identified only in policy and there is not currently an agreement or specific site identified. The TDSB is currently working with Waterfront Toronto and the City to ensure that this future school is provided in a suitable location that meets the needs of this emerging neighbourhood. The future Keating Channel school would be the third within the central waterfront area.



The West Donlands elementary school is projected to open in 2027 with 275 students and be 61% utilized. As new developments are constructed and occupied the school's enrolment will grow steadily to 385 students by 2029, resulting in a utilization rate of 86%. The capacity of 455 is projected to be exceeded in 2031 with 499 students. A future elementary school on the Keating Channel site will need to be pursued over the next 10

years to ensure that students can be accommodated over the longer-term. Given the constraints of the West Donlands site, a holding arrangement will likely need to be implemented as the site cannot accommodate any portables.

Part B: Alternative Accommodation Strategies

Given that the site will not be accessible to the TDSB for the construction of a school until January 2027, the existing holding scenario will remain in place. However, if the #1 Capital Priority project, the Lower Yonge Precinct, is approved, there is an opportunity to remove the population of the Lower Yonge Precinct and a portion of the East Bayfront Precinct from the holding scenario at Dundas Jr. PS and Queen Alexandra MS.

The long-term growth in the area would be accommodated in a holding arrangement because the West Donlands site cannot accommodate any portables.

As described, elementary schools in the downtown are situated on small, constrained sites that do not have the ability to accommodate portables and/or expansions. These schools are also operating at or above their capacity, which doesn't provide opportunities for boundary, grade or program changes that may be available in parts of the City where land is more abundant.

2.0 SCHOOL ENROLMENT AND CAPACITY OVERVIEW

School Name	Current Utilization	Distance to Nearest School	School Summary
Dundas Jr. PS / Queen Alexandra MS	100% (Dundas Jr. PS) 100% (Queen Alexandra MS)	3.2 km (Block 9)	<p>In 2015 a holding strategy was implemented whereby new development along the City's Central Waterfront was assigned to Dundas Jr. PS (JK-5) and Queen Alexandra MS (6-8). These two schools are situated on the same site, located east of the Don Valley Parkway at the southeast corner of Broadview Ave. and Dundas St. E. The Dundas Jr. PS / Queen Alexandra MS site is approximately 3.2 km from the West Donlands Block 9 site.</p> <p>This holding strategy was required due to the inability of elementary schools within the downtown to accommodate these new developments. Further details on the constraints of existing elementary schools and sites in the downtown are provided within this business case.</p> <p>The inclusion of the Central Waterfront area into the school's projection results in an unsustainable long-term scenario whereby up to 16 portables may be required on the site. This is clearly not an appropriate accommodation plan for the school, nor is it appropriate for students residing within the new communities emerging along the waterfront.</p> <p>A recent study of the Dundas Jr. PS / Queen Alexandra MS site has determined that only 4 portables can be accommodated before the functionality of the outdoor play area(s) is significantly impacted. Although the site is slightly larger than 9 acres, it accommodates two large school buildings that share a single open green space. The current enrolment of both schools combined is 891 students. The Queen Alexandra MS building also accommodates a small secondary alternative school – SEED. This small alternative school occupies three resource-sized rooms on the second floor of the building. Inclusive of SEED, there are currently 952 students on the site. By 2025, the total enrolment</p>

			<p><i>of all schools on the site is projected to reach 1,438 students – this is an unsustainable level that could not possibly be accommodated. For comparison purposes, this projected enrolment is greater than all but 3 of the Boards 110 secondary schools.</i></p> <p><i>Dundas Jr. PS is projected to reach capacity by 2022 and Queen Alexandra MS in 2025. As new dwellings are constructed and occupied along the Central Waterfront enrolment at Dundas Jr. PS is projected to grow, exceeding its capacity in 2023 when 3 portables are projected.</i></p> <p><i>In the development of the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy document, 2021-30, which will be presented to Trustees for approval, a new study to determine alternative interim holding arrangements for new communities along the waterfront will be reflected. This study recognizes the inability of the Dundas Jr. PS / Queen Alexandra MS site to accommodate students beyond the 3-5 year timeline.</i></p>
Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS	77%	1.1km	<p><i>Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS is located approximately 1.1km from the Block 9 site and situated on the Esplanade between Parliament St. and Sherbourne St. Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS is situated on a very small 2.3 acre site that is fully integrated into a mixed-use development. The school was constructed in 1992.</i></p> <p><i>The built form surrounding the school has resulted in a highly constrained site that cannot accommodate any portables and/or expansion. The nature of the building does not allow for any expansion to accommodate additional students. The building is flanked by the St. Lawrence Community Centre to the west and a mixed-use development (retail at grade, residential above) to the east. Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS does not have any greenspace/playfield and must use David Crombie Park, situated on the south side of The Esplanade for this purpose.</i></p> <p><i>Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS is currently 77% utilized with 328 students. Over the mid to long-term enrolment is projected to grow at the school, reaching 101% utilization in 2025 with 433 students. Enrolment growth in the area is attributed to an increase in the school-aged population within the attendance area, along with the occupancy of new residential development projects scattered throughout the attendance area.</i></p> <p><i>Given the constraints on the site and the projected enrolment growth within the school's attendance area, there is absolutely no opportunity to accommodate any additional students from new developments along the City's waterfront. It was for these reasons that back in 2015 the holding arrangement at Dundas Jr. PS and Queen Alexandra MS was approved.</i></p>
Downtown Alternative School	65%	1.7km	<p><i>Downtown Alternative School is a small elementary alternative school situated within a mixed-use development that is shared with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation and the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The school is located at the southeast corner of Jarvis St. and The Esplanade, in the same neighbourhood as Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS.</i></p> <p><i>Downtown Alternative school serves 124 students in JK to Grade 6, most of who reside within the immediate area – the attendance area for Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS. In 2020, slightly over half of the students (56%) resided within the Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS attendance area. This ironically provides for somewhat of mitigation against overutilization at Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS, which is a benefit to long-term accommodation planning in the area. The school has a small capacity of 190 pupil places and is currently operating at 65% utilization.</i></p>

			<p><i>A study has been identified in the Board's Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy to expand the grades of Downtown Alternative School from JK-6 to JK-8. This purpose of the study is to ensure that students are offered a continuation into the intermediate grades without needing to change schools. Given the location of Downtown Alternative School and the fact that many of the students reside in the attendance area of Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS, many students will end up back at that school for the intermediate grades.</i></p> <p><i>As described, the growth projected for Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS is becoming a growing concern. The ability of Downtown Alternative School to expand its grades helps to mitigate further enrolment growth at Market Lane Jr. & Sr. PS in the intermediate grades. A preliminary model for an expansion at Downtown Alternative School to a JK-8 program suggests that enrolment could increase to slightly above 150 students, leaving the school operating at 80% utilization.</i></p> <p><i>Enrolment intake in junior kindergarten at Downtown Alternative School is carefully controlled each year to ensure that the number of teachers allocated to the school aligns with the number of classrooms available. Due to the inability to add portables expand, an unanticipated increase in the number of teachers to the school in any given year will not be manageable.</i></p>
Nelson Mandela Park PS	52%	1.2km	<p><i>Nelson Mandela PS is situated within the Regent Park neighbourhood, which is undergoing a massive redevelopment initiative that began construction in 2005.</i></p> <p><i>There are no addresses within the Lower Yonge Precinct, East Bayfront or Keating Precincts that are within walking distance to Nelson Mandela Park PS and any student assigned to the school from the area would require bussing.</i></p> <p><i>Nelson Mandela PS was constructed in 1915 with subsequent additions in 1947 and 1957. To support the redevelopment of Regent Park and the additional population being added to the community through the construction of new market units, the building underwent a deep retrofit in 2010. Funding for the deep retrofit was provided through the Prohibitive to Repair and Energy Efficiency programs. The school also supported the consolidation of Regent Park/Duke of York PS, which was closed after a Pupil Accommodation Review and sold to the Toronto Catholic District School Board.</i></p> <p><i>Reopened in 2012, the project was undertaken in partnership with the City of Toronto to improve the entire site, inclusive of a community centre, child care and turf field. The project allowed the school to be 'right-sized' to accommodate the full build-out of the Regent Park revitalization. The site is approximately 3.5 acres and does not provide any opportunity for portables due to the full build-out of the available envelope.</i></p> <p><i>The revitalization of Regent Park began in 2005 and is currently in the third of five phases. Toronto City Council approved the revitalization of Regent Park in 2003. Phase 1 was completed in 2009, Phase 2 in 2018 and Phase 3 is to be completed in 2023. Phase 2 contained much of the community amenities such as a large central park, community and aquatic centre, refurbished Nelson Mandala Park PS and child care centre. Once fully built-out the project will be home to over 12,500 people, having replaced 2,083 affordable housing units, introduced 400 new affordable housing units and 5,400 new market</i></p>

			<p>condominiums for a total of nearly 7,900 units. The project is anticipated to take 20 to 25 years to complete; the full complement of students could be realized by 2031.</p> <p>Enrolment at Nelson Mandela Park PS has fluctuated throughout the course of the project due to the ongoing demolition of affordable housing units and relocation of tenants to other locations around the City. At present the school is 52% utilized with 416 students. Enrolment has steadily increased over the past 4 years; the school was operating at 42% utilization with 328 students in 2016-17. Phases 3, 4 and 5 contain a substantial number of new market units, which is reflected in the long-term projection for the school.</p> <p>Projections suggest that Nelson Mandela Park PS will continue to grow as new residential units within the Regent Park area are constructed and occupied. By 2025 the school is projected to reach 75% utilization with 620 students. The school is projected to reach its capacity shortly thereafter in 2029, with a utilization rate of 103% and 808 students. Although underutilized now, enrolment over the long-term at Nelson Mandela Park PS will need to be monitored to ensure that the capacity of the school is not exceeded by any large margin. As noted, the site is fully built-out and no portables can be accommodated. If enrolment exceeds the capacity of Nelson Mandela Park PS then there are other options that could be explored to balance enrolment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boundary change with Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS 2. Relocation of existing Special Education programs to Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS <p>One significant factor to note is the impact of the pandemic has had on communities like Regent Park, which serve as a home for many new Canadians. Fewer newcomers to Canada in 2020 due to travel restrictions associated with the pandemic resulted in lower enrolment at schools situated communities. Over the long-term, and as immigration levels return to regular levels post-pandemic, enrolment is projected to return to the levels experienced prior to COVID-19.</p> <p>In summary, projections suggest that enrolment at Nelson Mandela Park PS will begin to increase in 2021 as new development projects within Phase 3 become occupied. Long-term projections that reflect the full build-out of the revitalization suggest that the school will be fully occupied by 2029.</p>
Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS	54%	2.0km	<p>Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS is a JK-8 school situated adjacent to Regent Park on the west side of Parliament Street. The school accommodates a small portion of the revitalization area, specifically the northwest corner of Gerrard and Parliament Streets, contained within phases 1, 3 and 4 of the revitalization project.</p> <p>There are no addresses from the emerging communities along the central waterfront that are within walking distance to Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS and any student assigned to the school from the central waterfront area would require bussing.</p> <p>Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS is a vibrant inner-city school representing over 30 different language groups – 68% of the school's population has English as their second language (ESL). Similar to Nelson Mandela Park PS and other inner-city schools, enrolment has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated decrease in immigration into Canada through 2020 and into 2021.</p>

			<p><i>This impact has left the school currently underutilized, but as immigration levels return to normal it can be reasonably expected that enrolment will rebound to levels experienced prior to the pandemic.</i></p> <p><i>Further, the school accommodates a large part of the City's eastern downtown. As a result, there is a significant level of residential development proposed within the attendance area that, over time, will result in enrolment increases that will fill up the school's available capacity. Lord Dufferin Jr. & Sr. PS is currently operating at 54% utilization with 374 students on-site. By 2025 the school is expected to grow to 590 students, resulting in a healthy utilization rate of 85%. The school is projected to remain stable at that level over the long-term.</i></p> <p><i>The school is situated on a 3.7 acre site that has had significant investments to the exterior play areas over the past two decades. The number of portables that can be accommodated on the site is only 2, meaning that there is little space available. Due to the existing landscaping and playscape that exist on the site, even 2 portables placed on this site will greatly affect the area of play on the hard surface. On this small site there is already a truncated baseball diamond and a very small soccer field.</i></p> <p><i>Charitable organizations like the Kids Around the World Organization and the Million Dollar Round Table Foundation have contributed to the improvement of play areas on the site.</i></p>
--	--	--	---

3.0 PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

Part A: School Project Scope

The proposed elementary school on the West Donlands site will be constructed to a capacity of between 455 and 550 pupil places. The preference would be to construct a larger 555 pupil place school on the site but the constraints that exist may necessitate a smaller 455pp school. The constraints of the site will be described within Part C of this business case.

The proposed 455 pupil place JK to Grade 8 school will include:

- 3 Full Day Kindergarten Classrooms
- 14 Regular Classrooms
- 1 Art Room
- 1 Science Room
- 1 Special Education Classroom
- 1 Instrumental Music Room
- Unloaded Resource and Seminar/Meeting Rooms
- Learning Commons
- Double gymnasium and Stage
- Operational spaces as per Ministry Space Benchmarks

The benchmark cost of a 455pp elementary school in this location is \$10.6M.

The future school will require access to the adjacent city park, Corktown Common, to provide the green space necessary for student programming. There is a .5-acre area of the park that abuts the Block 9 site that would be utilized for this purpose, subject to a shared-use agreement being enacted with the City.

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**

The West Donlands site is small and highly constrained. The site does not have the ability to support any additional infrastructure or partners. This has been communicated to Children's Services staff at the City of Toronto. The City has indicated that they will be able to secure childcare in the area through the funds generated by Section 37 of the Planning Act.

Part C: Site Selection and Acquisition

Does the school board already own a site for the requested project? Yes

Will the school board be seeking additional ministry funding for any unique site costs? Yes

The proposed elementary school on the West Donlands site will be constructed to a capacity of between 455 and 550 pupil places. The size and location of the Block 9 site presents a number of challenges that will complicate the construction of the future school, including:

- Crash barrier along the south property line
- Unique site development and planting to suit
- Allowance for unforeseen below grade conditions, poor bearing capacity or environmental issues requiring remediation
- Below grade parking
- Structural premium – cantilevered gymnasium (given the limitations of the site, the JK-8 program can be accommodated only by placing the gymnasium on the second floor and cantilevering it over the existing conservation easement on the eastern end of the site)
- Active roof to compensate for lack of play space at grade
- Acoustic isolation of structure – vibration control
- Acoustic treatment – building façade and interior finishes

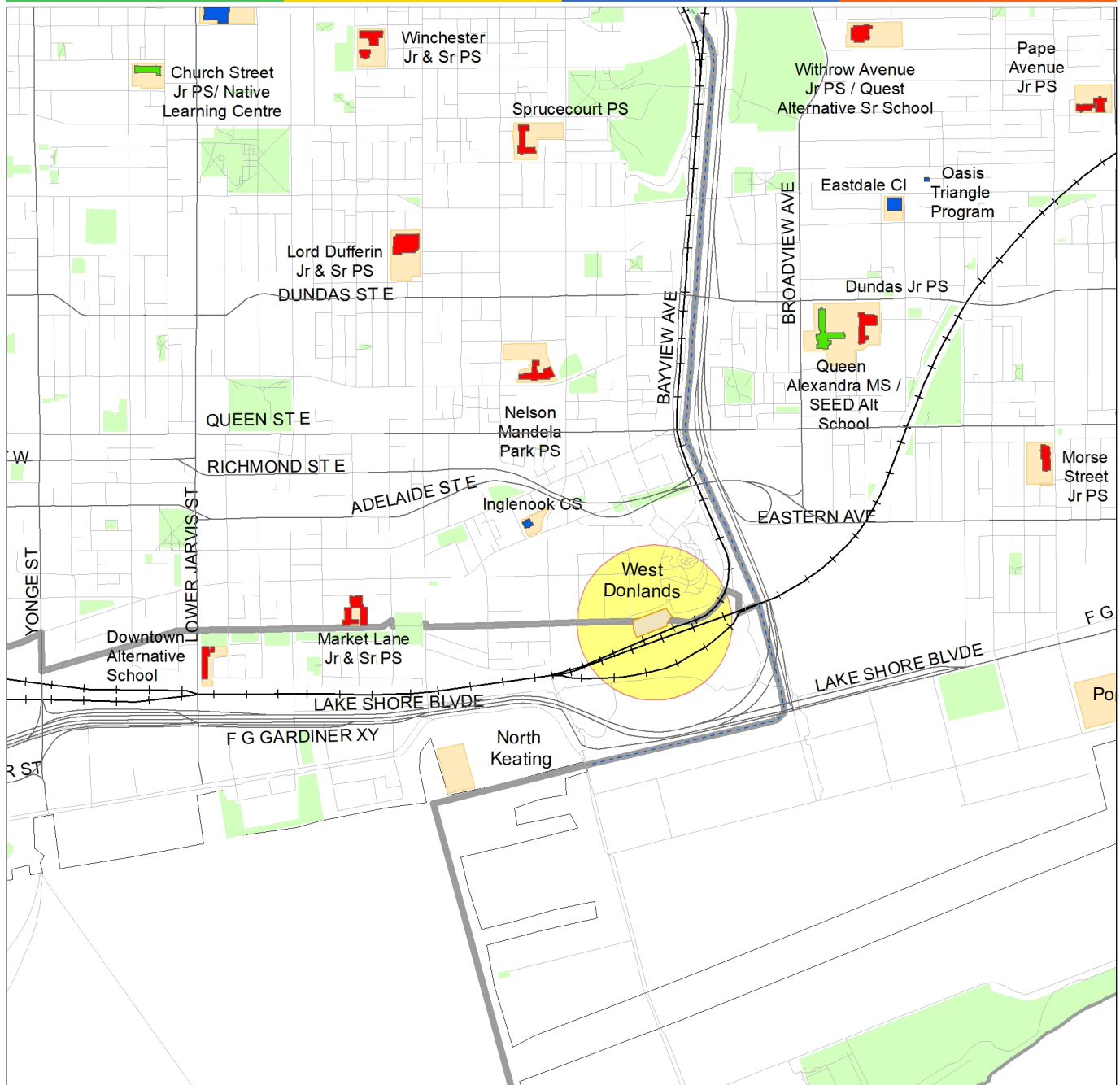
The estimated cost of site remediation and preparation is \$2.7M, however this will need to be revisited and examined as the opportunity to build the school arises.

4.0 PILOT FOR MODULAR CONSTRUCTION BUILD

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 identified in proceeding with a joint project at this location. Further, the site is highly constrained given the size and the additional setback requirements to accommodate the rail line to the south. There would be no opportunity for additional uses on this site.













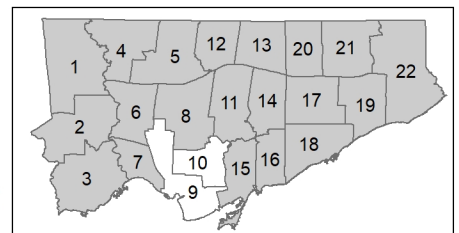
0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km

Produced by:
Planning Division, TDSB
May 2021
Source:
Base Map- Geospatial Competency Centre
Facility - Planning Division, TDSB
Data- City of Toronto

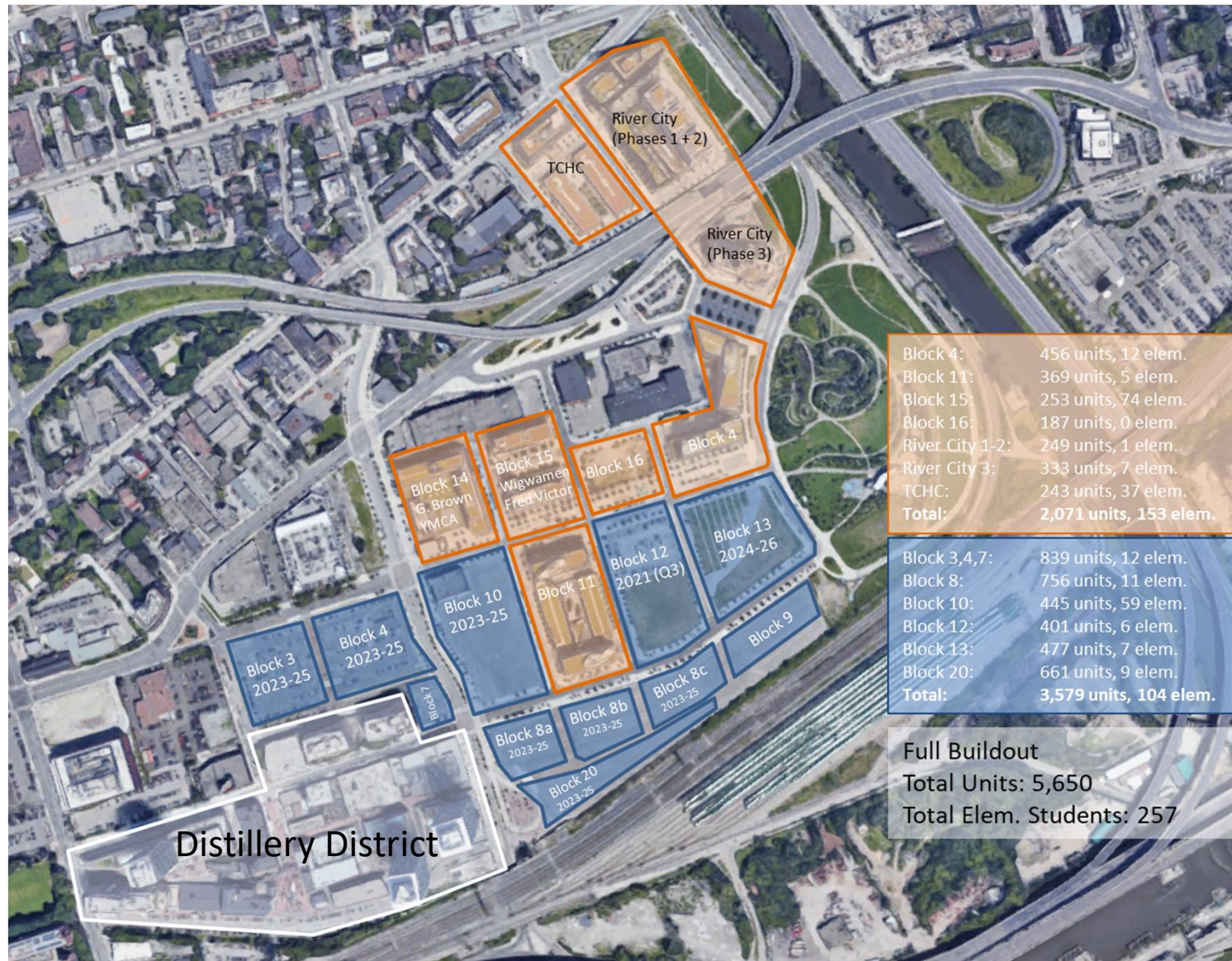


Legend:

 Elementary School	 Major Road
 Secondary School	 Railway
 Elementary & Secondary School	 Utilityline
 Other TDSB Facility	 Waterway
 Site	 Ward Boundary



West Donlands – Overview of Development Blocks, Units and Timing



Development Blocks – Status of construction and timing of future developments