

TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT APPLICATION – WZMH ARCHITECTS INC., ON BEHALF OF 1772175 ONTARIO INC. (TD BANK) - 625 VETERAN'S DRIVE – REDUCED PARKING PROPOSED DATA PROCESSING CENTRE

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: RYAN WINDLE, M.C.I.P., R.P.P., MANAGER OF DEVELOPMENT CONTROL, EXT. 4324

SUBMITTED BY: *for:* M. KALYANIWALLA, M.C.I.P., R.P.P. ACTING DIRECTOR OF PLANNING SERVICES *[Signature]*

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: R. FORWARD, MBA, M.Sc., P. ENG. GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE *[Signature]*

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: JON M. BABULIC, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER *[Signature]*

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Zoning By-law Amendment Application submitted by WZMH Architects Inc., on behalf of 1772175 Ontario Inc. for the re-zoning of lands known municipally as 625 Veteran's Drive from General Industrial (EM4) to General Industrial (EM4) (Special) be approved (D14-1501).
2. That the following Special Provision be referenced in the Zoning By-law for the subject property:
 - a. That the minimum number of on-site parking spaces required be 83 spaces (79 spaces with 4 Barrier Free Spaces) based on a maximum office component of 2500 m² for a Data Processing Centre.

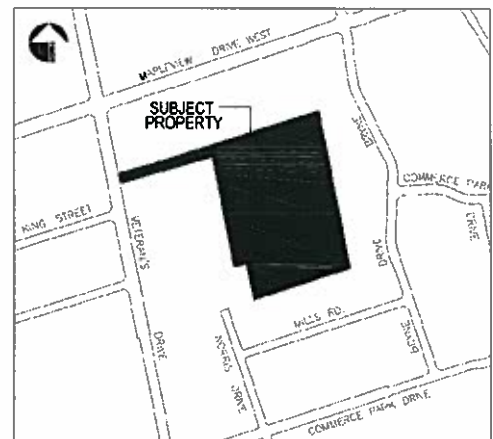
PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Purpose

3. The purpose of this report is to consider an application for a Site Specific Zone Amendment to permit a reduction in the on-site parking spaces to accommodate the use of the subject property for a Data Processing Centre. The proposed Site Plan illustrating the site layout and the parking configuration is attached as **Appendix A**.

Location

4. The subject property is located on the east side of Veteran's Drive just south of Mapleview Drive West. The property has frontage on Veteran's Drive Street and an area of approximately 16ha (40ac) and is known municipally as 625 Veteran's Drive.



Existing Policy

5. The subject property is considered to be designated General Industrial within the City's Official Plan and is zoned General Industrial (EM4) in accordance with Zoning By-law 85-95 and 2009-141.

Surrounding Land Uses

6. The subject property is surrounded by the following land uses:

North: Existing commercial uses zoned General Commercial (C4) and Service Industrial (EM3).

South: Vacant service industrial subdivision zoned Service Industrial (EM3).

East: Existing commercial and service industrial development zoned General Commercial (C4) and Service Industrial (EM3).

West: 2 vacant parcels and 1 parcel occupied by a single detached dwelling zoned General Industrial (EM4).

Public Meeting

7. In accordance with the Planning Act, a Public Meeting was held on February 14, 2011.
8. There were no comments/concerns received from the public at the meeting.

ANALYSIS

9. The applicant/owner is proposing to construct a 16,811 m² (approx. 181,000 sf.), 1-storey Data Processing Centre on the subject lands. Parking for this use, as stipulated in the Zoning By-law, is to be provided at a rate of 1 space per 30m² of Gross Floor Area of the proposed building. Based on a Gross Floor of 7,871m², which includes 1) office space, 2) rooms that contain mechanical and electrical equipment (Central Utility Plant), 3) large open building spaces that contain computer equipment located in racks and 4) access corridors within the building, the total number of required on-site parking spaces is 263 spaces. The applicant/owner is proposing to construct a total of 83 parking spaces (79 spaces with 4 Barrier Free Spaces) as illustrated on Site Plan attached as **Appendix A**.
10. The applicant/owner has indicated that the majority of the building is comprised of a Central Utility Plant, Data Halls and Corridors, none of which generate a demand for parking spaces. This area represents a total of 15,224m² (approx. 164,000sf) or approximately 91% of the building space. The associated office space, which would be the demand driver for parking, totals 1,587m² (approx. 17,000sf) or approximately 9% of the building space. Using the 1 space per 30m² of GFA standard the required parking for just the office space would be 53 spaces. The applicant/owner is proposing to provide 83 spaces.
11. Policy 4.4.1 of the Official Plan states that a goal for industrial areas is *to ensure that the policies and standards pertaining to the development of industrial land are sufficiently flexible to accommodate the changing and diverse needs of industry while ensuring that industrial development occurs in an environmentally sensitive manner*. Given the new industrial economy and the City of Barrie's focus on attracting technology based business, Data Processing Centres are a desirable industrial land use. In staff's opinion, applying the 1 space/30m² of GFA to the entire building area is not appropriate given that the majority of the building would be used essentially for warehousing of utility and computer equipment. The proposed zone amendment will provide the flexibility to accommodate the data centre given the nature of the use and the

minimal demand for parking. The reduced amount of paved parking will also minimize the impact of the development on the forested area located to the south of the proposed building.

12. Staff do not anticipate any negative impacts on adjacent properties from the reduction in parking. The site is self contained and the owner/applicant has indicated that the proposed parking is sufficient to accommodate their needs. Notwithstanding, staff recommend that the reduction in parking be limited to a maximum of 2500 m² of office space for a data processing centre, as this equates to required parking of 83 spaces. This will ensure that if the office use is expanded or the property is redeveloped for other uses, the parking standards at the time of development are adhered to.
13. Staff have reviewed the development plan through the Site Plan approval process and as such staff are amenable to the site layout and the proposed parking. The plans have been finalized and are currently being circulated for final staff sign-off. The Site Plan Agreement has been prepared and is currently being reviewed by the City and the owner/applicant. It should be noted that the owner/applicant has illustrated on their site plan that the required parking could theoretically be provided on site, however, as indicated above, the nature of the use is such that the demand for parking is significantly lower than required in the Zoning By-law.
14. It should be noted that Planning staff are currently working on a report that reviews the parking standard for Data Processing Centres to determine a standard that more realistically captures the need for parking for future data centres that may locate in Barrie. This review is needed given the fact that significant portions of data centres consist of equipment storage or "white space" that does not create demand for parking. Staff anticipate reporting to General Committee with a recommendation in approximately 1-2 months.

Summary

15. In summary, the proposed reduction in required parking is appropriate given the nature of the use. The proposed parking would be sufficient to accommodate the demand generated from the office uses, which comprise only a small portion of the building. In staff's opinion, applying the 1 space/30m² of GFA to the entire building area is not appropriate given that the majority of the building would be used essentially for warehousing space. The zone amendment will provide the flexibility to accommodate a desirable industrial land use which is supported by the goals of the Official Plan. The Site Plan approval process will ensure the site (including parking) is developed efficiently and in attractive manner.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

16. Limiting the number of constructed parking spaces and locating the parking area on the northern portion of the site allows for preservation of a significant treed area on the southern portion of the subject property.

ALTERNATIVES

17. There is one option available to General Committee in regard to this report:

Alternative 1 That the requested Site Specific Zoning By-law Amendment to reduce the number of required on-site parking spaces be denied.

This alternative is not recommended as in staff's opinion, the proposed parking is sufficient given the nature of the use of the property. The approved zone amendment will allow the applicant/owner to finalize their Site Plan approval and obtain final building permits for a significant economic development project within the City of Barrie.

FINANCIAL

18. There are no direct financial implications for the Corporation resulting from the proposed recommendation to reduce on-site parking. However, this is a significant economic development project with a construction value of approximately \$85 million. Based on the size of the proposed building, approximately \$330,000 in property taxes per year would be generated once the facility is constructed.
19. The owner/applicant would be responsible for any costs arising from the development of the project in accordance with the Site Plan Agreement.

LINKAGE TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

20. The 2010-2014 Council's Strategic Priorities have not been approved as of the time of writing of this report. However, one of the proposed goals is to direct and manage Economic Development, which includes attracting and promoting sector clustering. Data Centres are an emerging sector for Barrie whereby two major facilities have located in Barrie with potential for future similar facilities.

Attachment: Appendix A – Site Plan

Site Plan

