

Sheridan Park update

# BUSINESS REFRESHER

By Edward LaRusic

A new master plan for the Sheridan Park Corporate Centre seeks to modernize land use stuck in the past to better reflect current business models.

The new master plan by **Urban Strategies Inc.** identifies amendments and other actions the city could take to help revitalize the 138 ha. corporate centre in southwestern Mississauga, one of the earliest campus-style research parks in North America.

“Over the last few years if you’ve driven by and you weren’t familiar with Sheridan Park, you would think that it could be an unused campground. It is a really neglected site,” said Ward 2 councillor **Karen Ras**.

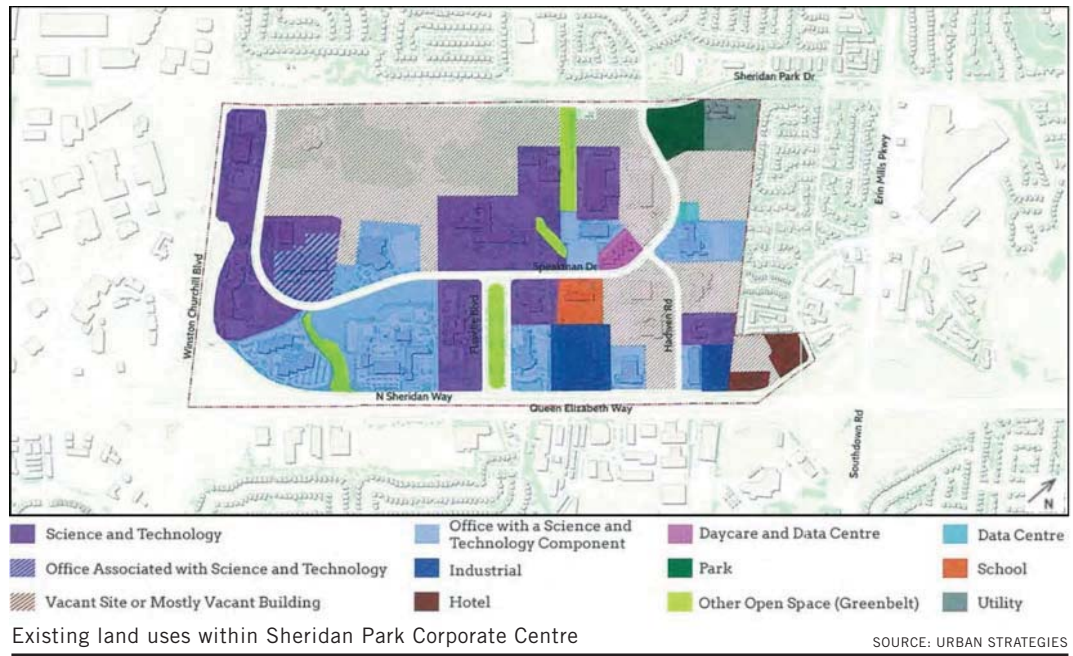
Ras said the current planning framework was the result of a very different vision for Sheridan Park than one could imagine today.

“This area was created back in the 1960s, and there was fairly restrictive zoning placed on it at the time. The idea was to foster a science and technology park. At the time, 70 per cent of a company’s core business had to be related to [research and development], with the remaining 30 per cent being office-type work. As the years went by, company business models didn’t quite operate that way. They didn’t separate their manufacturing from their research and head office. So they were really limited as to what they could put at the park.”

Planning & Building Department director **Lesley Pavan** said there have been few applications for new developments within the corporate centre over the last few years.

“To quote Urban Strategies, it’s high land vacancy and low employment density,” said Pavan. “We’re looking to intensifying it a little bit while still maintaining the character.”

A 2008 employment land review study by **Hemson Consulting Ltd.** identified the area as having 5,800 jobs, about



21 jobs per hectare, well below the city average of 38 jobs per hectare.

The master plan recommends increasing the permitted uses to allow additional office space—even office space unrelated to science and technology uses—accessory manufacturing and commercial uses. The plan also recommends increasing the floor space index from 0.4 to 0.6 and capitalizing on the existing green space to provide better pedestrian linkages.

Ras said the recommendations in the master plan would “flip” the model from one where research and development dominates to one that better reflects how businesses operate today.

“When new companies can come in and increase densities in some areas, it will breathe new life into Ward 2 and Mississauga.”

Pavan said the master plan is currently being circulated to landowners, businesses and nearby ratepayer groups for comment. From there, staff will draft official plan and zoning by-law amendments to implement the master plan, with a statutory public meeting for those amendments in the spring.

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