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GOLDEN MILE SECONDARY PLAN STUDY Alternatives Report

January 28, 2019



GOLDEN MILE SECONDARY PLAN STUDY

ALTERNATIVES REPORT

VERSION CONTROL

Version:

3

Reviewed by:

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City of Toronto

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Cover photo:

Golden Mile (Eglinton Avenue East & Victoria Park Avenue), 1969 City of Toronto Archives



Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION (Section 1)

SvN was retained by the City of Toronto, Scarborough Community Planning to undertake a Secondary Plan Study (GMSP Study) for the Golden Mile. The objective of the GMSP Study is to develop a vision and framework for a complete community for the historic Golden Mile in Scarborough. The vision and comprehensive planning framework will form the foundation for a Secondary Plan, Urban Design Guidelines, and other planning tools for the Golden Mile area which supports both existing and future employment, mixed use and residential uses in the area.

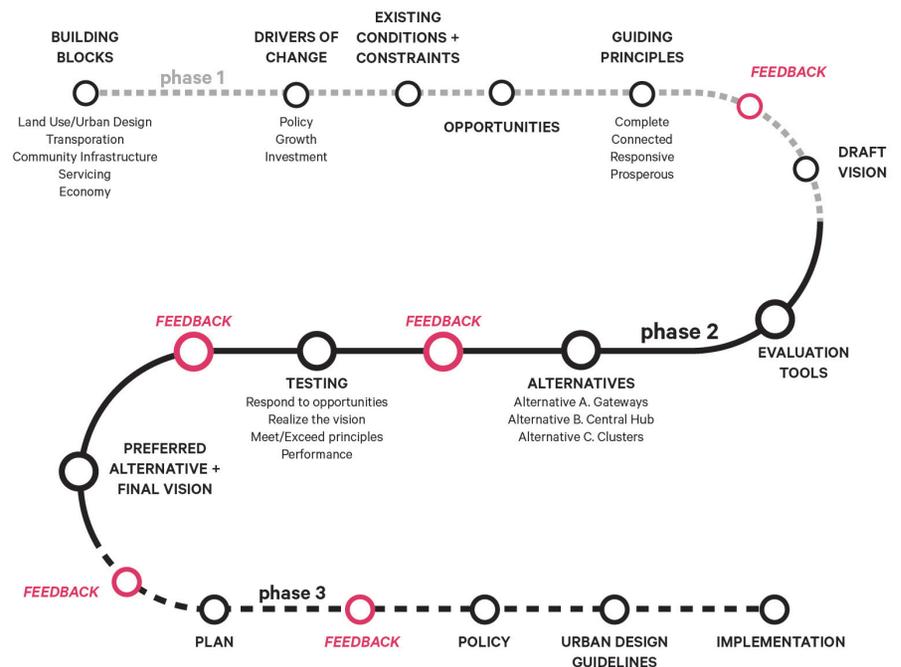
The GMSP Study is being conducted over three phases as follows:

- **PHASE 1:** Background Analysis, Consultation and Visioning which involves Study Commencement (including municipal EA component), Public Outreach, Opportunity and Constraint Analysis and Visioning;
- **PHASE 2:** Design Analysis and Alternative Solutions involving identification, analysis and testing of design alternatives, selection of a preferred alternative and public outreach of the same (according to Municipal Class EA requirements); and
- **PHASE 3:** Final Design and Plan Development involving refinement of the preferred alternative, preparation of the final design and plan and completion of the Final Secondary Plan Report.

Phase 1 has been completed and the findings can be found in the Golden Mile Secondary Plan Study Background Report. This report focuses on Phase 2, during which a series of design alternatives were developed, tested and presented to stakeholders and members of the public. The technical assessment of the alternatives combined with feedback from the stakeholders and members of the public informed the development of a draft preferred alternative that will be used as the basis for developing a Final Design and Plan in Phase 3 of the GMSP Study.

This Report is organized into the following sections:

- **SECTION 1:** Introduction which provides an overview of the Study purpose, process and Study Area.
- **SECTION 2:** Emerging Networks which details the emerging street and block and parks and open space networks that were used as a consistent base for the three development alternatives.
- **SECTION 3:** Three Development Alternatives which details the three Development Alternatives that offered three different approaches to intensification within the GMSP Study Area through different arrangements of land use and built form.



| Study Process

Phase 2 involved a 4-step process to develop the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- **STEP 1:** Using the Vision and Guiding Principles developed in Phase 1 as a key input, three Initial Alternatives were developed that expressed conceptual connections, open spaces and distributions of density. The Initial Alternatives were used as a starting point to begin engaging stakeholders on possible concentrations of density and high-level transportation options.
- **STEP 2:** The Initial Alternatives were used to inform the development of Street and Block Network Alternatives and Parks and Open Space Network Alternatives. These Network Alternatives were assessed through a high-level urban design/planning and transportation evaluation to select Emerging Preferred Network Alternatives. The analysis was able to test relative performance of the Street and Block Network Alternatives to confirm the need for high-level transportation network changes including the realignment of O'Connor Drive and new east-west connections.
- **STEP 3:** The Emerging Preferred Network Alternatives were then used as a consistent base for the three Development Alternatives. These Development Alternatives explored different distributions of land use and built form, with the resulting densities being tested from an urban design/land use perspective, as well as an additional round of more detailed transportation evaluation. The analysis was able to test relative performance of the Alternatives against the Vision and Guiding Principles using planning, urban design and transportation objectives and indicators.
- **STEP 4:** The evaluation of the Development Alternatives resulted in an Emerging Preferred Alternative. This was then further refined to incorporate consultation feedback and high-performing elements of the various Development Alternatives leading to the Preferred Alternative.

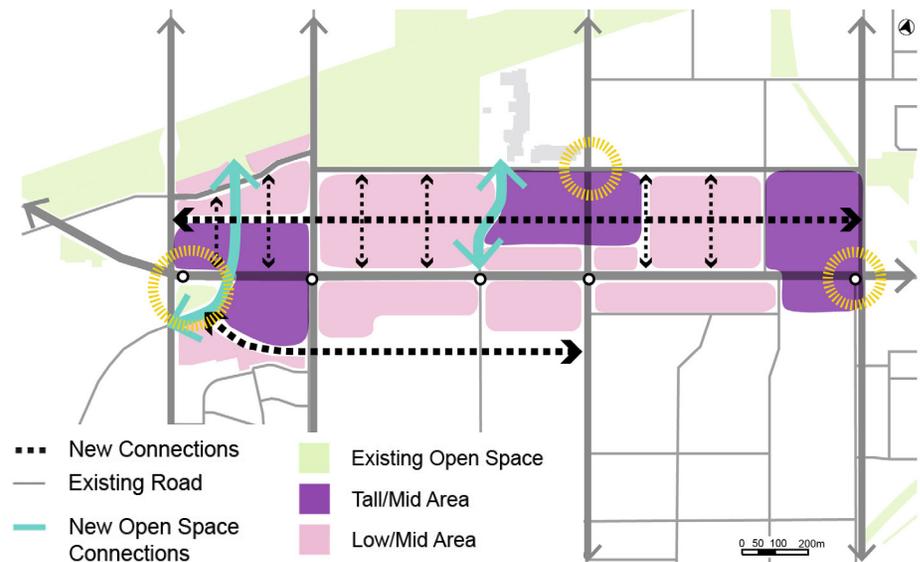
EMERGING NETWORKS (Section 2)

Initial Alternatives

Phase 2 commenced with the preparation of Initial Alternatives that built on the Issues and Opportunities identified in Phase 1. These Initial Alternatives provide three different conceptual approaches to distributing density, new connections and open space throughout the GMSP Study Area.

The Initial Alternatives were then used to provide direction on the development of three Street and Block Network Alternatives and three Parks and Open Space Network Alternatives. A high-level assessment process was undertaken to select an Emerging Preferred Street and Block Network and an Emerging Preferred Parks and Open Space Network.

Initial Alternative A focused on creating gateways of higher densities within the GMSP Study Area at its western edge at Eglinton Avenue East



| Initial Alternative A

and Victoria Park Avenue, in the centre at Ashtonbee Road and Warden Avenue, and at the eastern edge at Eglinton Avenue East and Birchmount Road. Initial Alternative B focused higher densities in a central hub from west of Hakimi Avenue to east of Warden Avenue. Initial Alternative C focused higher densities in three clusters throughout the GMSP Study Area at its western edge between Victoria Park Avenue and Pharmacy Avenue, immediately south of Ashtonbee Reservoir Park between Pharmacy Avenue and Hakimi Avenue, and just east of Warden Avenue.

Street and Block Network Alternatives

Three main factors were considered in refining the Initial Alternatives into Street and Block Network Alternatives, including:

1. improving movement for all modes of travel throughout the GMSP Study Area;
2. providing flexible block sizes; and
3. the location of existing property lines and buildings.

The three Street and Block Network Alternatives each featured varying degrees of change to existing conditions to respond to these three factors, with all three featuring a continuous east-west connection north of Eglinton Avenue East between Victoria Park Avenue and Birchmount Road.

- Street and Block Network Alternative 1 featured minimal changes to existing conditions.
- Street and Block Network Alternative 2 featured a moderate level of change to existing conditions, including an east-west connection south of Eglinton Avenue East that realigns and extends O'Connor Drive east of Victoria Park to Warden Avenue.

- Street and Block Network Alternative 3 featured a relatively substantial level of change to existing conditions, including a continuous east-west connection south of Eglinton Avenue East between Victoria Park Avenue and Birchmount Road (with a jog at Warden Avenue) and a realignment of O'Connor Drive and extension of Bartley Drive west of Victoria Park Avenue.



Alternative 2 (top) and 3 (bottom) of the three Street and Block Network Alternatives

A preliminary transportation analysis of the three Street and Block Network Alternatives was undertaken to select an Emerging Preferred Street and Block Network. Based on the preliminary transportation analysis, Alternative 1 was screened out and Alternatives 2 and 3 were carried forward for further consideration from a land use and built form perspective. These results were primarily driven by three key factors:

- The intersection realignment in Alternative 3 at Pharmacy Avenue, Craigton Drive and Ashtonbee Road would help off load internal traffic within the GMSP Study Area as well as on Eglinton Avenue.
- The realignment of O'Connor Drive at Victoria Park Avenue and Eglinton Square Boulevard at Eglinton Avenue East in Alternatives 2 and 3 shifts congestion away from Eglinton Avenue East onto Victoria Park Avenue. With this realignment however, the new east-west road east of Victoria Park Avenue can be constructed with higher capacity (four lanes) to accommodate the demand and reduce the Victoria Park Avenue congestion.
- The increased distance between O'Connor Drive and Eglinton Avenue East in Alternative 3 is beneficial for the transportation network as it increases intersection spacing on Victoria Park Avenue.

The land use and built form assessment involved an examination of the two remaining Alternatives in terms of their ability to:

- Provide flexible blocks;
- Minimize impacts with existing buildings; and,
- Take into account property lines to provide a relatively equitable distribution of new public streets between adjacent property owners.

Through this additional layer of analysis, a modified version of Alternative 3 was carried forward as the Emerging Preferred Street and Block Network.

This Alternative provide a greater number of total blocks, a wider variety of block sizes, minimized impacts on existing buildings, and provided a more equitable distribution of new public streets between adjacent property owners than Alternative 2.

Parks and Open Space Network Alternatives

As with the Street and Block Network Alternatives, the Initial Alternatives were used as a starting point for developing the three Parks and Open Space Network Alternatives. Four factors were considered in refining the Initial Alternatives into Parks and Open Space Network Alternatives, including:

1. Connections to and between existing and planned open space assets;
2. Parkland dedications rates;
3. Nine emerging principles for parks and open space in the Golden Mile; and,
4. Fourteen potential big moves for parks and open space in the Golden Mile.

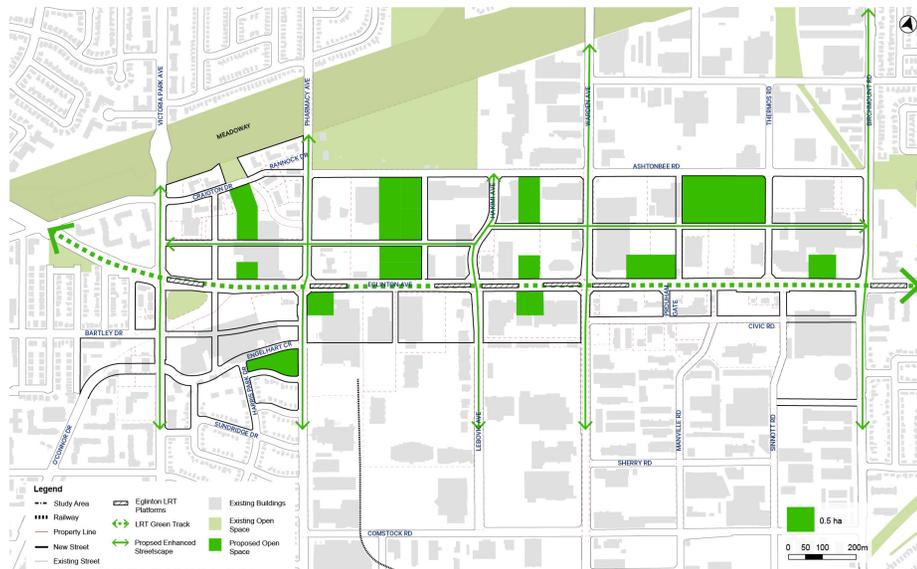
Together, these four factors led to the development of three Parks and Open Space Network Alternatives that would provide between 10-13 hectares of new parkland. All three of these Alternatives provided for:

- Large parks as community focal points for new residential districts;
- Connections from Eglinton Avenue East to Ashtonbee Park; and,
- East-west connectivity between the large parks through a new east-west street north of Eglinton Avenue East with an enhanced, green boulevard.

These three Alternatives featured the following defining components:

- **ALTERNATIVE A:** smaller Neighbourhood Parks and Parkettes dispersed throughout the GMSP Study Area
- **ALTERNATIVE B:** two Community/large Neighbourhood Parks (Central Park and East Park), supported by smaller Neighbourhood Parks and Parkettes
- **ALTERNATIVE C:** linear Community Park supported by smaller Neighbourhood Parks and Parkettes

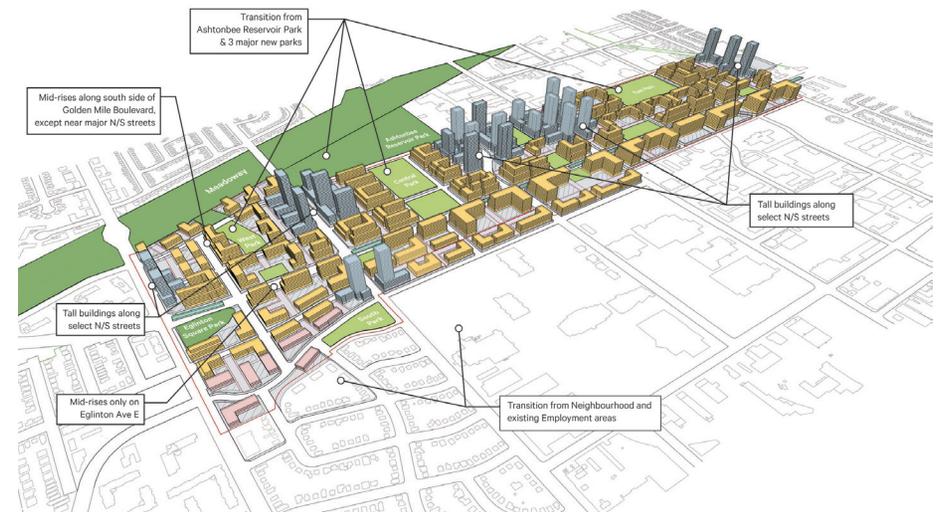
Based on its ability to best achieve the 9 emerging principles and 14 big moves for parks and open space within the Golden Mile, Alternative B was carried forward as the Emerging Preferred Parks and Open Space Network. This Alternative provided for:



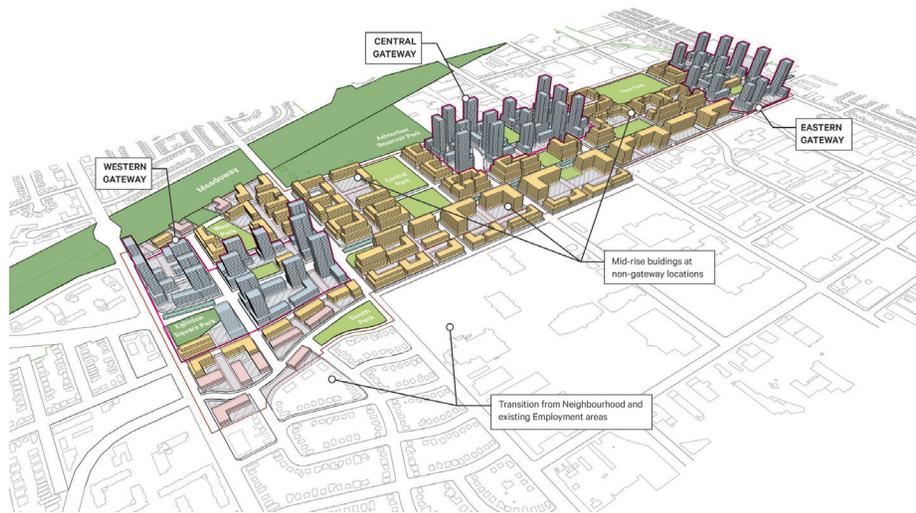
Alternative B of Parks and Open Space Network

- Two large Community Parks in the Central Park and East Park;
- Two significant Neighbourhood Parks in the West Park and South Park; and,
- A string of smaller Neighbourhood Parks and Parkettes across the Study Area.

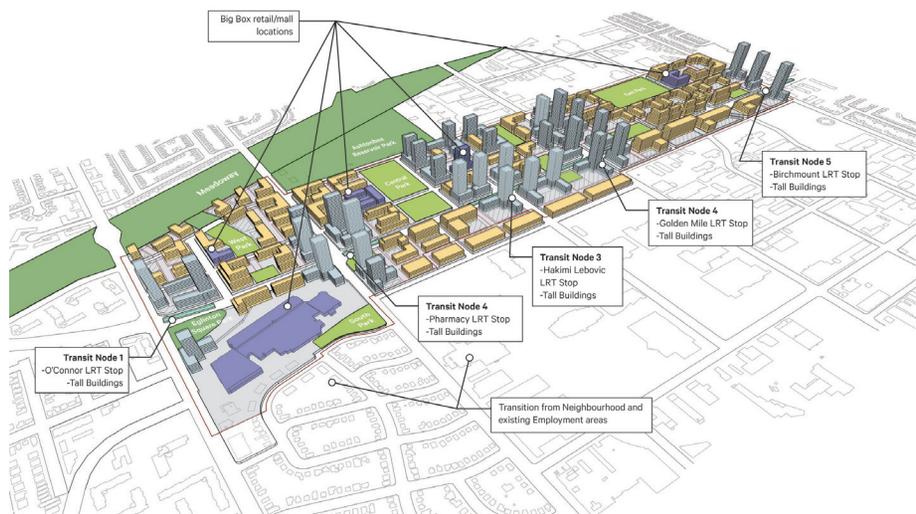
It also provided for strong connections to the Meadoway from Eglinton Avenue East and a frequency of parkland along the potential future east-west street between Eglinton Avenue East and Craigton Drive / Ashtonbee Road.



Development Alternative 1



Development Alternative 2

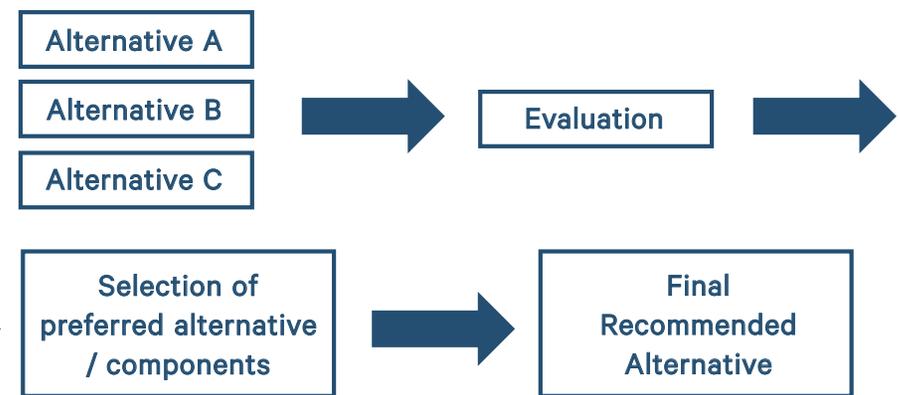


Development Alternative 3

THREE DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES (Section 3)

Following the development of the Emerging Preferred Street and Block Network and the Emerging Preferred Parks and Open Space Network a series of three Development Alternatives were prepared, each devised using different land use and built form strategies. These strategies were informed by four key factors: (1) maintaining existing Official Plan land use designations; (2) exploring the potential for a finer-grain mix of uses in *Mixed Use Areas*; (3) applying built form parameters from existing urban design policies and guidelines contained within the Official Plan, Tall Building Design Guidelines and Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards; and (4) applying potential Golden Mile-specific built form parameters.

A finer-grain mix of uses in *Mixed Use Areas* was explored in all three Development Alternatives through the application of two mixed use categories in the land use strategy of each Development Alternative: Mixed Use –Retail Focus; and Mixed Use – Residential Focus. These two categories both permit residential, office and retail uses, and differ based



Evaluation Process

on the proportion of retail that each contains, with Mixed Use – Retail Focus containing a slightly greater proportion of retail than Mixed Use – Residential Focus.

Development Alternative 1 seeks to concentrate activity and density along Eglinton Avenue East, through both land use and built form. It most closely reflects the clusters density concept expressed in Initial Alternative C. Measured over the entirety of the GMSP Study Area, this Development Alternative would result in a gross Floor Space Index (FSI) of 2.2 and a net FSI of 4.0. It would also result in approximately 450-500 people and jobs combined per hectare.

Development Alternative 2 focuses on creating gateways of activity and density at significant entry points into the GMSP Study Area in the west, east and north ends. It most closely reflects the gateways density concept expressed in Initial Alternative A. Measured over the entirety of the Study Area, this Development Alternative would result in a gross FSI of 2.3 and a net FSI of 4.2. It would also result in approximately 450-500 people and jobs combined per hectare.

Development Alternative 3 uses five transit nodes and a central hub as its organizing elements and locations of greater activity and density. In this way,

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Total Score Across All Four Principles*	33	38	41
*In absence of weighting criteria (eg, transportation)			

| Total Score of Each Alternative

it most closely reflects the central hub density concept expressed in Initial Alternative B. Measured over the entirety of the GMSP Study Area, this Development Alternative would result in a gross FSI of 2.0 and a net FSI of 3.5. It would also result in approximately 400-450 people and jobs combined per hectare.

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES (Section 4)

Following the preparation of the three Development Alternatives and their presentation to members of the public at a Community Consultation Meeting, the three Alternatives were evaluated against a multi-objective evaluation framework based on the GMSP Study’s Guiding Principles. This evaluation resulted in the identification of an Emerging Preferred Development Alternative.

An evaluation framework was prepared to assess the performance of each Development Alternative relative to one another. The framework consists of objectives and indicators that are aligned to each of the four Guiding Principles. Each objective further articulates the goal within its associated principle, and each indicator provides a qualitative or quantitative measure for identifying the level to which the objective is achieved by the Development Alternative. The Development Alternative that best achieves the objective is assigned a score of 3, the second best performing Alternative is assigned a score of 2, and the least well performing Alternative is assigned a score of 1 for that objective. Where all three Alternatives perform equally, a score of 0 is assigned to all three. The scores for each objective are totaled by Guiding Principle, and then across all four principles to produce a total score. Neither the individual objective scores nor the aggregate Guiding Principle scores are weighted.

Based on the aggregate score across all four Guiding Principles, Alternative 3 received the highest total score. This result largely derives from Alternative 3 scoring highest for Guiding Principle 1 Complete Community and Guiding Principle 4 Prosperous Community and being the second highest

scoring Alternative under Guiding Principle 2 Connected Community. Notwithstanding this, Alternative 3 did not perform as well as Alternative 2 under the detailed transportation evaluation and was in fact recommended to be screened out of further consideration, however, due to its superior performance under the land use and urban design-related objectives within nearly all Guiding Principles, and feedback from the Technical Advisory Committee and Local Advisory Committee, it was determined that a combination of Alternatives 2 and 3 should be brought forward as the Emerging Preferred Alternative, to be refined into a Preferred Alternative.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (Section 5)

The Preferred Alternative consists of the following elements:

- Preferred Structure Plan;
- Preferred Alternative Districts;
- Preferred Alternative Land Use Strategy;
- Preferred Alternative Built Form Strategy.

Preferred Structure Plan

There are seven structuring elements that help define the characters of each district and organize land use and built form within in the GMSP Study Area. These structuring elements are as follows:

5. Eglinton Avenue East as a multi-modal transit corridor;
6. Golden Mile Boulevard as a multi-modal street with a consistently green streetscape;
7. A re-aligned and extended O'Connor Drive as a key additional east-west route;

8. Seven major parks including proposed parkland, existing and improved parkland, and planned parkland;
9. Five Transit Nodes;
10. Three Green Nodes;
11. The existing north-south arterial streets with enhanced streetscapes.

Preferred Street and Block Network

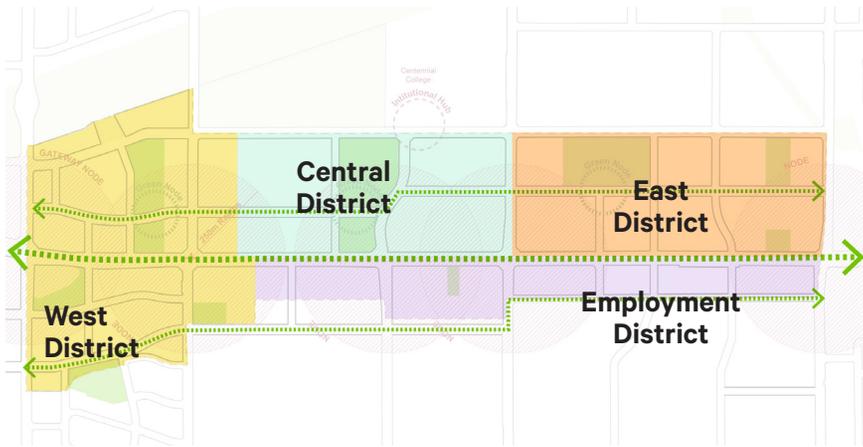
The Preferred Street and Block Network does not differ greatly from the Emerging Street and Block Network, still providing new east-west connections north and south of Eglinton Avenue East and new north-south connections throughout. In addition to new public streets, new fine grain connections are proposed to break up the large blocks even further. These latter connections could be under public or private ownership and of various types including full streets, mews, lanes or connections with no vehicular access.



Preferred Parks and Open Space Network

Preferred Right-of-Way (ROW) Widths

The Preferred Street and Block Network identifies ROW widths for the proposed new and re-aligned public streets (Figure 54). A number of factors were considered in setting these proposed ROW widths, including: (1) the ability to provide wide sidewalks and street trees to achieve safe and comfortable pedestrian space; (2) the ability to provide protected cycling facilities to achieve safe and comfortable space for cyclists; and (3) the number of vehicular lanes required to provide capacity for anticipated traffic volumes.



Four Districts of the Preferred Alternative

These proposed ROW widths will be further studied during the final Phase of the GMSP Study, with conceptual cross sections being developed for typical conditions. The planned ROW widths of all existing public streets will be maintained.

Preferred Parks and Open Space Network

The Preferred Parks and Open Space Network continues the themes and general arrangement of parkland as in the Emerging Preferred Parks and Open Space Network. The revisions were largely driven by a detailed parkland dedication study to understand dedication rates by district. During this study, the area of parkland was calculated based on 20% of net developable area of each mixed use district, excluding existing park areas. Further study of parkland dedication rates by land owner will be undertaken in the final Phase of the GMSP Study and will result in further changes to the arrangement and size of proposed parkland.

The existing and proposed parks and open spaces will be complemented by Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS) throughout the Study Area and will be well connected to one another through direct open space linkages and/or through enhanced green streetscapes. There is also the possibility to collocate schools and other community facilities with parks and open space, with preliminary analysis suggesting that two new elementary schools (one for each school board) will be required and one community centre may be required within the Study Area.

Preferred Cycling Network

The Preferred Alternative adds a cycling network layer to the Preferred Street and Block and Preferred Parks and Open Space Networks. The proposed cycling facilities contained within the Preferred Cycling Network will help increase the number of complete streets within the GMSP Study Area and provide active transportation connections between existing and proposed parks and open space within the GMSP Study Area and beyond. The Preferred Cycling Network will be further refined following further transportation network analysis in the final Phase of the GMSP Study.

Preferred Alternative Districts

There is the opportunity to create several distinctive areas within its boundaries to better inform land use, built form and public realm within the Preferred Alternative and ultimately within the final design and plan. This is achieved through the identification of four districts, each with its own distinct character:

- **West District:** a commercial gateway with two major parks
- **Central District:** the social and cultural hub of the Golden Mile
- **East District:** a new residential community
- **Employment District:** preserved and enhanced employment lands

From west to east, various elements of district character change: primary land use gradually shifts from a grade related retail focus to residential focus; public realm changes from urban to soft landscape; and parks and open space transforms from more urban and gateway features to recreational.

Preferred Alternative Land Use Strategy

The general land use strategy in the Preferred Alternative is to concentrate Mixed Use – Retail Focus along Eglinton Avenue East and portions of major north-south streets. Proposed blocks without direct frontage onto these streets would have a Mixed Use – Residential Focus. The Preferred Alternative also provides a third finer-grain mixed use category with the Mixed Use – Retail/ Cultural / Social Focus. This category, applied to the east side of Hakimi Avenue, would encourage cultural and institutional uses in addition to retail, office and residential to help drive the character of the Central District and reflect the use provided by Centennial College to the north.

Primary and secondary active frontages are also identified in the Preferred Alternative Land Use Strategy. These frontage categories provide for a

hierarchy of activity at grade, with primary active frontages containing a greater consistency and number of fine grain active uses at grade and secondary active frontages containing a less consistent and lower number of fine grain active uses at grade. For example, a Primary Active Frontage could consist of a continuous string of publicly-accessible spaces such as retail units at grade with primary entrances and glazing oriented to the street. A Secondary Active Frontage could consist of a less continuous presence of publicly-accessible spaces, or a more private spaces that still have a strong street-related presence, such as townhouse units integrated into the first several floors of a larger multi-storey building.

Primary Active Frontages are generally aligned with lands that are Mixed Use - Retail Focus with frontages along Eglinton Avenue East and major north-south streets while Secondary Active Frontages are associated with both Mixed Use – Retail Focus and Mixed Use – Residential Focus lands on the north and south side of the new Golden Mile Boulevard and on the east and west side of existing north-south arterials.

Preferred Alternative Built Form Strategy

The Preferred Alternative achieves a mix of building types across the Study Area (Figure 63 / Figure 64). Tall buildings are mainly located within the Transit Nodes as these areas have excellent access to the ECLRT stations. In some cases, tall buildings are located outside of these Transit Nodes where there is a need to redeploy density (e.g. where a significant amount of park space is located within a Transit Node).

Mid-rise buildings are present throughout the Study Area and especially as follows:

- within the Employment District on the south side of Eglinton Avenue East to provide for optimal sunlight conditions on the north side of the street.

- in areas outside of the Transit Nodes.
- Around existing and future parks to promote variety of built forms and enhanced visual interests and porosity around the parks.
- Along portions of the north side of Eglinton Avenue East to promote a balanced built form condition, avoiding all tall buildings on the north side and all mid-rises on the south side.
- Along portions of Golden Mile Boulevard, to enhance the character of the street as a multi-modal, consistently green street that connects all of the large parks.
- Along Craigton Drive / Rannock Street to provide a transition to the future Meadoway.

Low-rise buildings are located in areas directly adjacent to existing *Neighbourhoods* to provide for a transition in scale and minimize overlook.

Measured over the entirety of the GMSP Study Area, the Preferred Alternative would result in a gross FSI of 2.2 and a net FSI of 4.0. It would also result in approximately 450-500 people and jobs combined per hectare.

NEXT STEPS (Section 6)

The Preferred Alternative will continue to be refined during the final Phase of the GMSP Study. This final Phase will involve the development of a final design and plan and completion of the Final Secondary Plan Report. The final design and plan will contain all of the components of the Preferred Alternative, with potential refinements to the following elements:

- The overall level of density
- The distribution of density
- The location of tall buildings

- The location and alignment of proposed public streets
- The size and location of proposed parks

These refinements will be informed by the conclusion of several technical studies, including the Transportation Master Plan (TMP), Municipal Servicing Plan (MSP), and Community Infrastructure Strategy (CIS). The TMP in particular will identify the transportation infrastructure required to support the Preferred Alternative and will satisfy Phases 1 and 2 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

The final design and plan will also be supported by a final report that will contain:

- Land use recommendations;
- A streets and blocks strategy;
- A parks, open space and public realm strategy;
- A built form strategy and urban design guidelines;
- A streetscape and pedestrian amenity strategy;
- Summaries of the TMP, MSP and CIS;
- A public art/heritage expression strategy; and,
- An implementation/phasing plan.

A draft of the final design and plan and the supporting recommendations will be shared with the Local Advisory Committee and members of the public through a final Community Consultation Meeting for further suggested refinements prior to being brought forward to Council for endorsement.