

Our Plan Toronto: Employment Area Conversion Requests - Preliminary Assessments Group 2

Date: January 31, 2022

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report provides preliminary assessments for an additional 37 requests to convert lands designated *Core* and *General Employment Areas* to non-employment uses as part of the current Growth Plan 2020 conformity exercise and Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). It also includes 1 preliminary assessment in response to direction from Planning and Housing Committee.

This is the second in a series of reports providing staff's preliminary assessments to be used as the basis of consultation with key stakeholders and the public, including landowners and businesses, to obtain comments and feedback.

Staff will prepare final recommendations for each of the conversion requests for Planning and Housing Committee and Council's consideration as part of a statutory public meeting under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. Planning and Housing Committee authorize the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to use the Preliminary Assessments, attached as Attachment 1 to the report (January 31, 2022) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning as a basis for consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City Planning Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The Official Plan provides a vision for the City grounded in principles that assure a successful and healthy future. A founding principle of the Official Plan is that Toronto's future must be diverse, inclusive and equitable. The provision of employment and economic opportunities across the city is important to planning inclusive and equitable communities.

Employment Areas serve to accommodate a range of businesses including those that offer attainable employment opportunities for people of various education levels and skill sets. The relationship between *Employment Areas* and economic opportunities for visible minority households is also important. Jobs in distribution and in manufacturing and other goods-producing sectors are commonly identified as low-barrier employment opportunities for recent immigrants and other individuals that tend to face challenges related to having their professional certifications recognized along with those individuals where English is not their first language.

DECISION HISTORY

On June 29, 2020, City Council adopted a recommended approach and work plan for the Growth Plan conformity exercise and MCR. To standardize the requirements for conversion requests, City Council authorized the commencement of the MCR on August 4, 2020 and established a deadline of August 3, 2021 for written requests to convert lands designated Core Employment Areas or General Employment Areas.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.PH14.4>

On January 12, 2022, Planning and Housing Committee considered a December 21, 2021 report entitled, "Our Plan Toronto: Employment Area Conversion Requests - Preliminary Assessments Group 1", and authorized the Chief Planner to use the 39 Preliminary Assessments attached to that report as the basis for consultation. Also, Planning and Housing Committee requested the Chief Planner to expand the preliminary review of two conversion requests by including lands in the vicinity of those addresses (60 Paton Road - Conversion request no. 111 and 1265-1289 Lawrence Avenue West - Conversion Request no. 98).

For conversion request number 111, Committee requested the Chief Planner to consider ways in which the City can secure low barrier entry employment as part of any

recommended conversion to ensure that similar employment opportunities and/or training facilities can be accommodated to support affected communities.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH30.5>

At its meeting on January 12, 2022, Planning and Housing Committee considered a report from the Chief Planner (dated December 21, 2021) entitled, Our Plan Toronto: Update on Growth Plan Conformity and Municipal Comprehensive Review (PH30.6). Among other matters, Committee recommended that Council:

1. Request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to exercise his legislative authority under Section 12(3) of the Places to Grow Act to set an alternative timeframe of July 2023 by which the City of Toronto's Official Plan must conform with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

2. If the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing grants the extension, City Council direct the Chief Planner to hold a statutory public meeting under Section 26 of the Planning Act in the first half of 2023 to consider the Municipal Comprehensive Review.

3. Request the Chief Planner to consider advancing Final Recommendation Reports on complete Official Plan Amendment applications that are being considered concurrently with and in the context of the Municipal Comprehensive Review no later than the July 5, 2022 meeting of the Planning and Housing Committee meeting.

Council will consider the Committee recommendations at its meeting on February 2 and 3, 2022. <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH30.6>

COMMENTS

Provincial land use policies and policies of the Official Plan permit the conversion and removal of land designated *Employment Areas* to non-employment uses through a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and where it has been demonstrated that certain criteria are met. The City Planning Division received approximately 140 conversion requests during the year-long conversion request window established by City Council and that closed on August 3, 2021.

Conversion request review process

City Planning and Economic Development and Culture staff are currently reviewing each conversion request. A preliminary assessment will be prepared by staff for each conversion request for consideration by Planning and Housing Committee. The preliminary assessment will form the basis for consultation with stakeholders and the public, including landowners and businesses, to obtain comments and feedback.

Prior to preparing a Final Report for Committee and Council's consideration, staff will assess requests to convert lands designated *Core* and *General Employment Areas* against the conversion policies of the Growth Plan (2020) and the Official Plan. This

includes a consideration of the need for a conversion to either meet the growth forecasts allocated to the City in the Growth Plan (2020) or to mitigate existing and/or potential land use conflicts. As well, staff will consider the impact of a proposed conversion on surrounding lands, including the potential for the conversion to adversely affect the overall viability of an *Employment Area* and the maintenance of a stable operating environment for business and economic activities.

Group 2 Preliminary Assessment Summary

On January 12, 2022, preliminary assessments of the first 39 conversion requests were considered by Planning and Housing Committee. Attachment 1 to this report contains the preliminary assessments of an additional 37 conversion requests ("Group 2"). In summary:

- Six of the 37 conversion requests are located in the Toronto and East York District. As directed by Planning and Housing Committee at its meeting of January 12, 2022, the lands at 640 Lansdowne Avenue have been added as an expansion to Conversion Request No. 111 at 60 Paton Road. The lands are reported as Conversion Request No. 111A.
- Group 2 includes 11 conversion requests in the Etobicoke York District, all of which are seeking residential permissions. Five conversion requests are located in an area west of the Keele St. Clair Study Area and the draft Protected Major Transit Station Area – St. Clair-Old Weston Station. Four conversion requests are for properties located in South Etobicoke and along or in the vicinity of The Queensway.
- Twelve conversion requests are in the Scarborough District, all of which are seeking residential permissions. Five are located near-to Highway 401 interchanges while the other 7 are distributed in other *Employment Areas*.
- There are eight conversion requests in Group 2 in the North York District, all of which are seeking residential permissions. Six are clustered within the northeast quadrant of Don Mills Road and Eglinton Avenue East, with the majority in the vicinity of Wynford Drive. Two requests are located near the Yorkdale Shopping Centre located west of Dufferin Street.

A map showing the location of conversion requests across the City of Toronto is provided in Attachment 2. More detailed maps of each Group 2 conversion request are provided in Attachment 3.

Major Transit Station Areas / Protected Major Transit Station Areas

Several requested conversion sites fall within potential Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) and Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs), for which the delineations and minimum densities are subject to Ministerial approval. Over 50 draft MTSAs and PMTSAs are posted on the Our Plan Toronto interactive engagement tool (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b27b774fe9f04047b14956f689a7762f>) and the

remaining ones will be posted in March 2022 for the basis of consultation. The location of any particular conversion request within a MTSA or PMTSA still requires municipal assessment and does not automatically grant a successful employment conversion, given that the Provincial minimum density targets require that the City plan for people and jobs per hectare. Provincial MTSA/PMTSA policies do not automatically confer residential permissions to employment designated lands. For the requests currently under review, the Growth Plan only allows conversions of employment areas to permit residential uses (and other non-employment uses) through a Municipal Comprehensive Review.

Individual developments within a MTSA or PMTSA are not required to meet the population and employment targets set out by the Province. These minimum targets are a cumulative measure of planned density across the entire delineated area. The MTSA and PMTSA work, together with the Land Needs Assessment, Employment study, and ongoing engagement will all play a role to inform staff's final recommendations on each individual conversion request.

Next Steps

Staff will conduct targeted consultations on the Group 2 Preliminary Assessments to obtain feedback on them prior to bringing forward a Final Report for Committee and Council's consideration. Planning and Economic and Development and Culture staff will continue to review materials for the remaining conversion requests and are expecting to report on a third group of conversion request (preliminary assessments) to the March 25, 2022 meeting of Planning and Housing Committee.

CONTACT

Kerri A. Voumvakis, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City Planning Division, 416-392-8148, Kerri.Voumvakis@toronto.ca

Jeffrey Cantos, Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City Planning Division, 416-397-0244, Jeffrey.Cantos@toronto.ca

Christina Heydorn, Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City Planning Division, 416-397-5616, Christina.Heydorn@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP
Chief Planner and Executive Director
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Preliminary Assessments of *Employment Area* Conversion Requests
(Group 2)

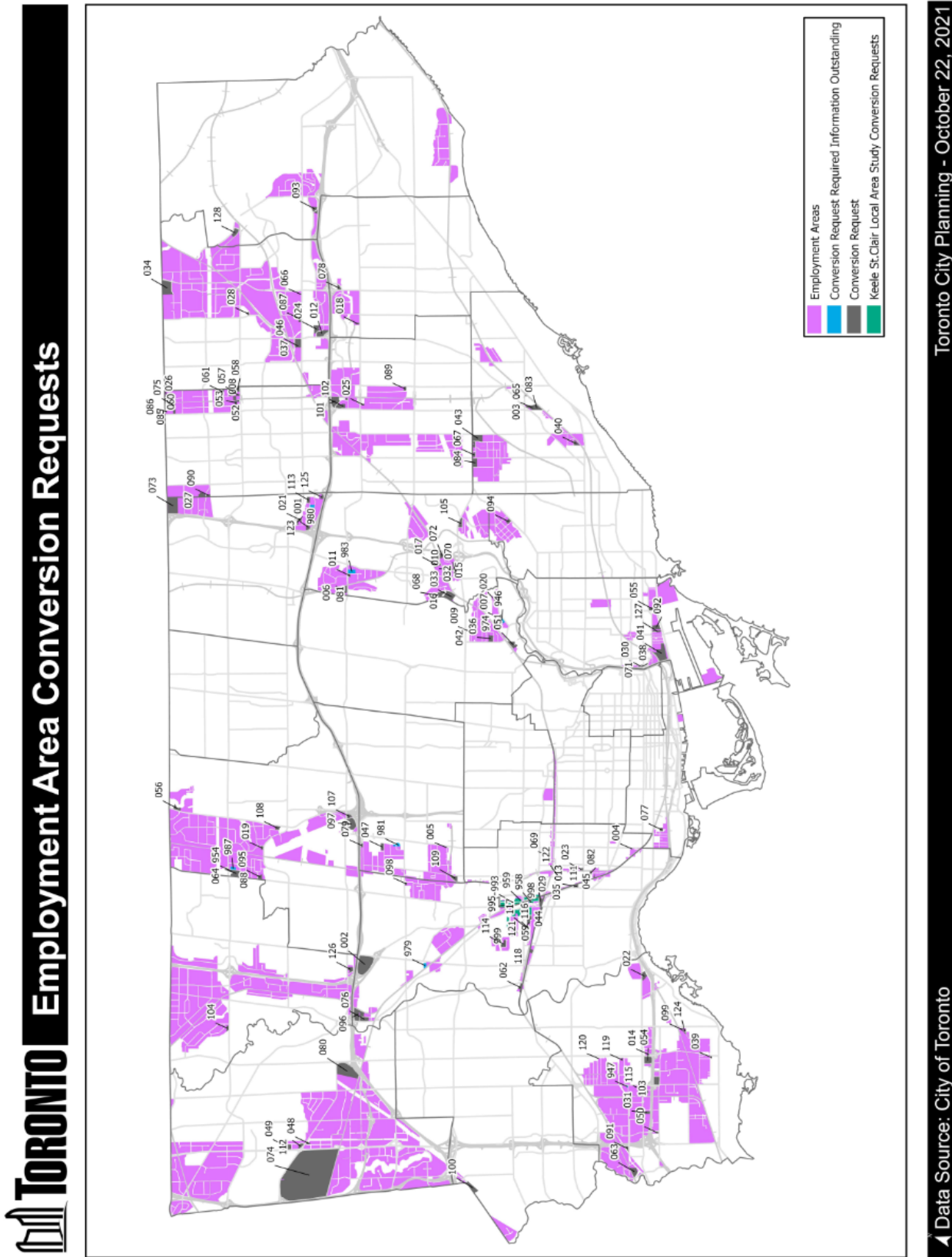
Attachment 2: Map of *Employment Area* Conversion Requests - City-Wide

Attachment 3: Group 2 Conversion Request Land Use Designations and Context

Attachment 1: Preliminary Assessments of Employment Area Conversion Requests (Group 2)

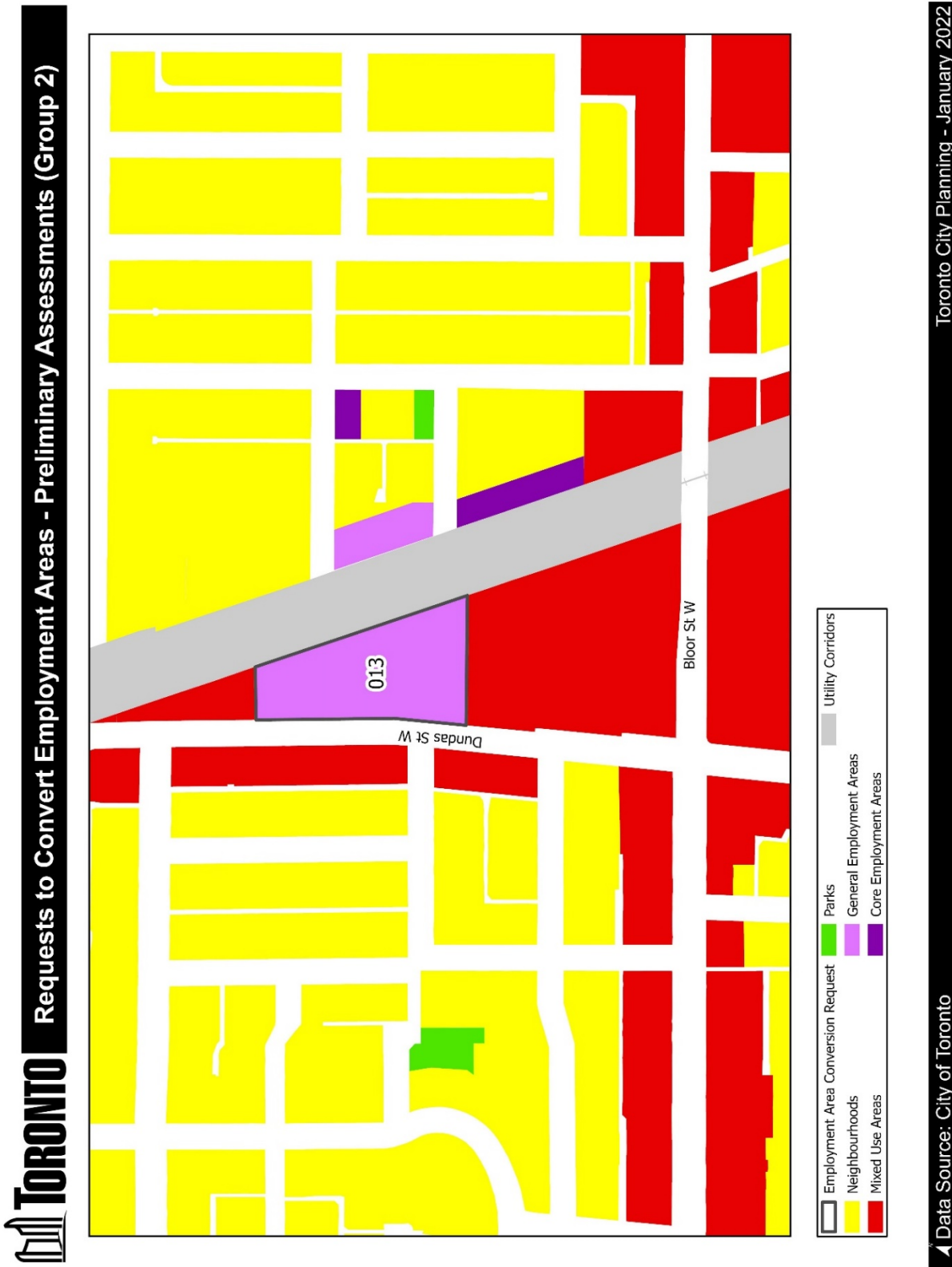
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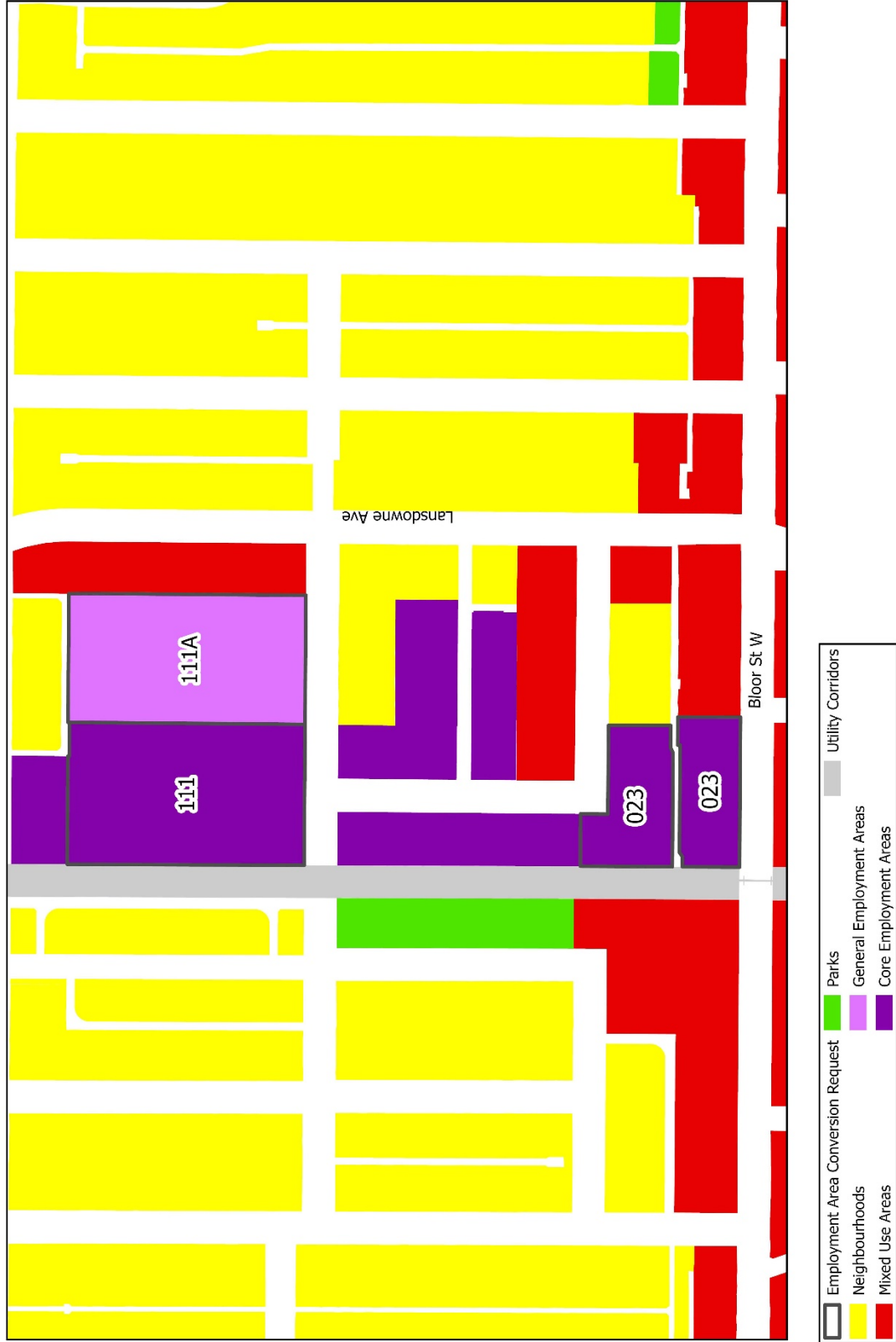
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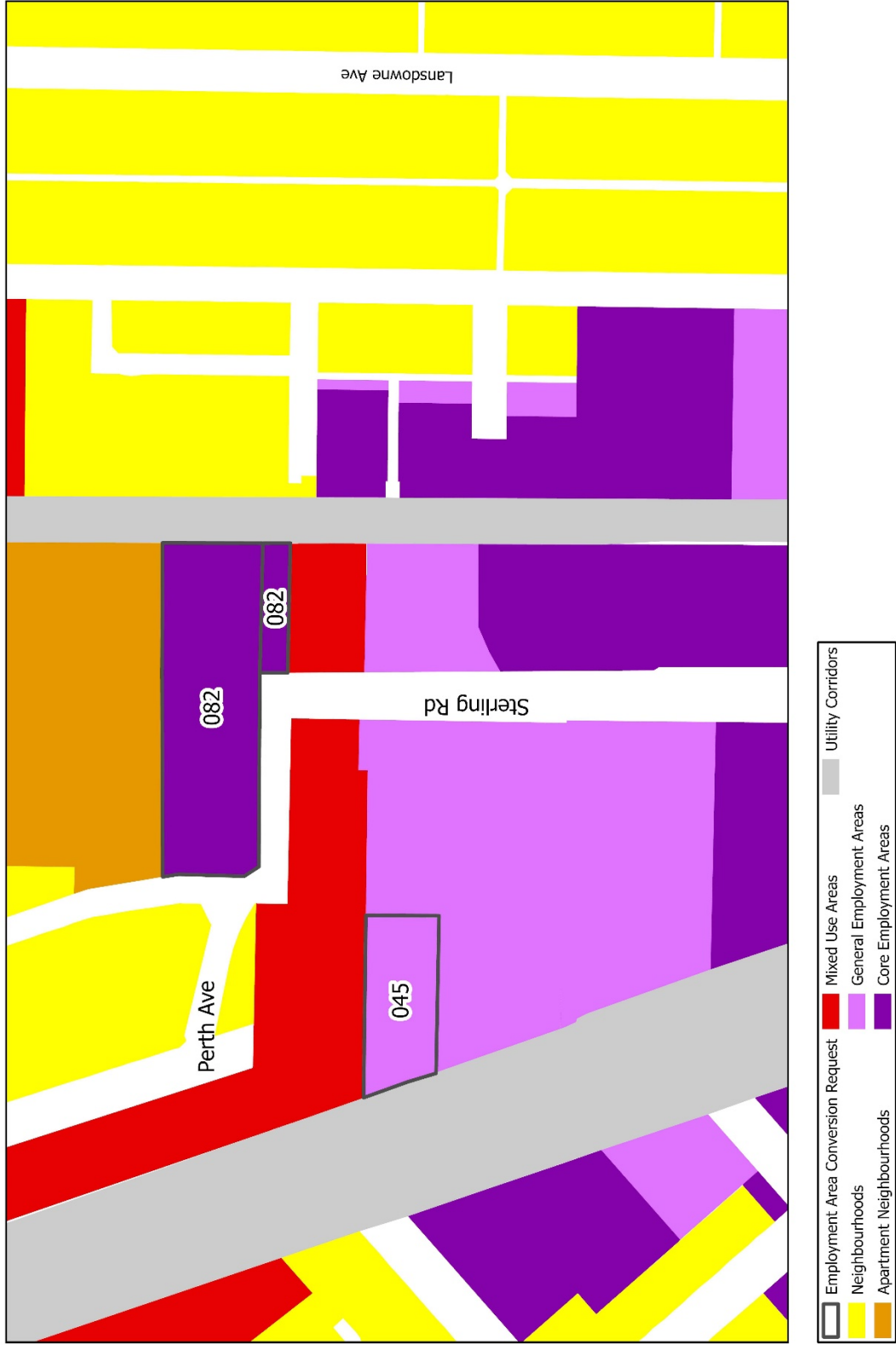


Attachment 3: Group 2 Conversion Request Land Use Designations and Context

Toronto and East York Group 2 Conversion Requests

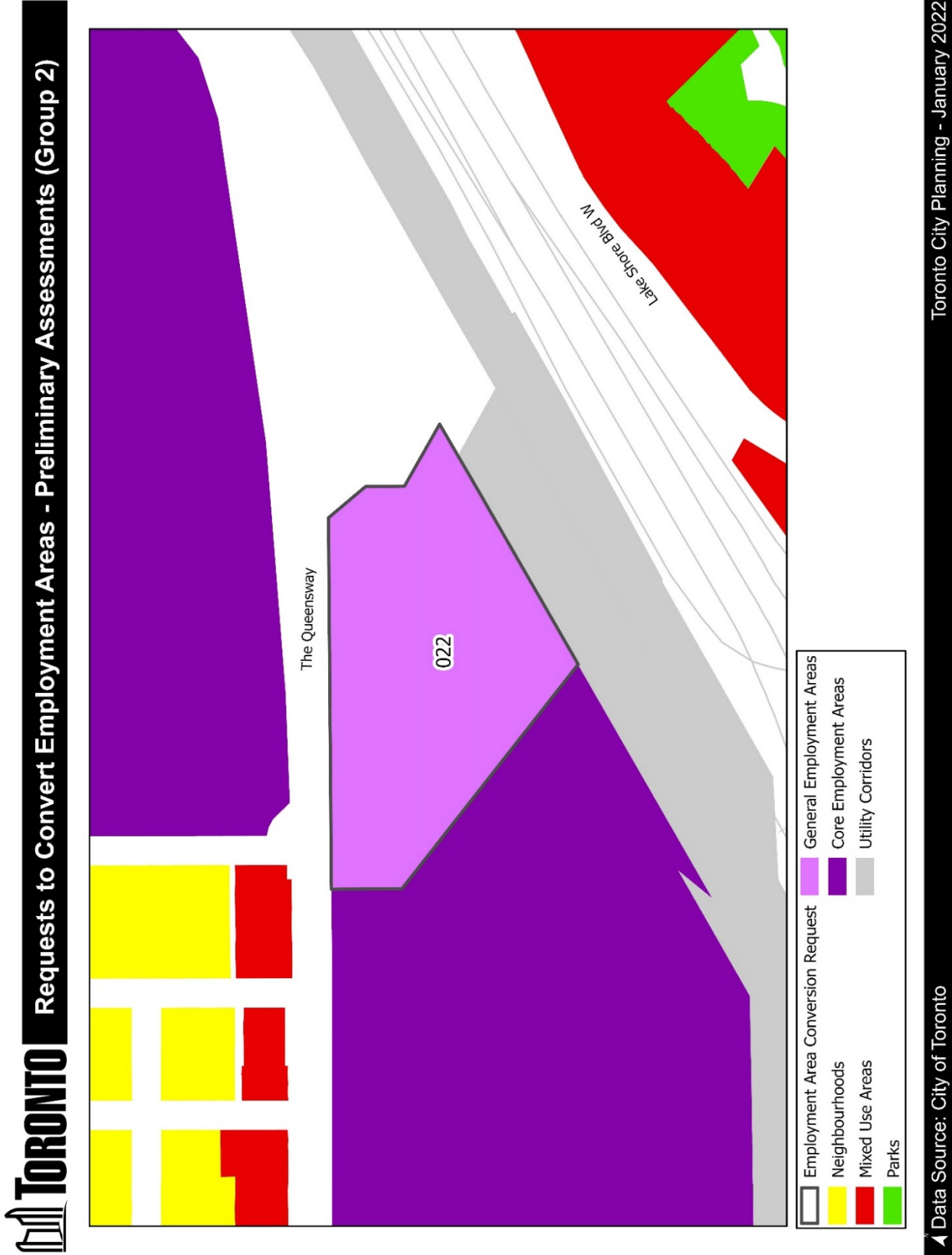


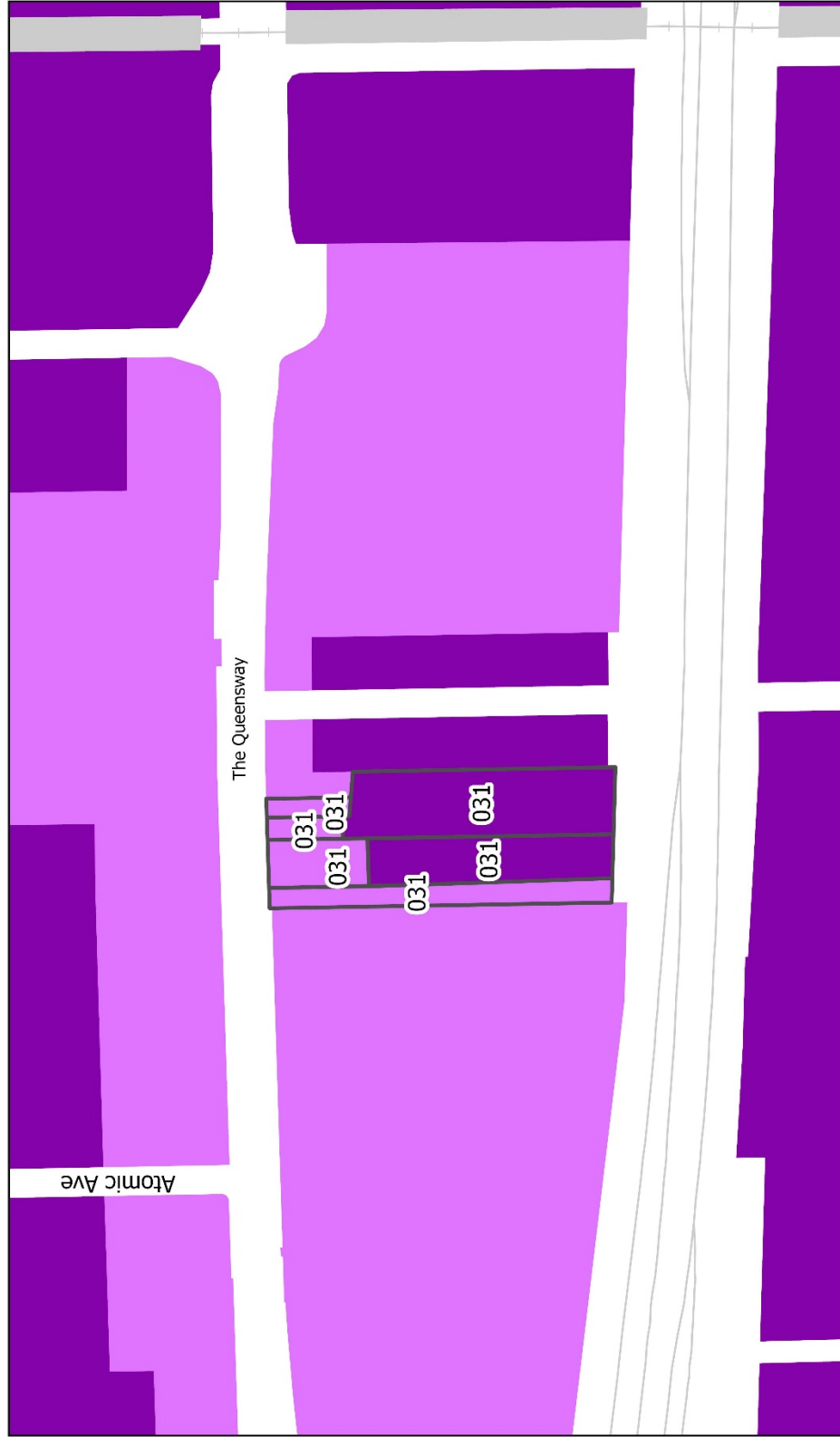


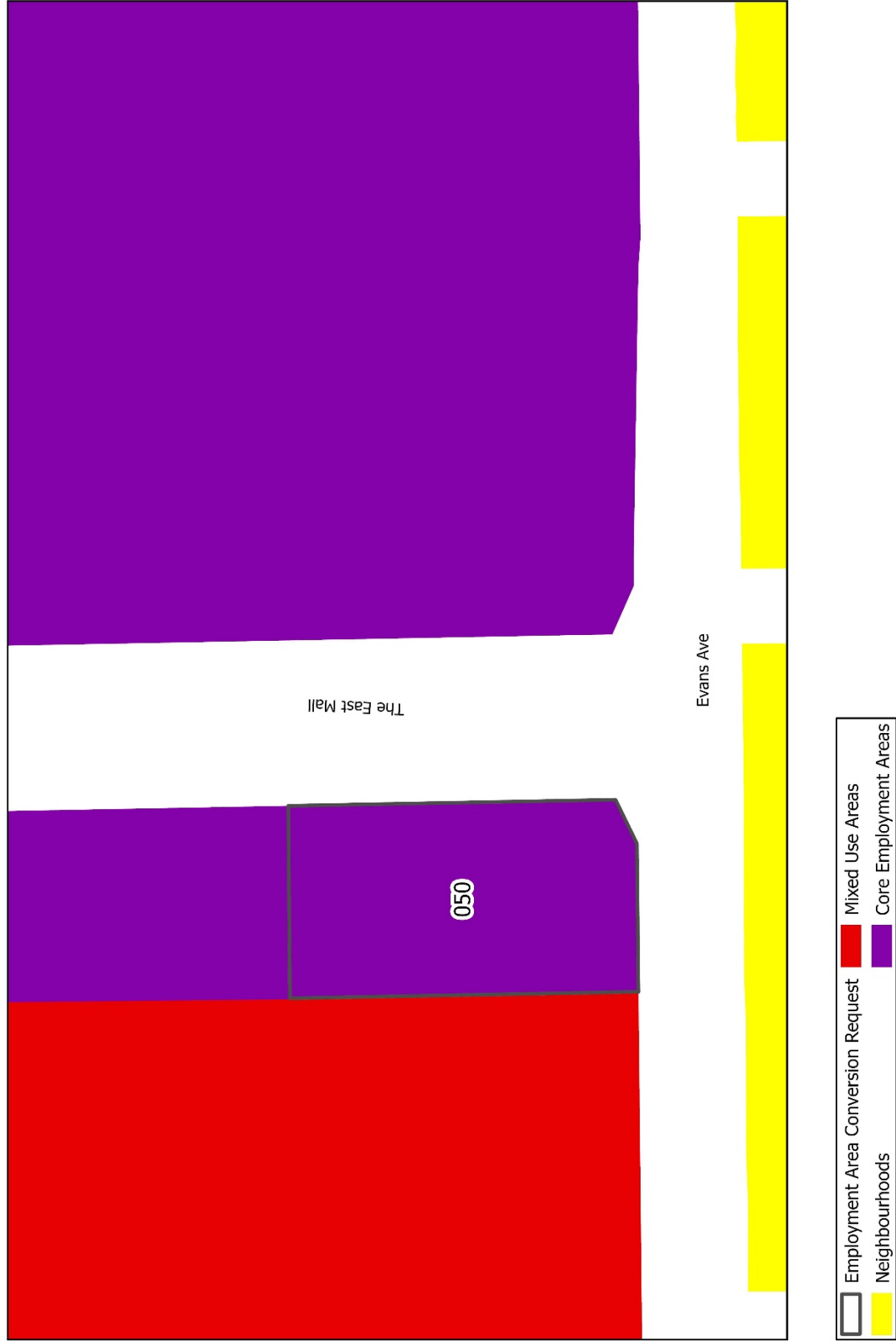




Etobicoke York Group 2 Conversion Requests

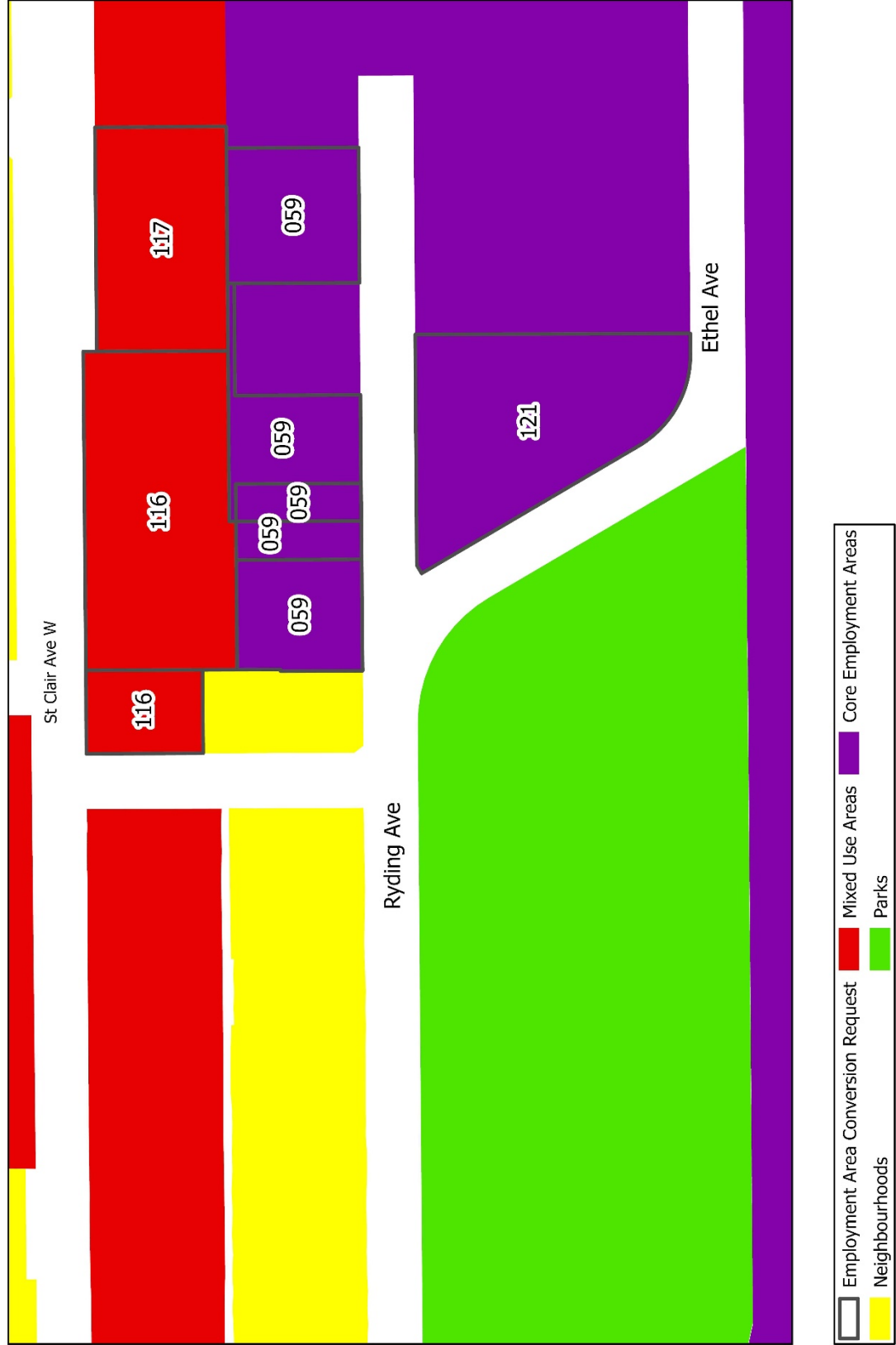


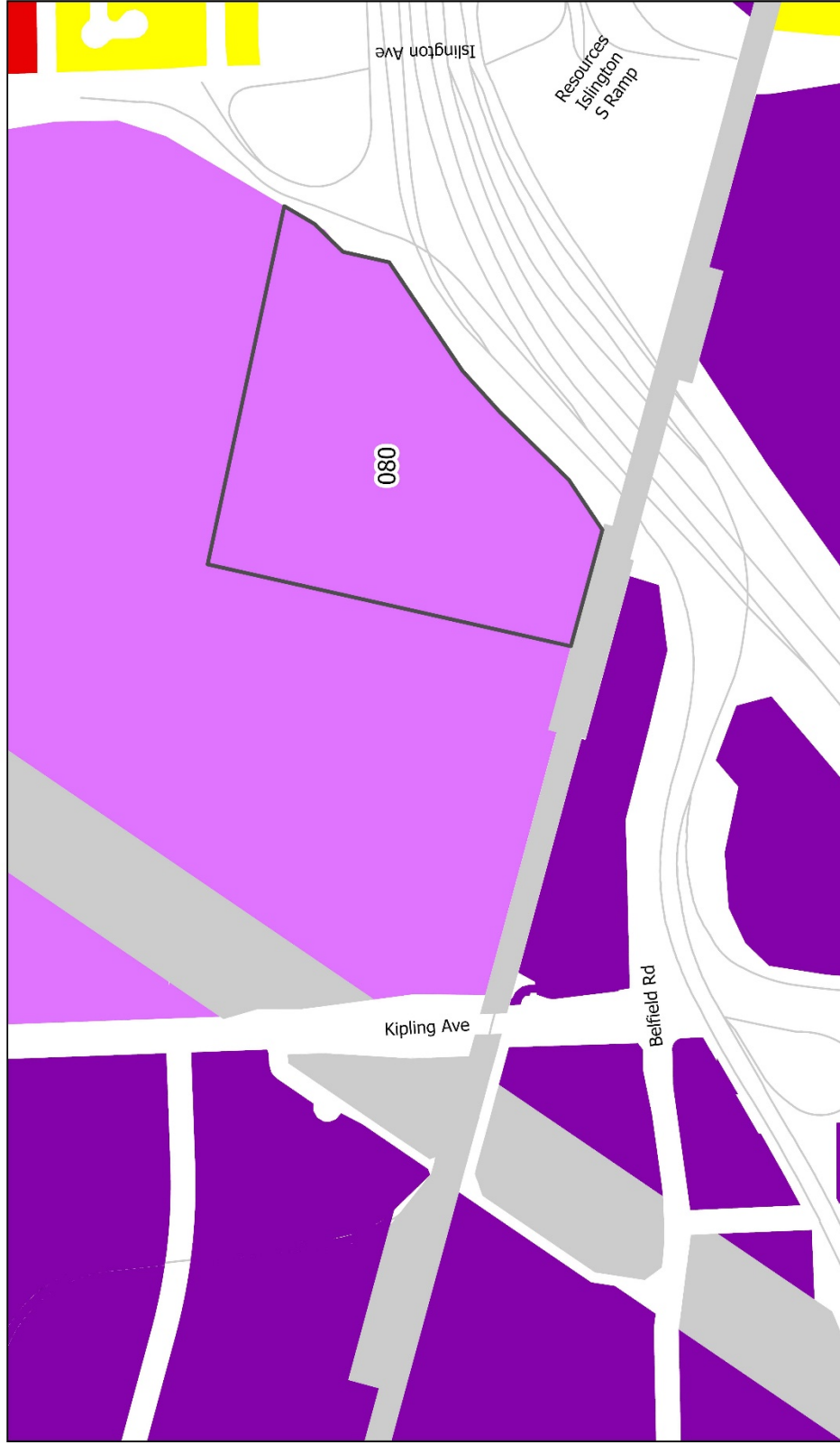


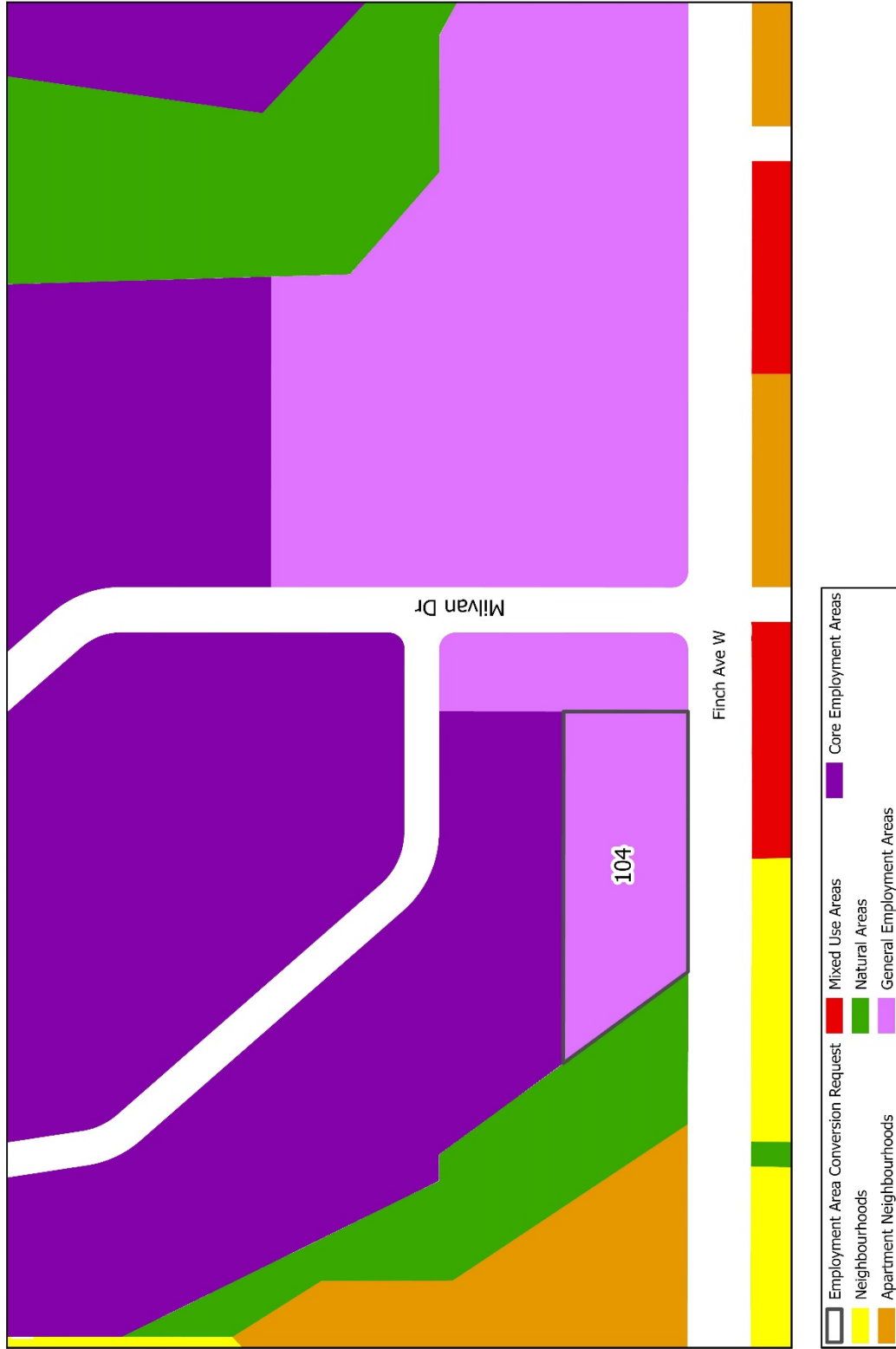


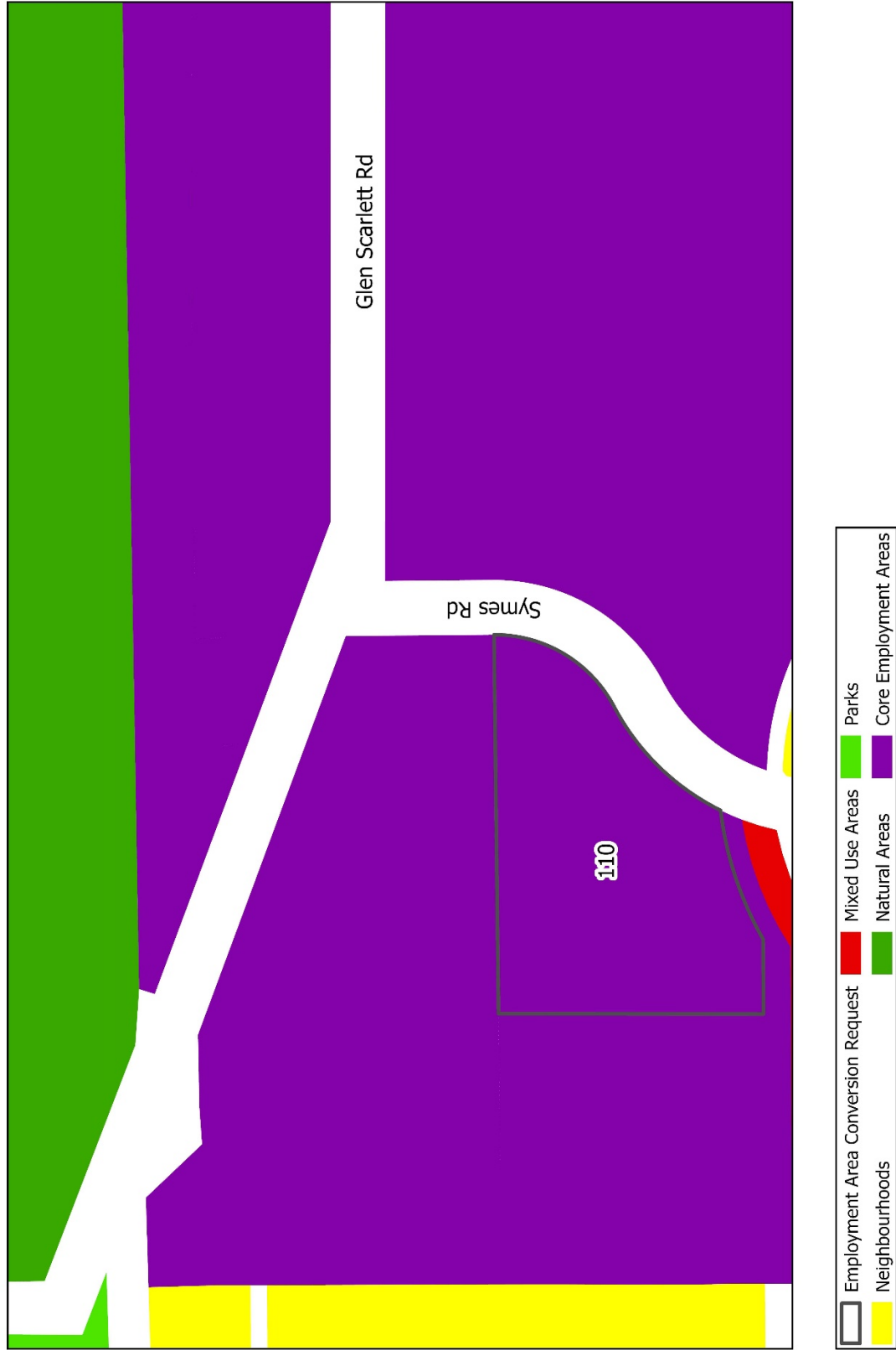


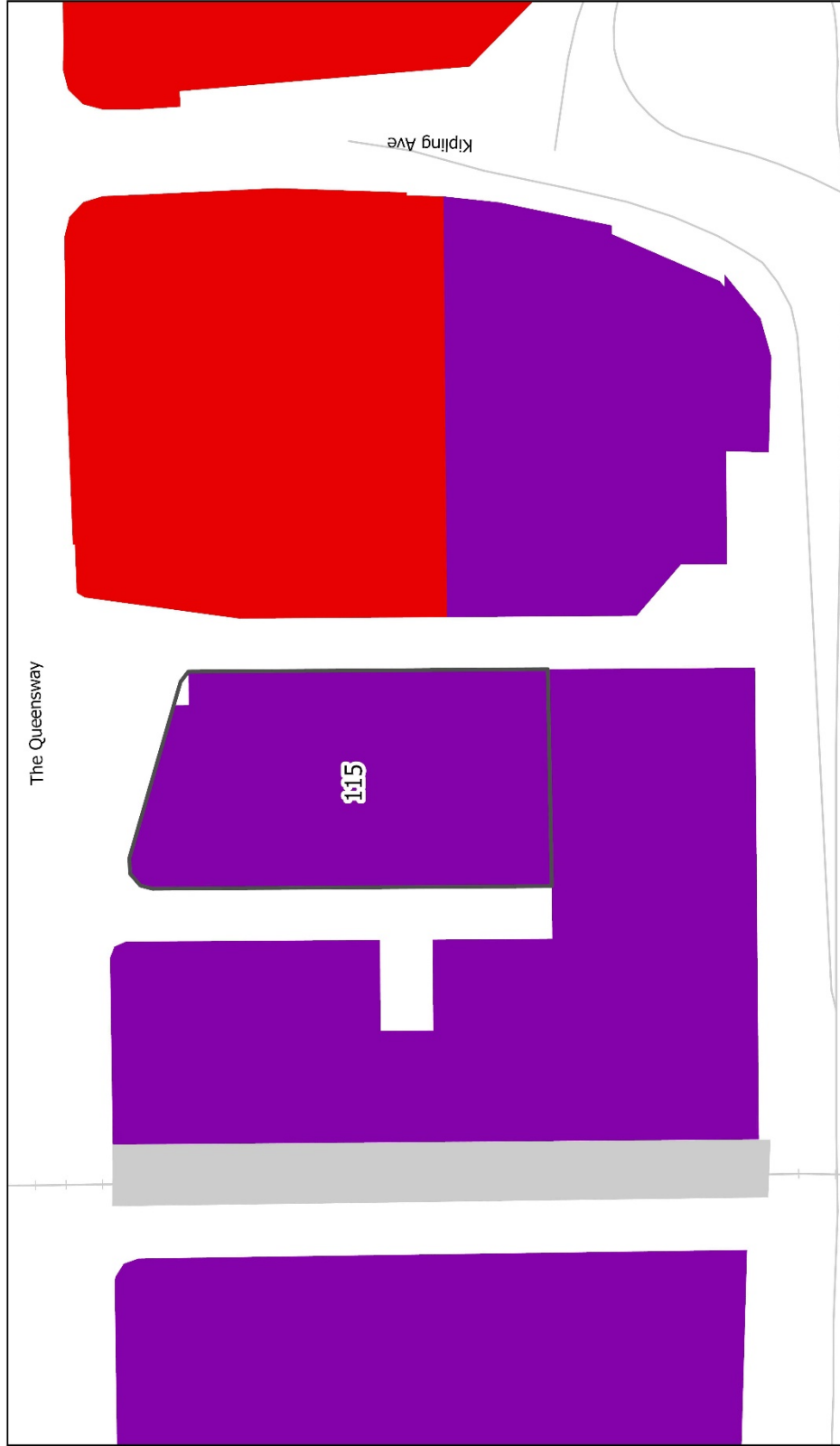
Requests to Convert Employment Areas - Preliminary Assessments (Group 2)



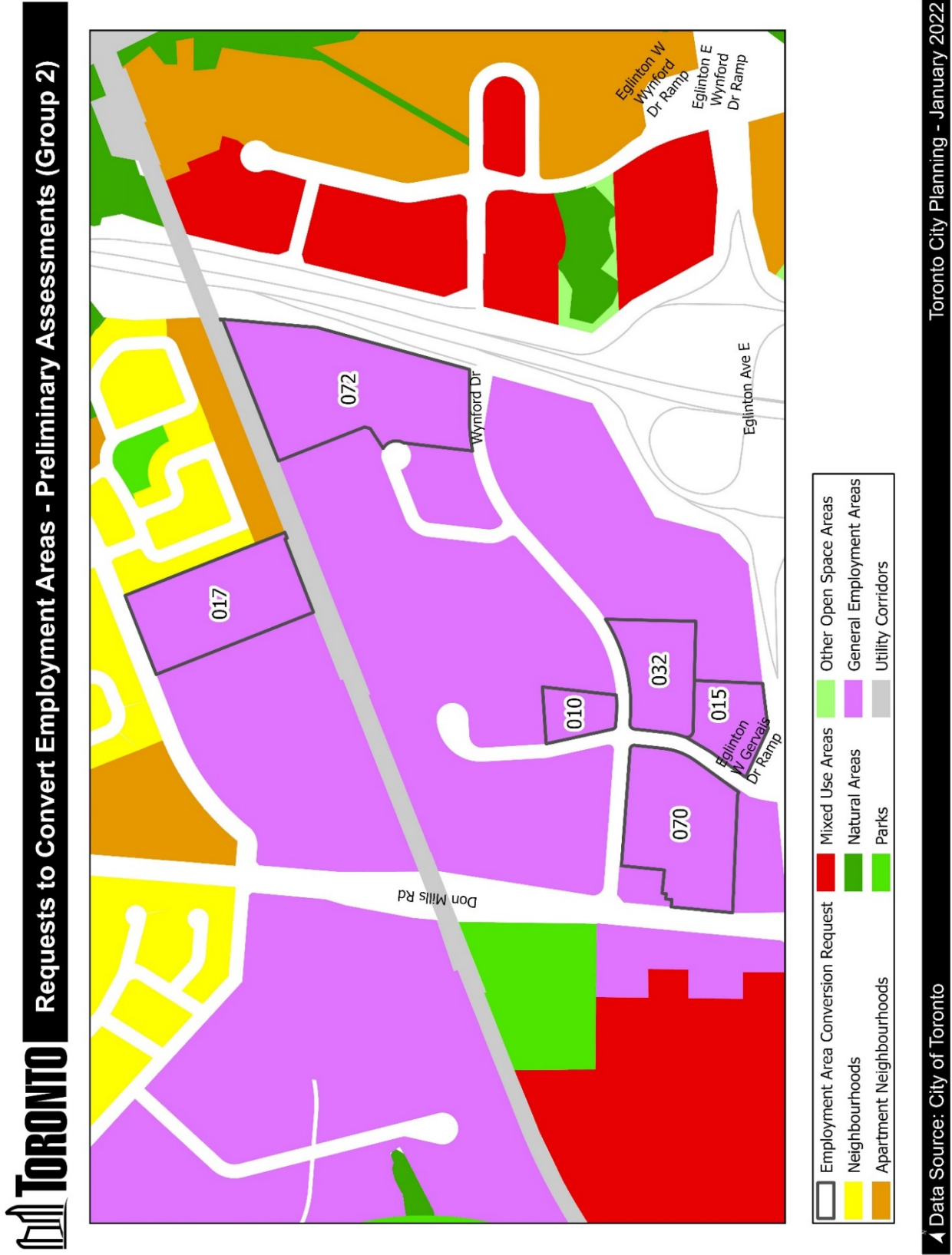


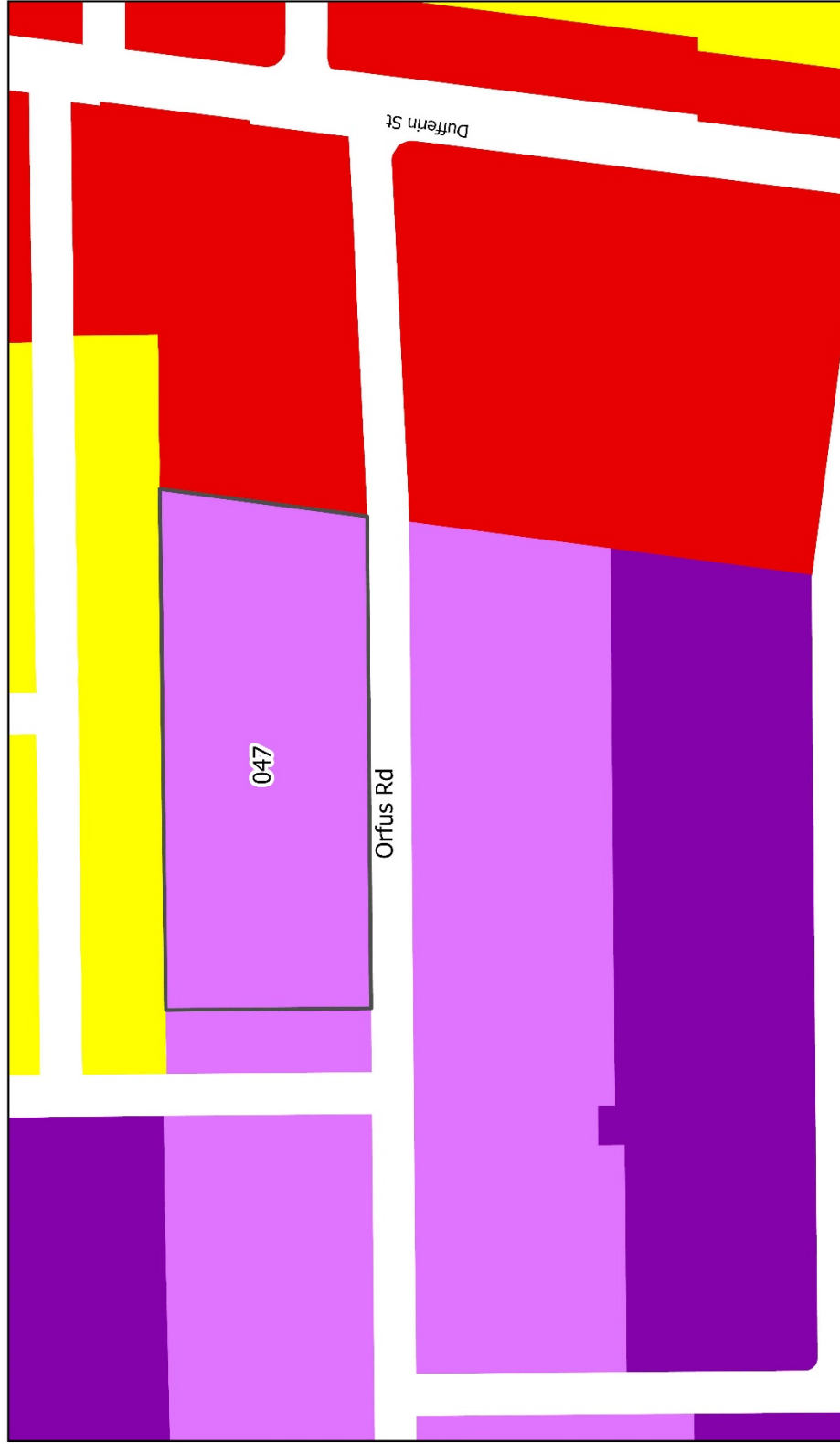






North York Group 2 Conversion Requests







Scarborough Group 2 Conversion Requests

