

Our Plan Toronto: Employment Area Conversion Requests - Preliminary Assessments Group 3

Date: March 10, 2022

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report provides preliminary assessments for the remaining 56 requests to convert lands designated *Core Employment Areas* 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 one preliminary assessment in response to direction from Planning and Housing Committee.

This is the third 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 (March 10, 2022) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning as the 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 October 15, 2019, Planning and Housing (P&H) Committee considered a report from the Chief Planner that described the requirements for the Growth Plan 2019 conformity exercise and MCR. The Committee requested the Chief Planner report on a work program for the completion of the required conformity exercise. The Committee also directed City Planning to prioritize the study of the Keele-St. Clair area as part of the MCR. <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.PH9.2>

On June 29, 2020, 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, P&H Committee considered a December 21, 2021 report on Group 1 Preliminary Assessments (PH30.5), and authorized the Chief Planner to use the 39 Preliminary Assessments attached to that report as the basis for consultation. Committee also 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, included in Attachment 1 to this report).

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

On February 2, 2022, Council considered P&H Committee recommendations based on a report from the Chief Planner (dated December 21, 2021) providing an Update on the Growth Plan Conformity and MCR (PH30.6). Among other matters, Council adopted recommendations to request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to set an alternative timeframe of July 2023 by which the City's Official Plan must conform with the Growth Plan. The Chief Planner on behalf of City Council has since submitted a request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and is awaiting a response.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH30.6>

On February 2, 2022, Council adopted a Directions Report from the City Solicitor authorizing her and staff to enter into further settlement discussions around an offer to settle site specific Appeal No. 92 to Official Plan Amendment 231 regarding 1235-1255 Lawrence Avenue West and 2-23 Benton Road (CC39.2). Council also requested staff to consider an introduction of some residential uses on the north part of the Lands within certain parameters. The Lands subject to the settlement discussions form part of the same area that P&H Committee requested the Chief Planner review as part of an expanded Conversion Request No. 98.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.CC39.2>

On February 16, 2022, P&H Committee considered a January 31, 2022 report Group 2 Preliminary Assessments (PH31.7). Committee authorized the Chief Planner to use the 35 Preliminary Assessments attached to that report as the basis for consultation. Committee also requested that the Preliminary Assessments for 109 Ryding Avenue (No. 121), 116R 126-142 Ryding (Number 059) and 100 Symes Road (No. 110) be provided in a report to the March 25, 2022 meeting of Planning and Housing Committee. <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH31.7>

On March 10, 2016, Council adopted a motion (EY12.30) to request the Chief Planner to undertake a review of the planning framework for the Mount Dennis study area including: built form; density; height; and public realm and to report back on the findings of the review and to provide recommendations for changes, if necessary, to the planning framework for the study area.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EY12.30>

On July 13, 2020, P&H Committee considered a Preliminary Report regarding applications for a Zoning By-law and for Draft Plan of Subdivision approval for 1285, 1295, 1315 Finch Avenue West and 30 Tangiers Road. Among other matters, Committee directed that should the current proposal be determined to include any non-permitted uses on lands designated as *Core Employment Areas*, or the applicant amend the proposal to include any non-permitted uses on lands designated as *Core Employment Areas*, that staff be directed to review the application concurrently and in the context of the MCR as a request to convert employment lands.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.PH15.3>

On July 14, 2021, Council adopted, as amended, a report recommending approval of Official Plan amendments resulting from the Geary Works Planning Study. Council directed City Planning and Economic Development and Culture to consider area specific changes to the land use permissions in *Employment Areas* adjacent to Geary Avenue and to consider a conversion of certain lands from *Core Employment Areas* to *General Employment Areas* as part of the MCR of the Official Plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH24.1>

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 that closed August 3, 2021.

Conversion Request Review Process

City Planning and Economic Development and Culture staff have reviewed each conversion request. Preliminary assessments for requests have been prepared for the purpose of consultation with stakeholders and the public, including landowners and businesses, to obtain comments and feedback. At its meetings of January 12, 2022 and February 15, 2022, Planning and Housing Committee authorized City Planning to use the preliminary assessments for Groups 1 and 2 conversion requests as a basis for consultation. Attachment 1 to this report provides the preliminary assessments for the remaining requests (Group 3) to convert lands designated *Core Employment Areas* and *General Employment Areas* as part of the current Growth Plan 2020 conformity exercise and Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR)

Prior to preparing a Final Report for Committee and Council's consideration, staff will assess requests to convert lands designated *Core Employment Areas* 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 3 Preliminary Assessment Summary

This report provides preliminary assessments for the remaining 56 conversion requests and one preliminary assessment in response to direction from Planning and Housing Committee. In summary:

- There are 7 conversion requests in Group 3 within Toronto and East York District. All but one are seeking residential permissions. Five conversion requests are within the Junction-West-Dupont Employment Area. One conversion request is within the Liberty Village Employment Area, and another in the Bermondsey-Railside Employment Area.
- There are 22 conversion requests in the Etobicoke York District, including one which seeks a *General Employment Areas* designation and 21 which seek residential permissions. Four conversion requests are located west of the Keele St. Clair Study Area. Two conversion requests are located in the Sherway Area Secondary Plan, while the remaining are distributed in other *Employment Areas*.
- There are 12 conversion requests in the Scarborough District, all seeking non-employment uses. Five are located close to the Milliken GO Station; four are located on Sheppard Avenue East between Markham Road and Brimley Road; and, the 3 others are distributed in other *Employment Areas*.
- There are 15 conversion requests in North York District, all of which are seeking residential permissions. Five are located within the York University Heights area of employment with others located south of Downsview Airport lands; several on York Mills Road between Leslie Street and Don Mills Road, and the remaining 5 requests are distributed in other *Employment Areas*.

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

Employment Areas west of the Keele-St. Clair Local Area Study

On February 15, 2022, Planning and Housing Committee adopted a motion to amend Attachment 1 to the January 31, 2022 report from the Chief Planner by deleting the Preliminary Assessments for 109 Ryding Avenue (No. 121), 116R 126-142 Ryding (No. 059) and 100 Symes Road (No. 110) and requested staff to include these Preliminary Assessments in the conversion requests report at the March 25, 2022 Committee meeting. Staff are assessing these conversion requests on a comprehensive basis that includes consideration of their contexts and includes the cumulative impact on nearby lands designated *Employment Areas*.

The three conversion request sites are outside the lands subject to the Keele-St. Clair Local Area Study (LAS) and approximately 350-550 metres to the west of the study area. The LAS is being conducted as part of the MCR to create a framework for the development of a complete community around the planned St. Clair-Old Weston GO Transit/SmartTrack Station. On November 25, 2021, Planning and Housing Committee endorsed a Draft Official Plan Amendment as the basis for public consultation. The Draft OPA adds a Keele-St. Clair Local Area Secondary Plan and a St. Clair-Old Weston Station Protected Major Transit Station Area. A Final Recommendation Report is anticipated to be considered by Committee at its meeting on April 27, 2022.

The draft Secondary Plan retains a buffer of land at the southwest area of the Secondary Plan Area as *General Employment Areas*. An active freight rail (shunting) yard is located south of these lands, and also south of the two conversion request sites located on Ryding Avenue. CPR operates the freight rail yard on a 24/7 basis for 365 days per year, except for six hours on December 25.

As a preliminary assessment and for the basis of consultation, staff indicate that the three conversion request sites should be retained as *Employment Areas*. The review of the conversion requests will include consideration of how a transition to other *Employment Area* uses can be encouraged should existing businesses cease operations.

Picture Mount Dennis Planning Framework Study

In 2019, City Planning staff began a review of the planning framework for the Mount Dennis study area including: built form; density; height; and public realm of the properties on Weston Road between Ray Avenue and Humber Boulevard in Mount Dennis. In December 2021, the City's consultants completed work on their final Picture Mount Dennis Planning Framework report, including a framework intended to create a comprehensive vision for the future of Mount Dennis with the arrival of the Mount Dennis Mobility Hub. The report includes analysis and recommendations on land use and urban design, public realm and mobility, cultural heritage and environment and infrastructure. To help facilitate the revitalization of Weston Road and accommodate growth, the consultant reports recommends,

- General Employment Areas lands municipally known as 915-945 Weston Road should be considered for the introduction of other uses, including residential uses, through the MCR process and including further consultation.

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/8d32-CityPlanning-Picture-Mount-Dennis-Planning-Framework-Final-Report.pdf>

As part of the MCR and the ongoing consultation for Picture Mount Dennis Planning Framework Study, staff will review and examine these lands and provide recommendations for Committee's consideration.

1285, 1295, 1315 Finch Avenue West and 30 Tangiers

Staff are currently reviewing applications for a Zoning By-law amendment (Application 20 114224 NNY 06 OZ) and for Draft Plan of Subdivision approval (20 114230 NNY 06 SB) for 1285, 1295, 1315 Finch Avenue West and 30 Tangiers Road. In July 2020, Planning and Housing Committee directed that should the proposal be determined to include any non-permitted uses on lands designated as *Core Employment Areas*, or the applicant amends the proposal to include any non-permitted uses on lands designated as *Core Employment Areas*, that staff be directed to review the application concurrently and in the context of the MCR as a request to convert employment lands.

On July 29, 2021, the applicant submitted a letter affirming their interests. Staff confirm that if a conversion of the lands at 30 Tangiers Road, which are designated *Core Employment Areas*, is required, it will be reviewed concurrently and in the context of the MCR. Preliminary Assessments for conversion requests adjacent to and in the vicinity of this address are provided in Attachment 1 of this report.

Geary Works

Between October 2019 and May 2021 City Planning and Economic Development & Culture lead a study of the lands on Geary Avenue to determine how to best to support businesses and creative enterprises on Geary Avenue and improve the public realm. In July 2021, a final report was considered by Council. Among other matters, Council directed that:

- Area-specific changes to the land use permissions in *Employment Areas* adjacent to Geary Avenue, be considered as part of the MCR, and that Chief Planner report back to Planning and Housing Committee in the fourth quarter of 2021 with recommendations for any potential changes to land use permissions.
- Through the Ontario Land Tribunal appeal process for Official Plan Amendment 231, to seek the removal of the lands at 2-80 Geary Avenue, 508-510 Delaware Avenue North and 1102-1104 Ossington Avenue from Site and Area Specific Policy No. 154.
- Support for future creative enterprises, small-scale retail, cafes, restaurants, bars and music venues on Geary Avenue and encouragement of other compatible non-residential land uses to animate Geary Avenue.
- The Chief Planner consider a conversion from *Core Employment Areas* to *General Employment Areas* for the lands south of Geary Avenue, fronting the north side of Dupont Street from Emerson Avenue to Dovercourt Road, in the review of the broader Geary Avenue Employment Area as part of the current Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan (Our Plan Toronto)."

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/geary-works-planning-study/>

Upon conclusion of the study, a Geary Avenue Working Group was established to initiate and inform the work directed to City Planning and Economic Development and Culture. Between September 2021 and January 2022, five Working Group meetings were held to, among other matters, explore potential Official Plan policy changes that would further support businesses and creative enterprises on Geary Avenue.

Staff are presently considering the input received through the working group along with city-wide MCR work plan items, including the consideration of requests to convert lands designated *Employment Areas*; a study of employment lands; and, a Land Needs Assessment. Staff will provide proposed policy directions for Geary Avenue and lands on the north side Dupont Street to Committee as part of the MCR process. The

Preliminary Assessment for Conversion Request for 322-328 and 330 Geary Avenue (no. 069) is provided in Attachment 1.

Next Steps

Staff will conduct targeted consultations on the Group 3 Preliminary Assessments to obtain feedback on them prior to bringing forward a Final Report for Committee and Council's consideration. Any other proposed site and area specific policy proposals that apply to the areas described in this report will be brought to Planning and Housing Committee for consideration so that they may be used as the basis of consultation during the MCR.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Preliminary Assessments of *Employment Area* Conversion Requests (Group 3)

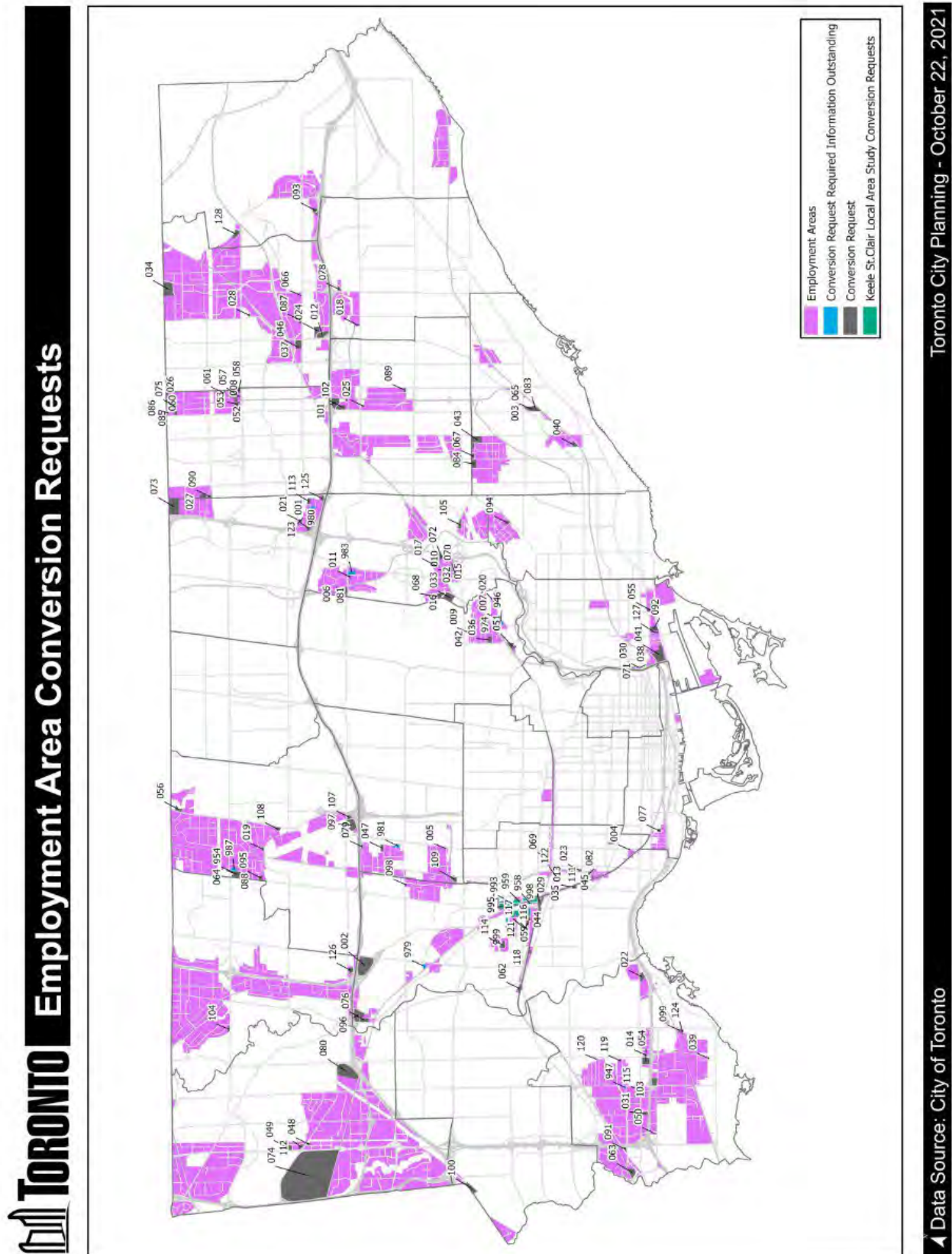
Attachment 2: Map of *Employment Area* Conversion Requests - City-Wide

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

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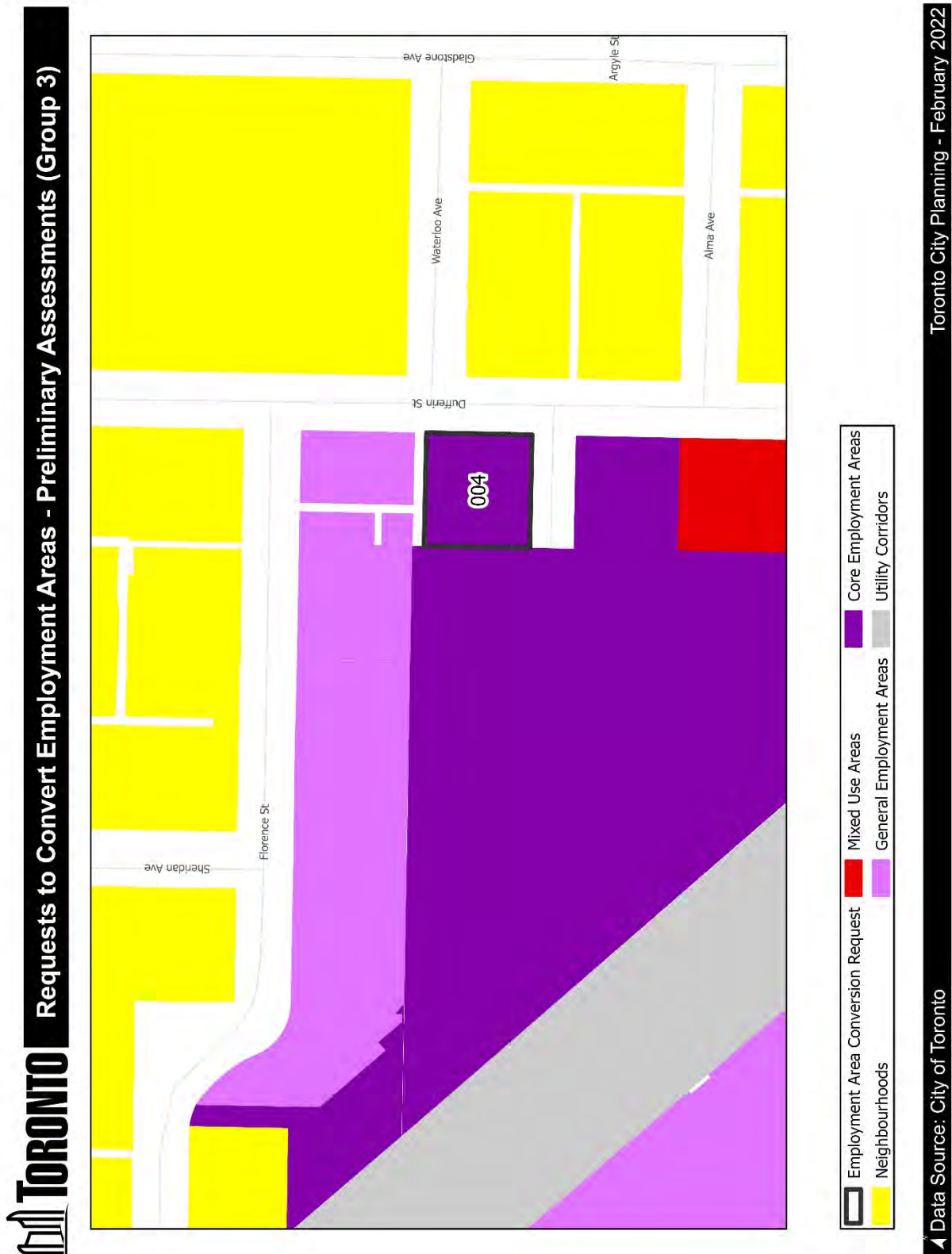
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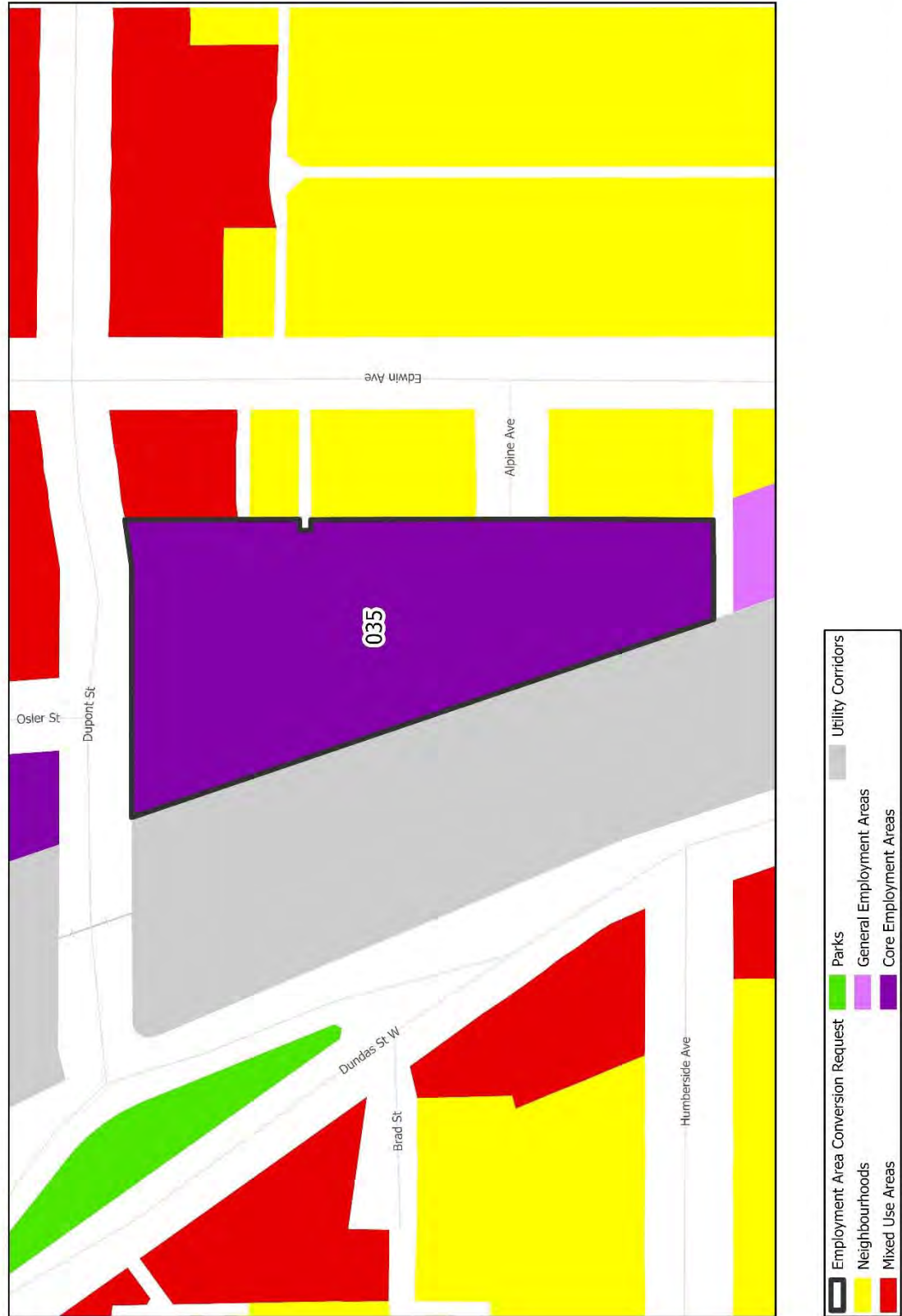
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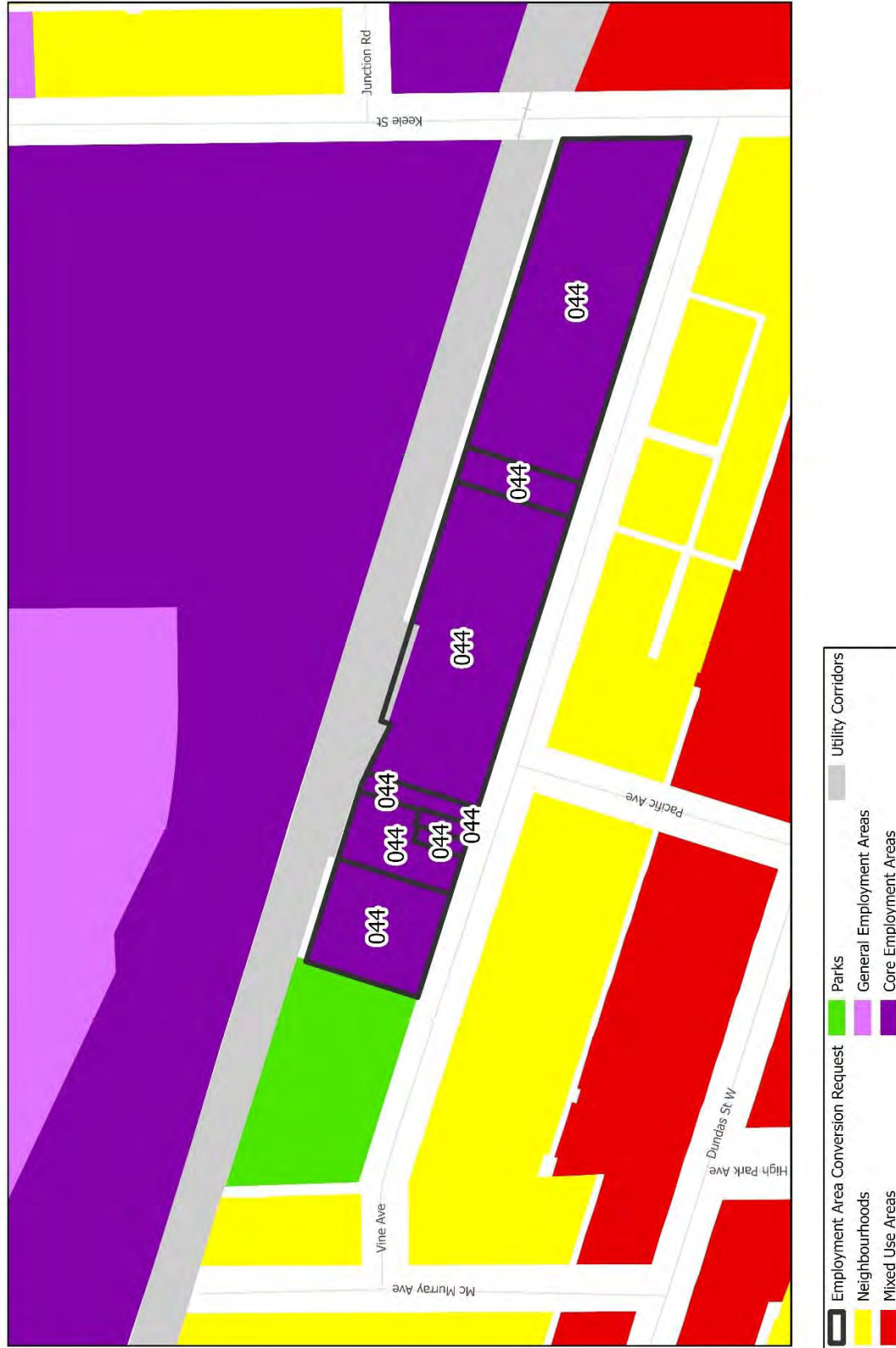


Attachment 3: Group 3 Conversion Request Land Use Designations and Context

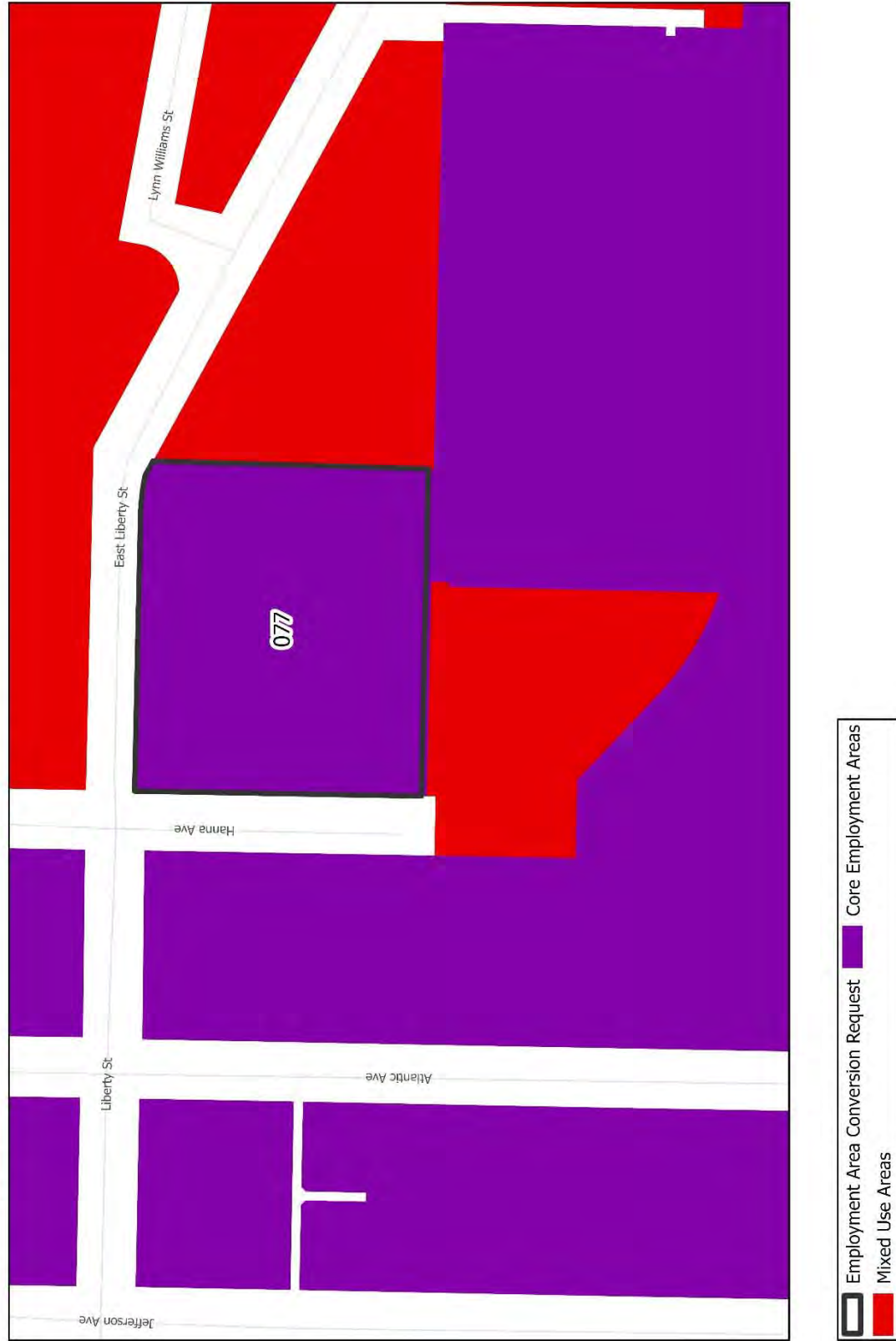
Toronto and East York Group 3 Conversion Requests

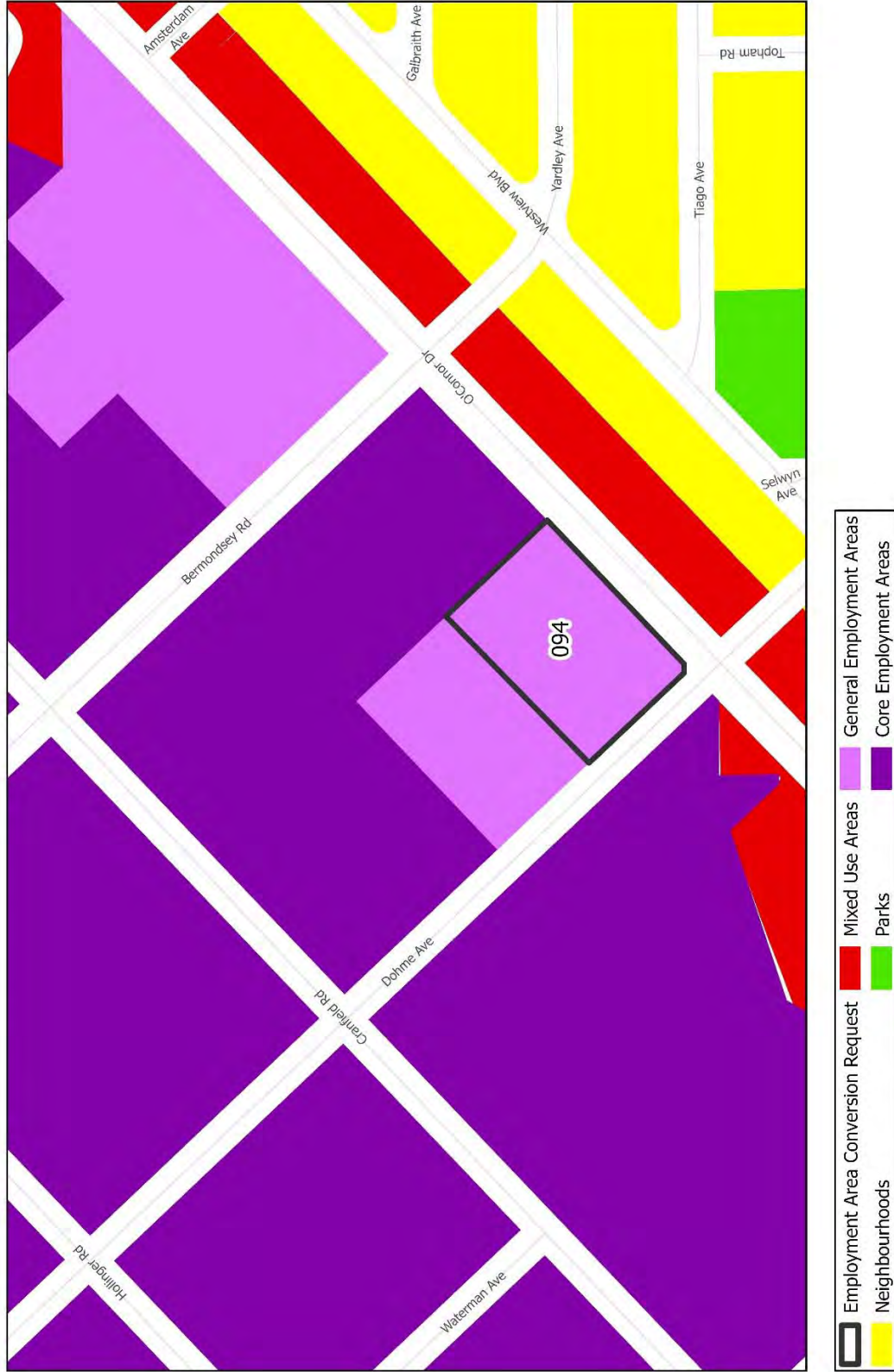


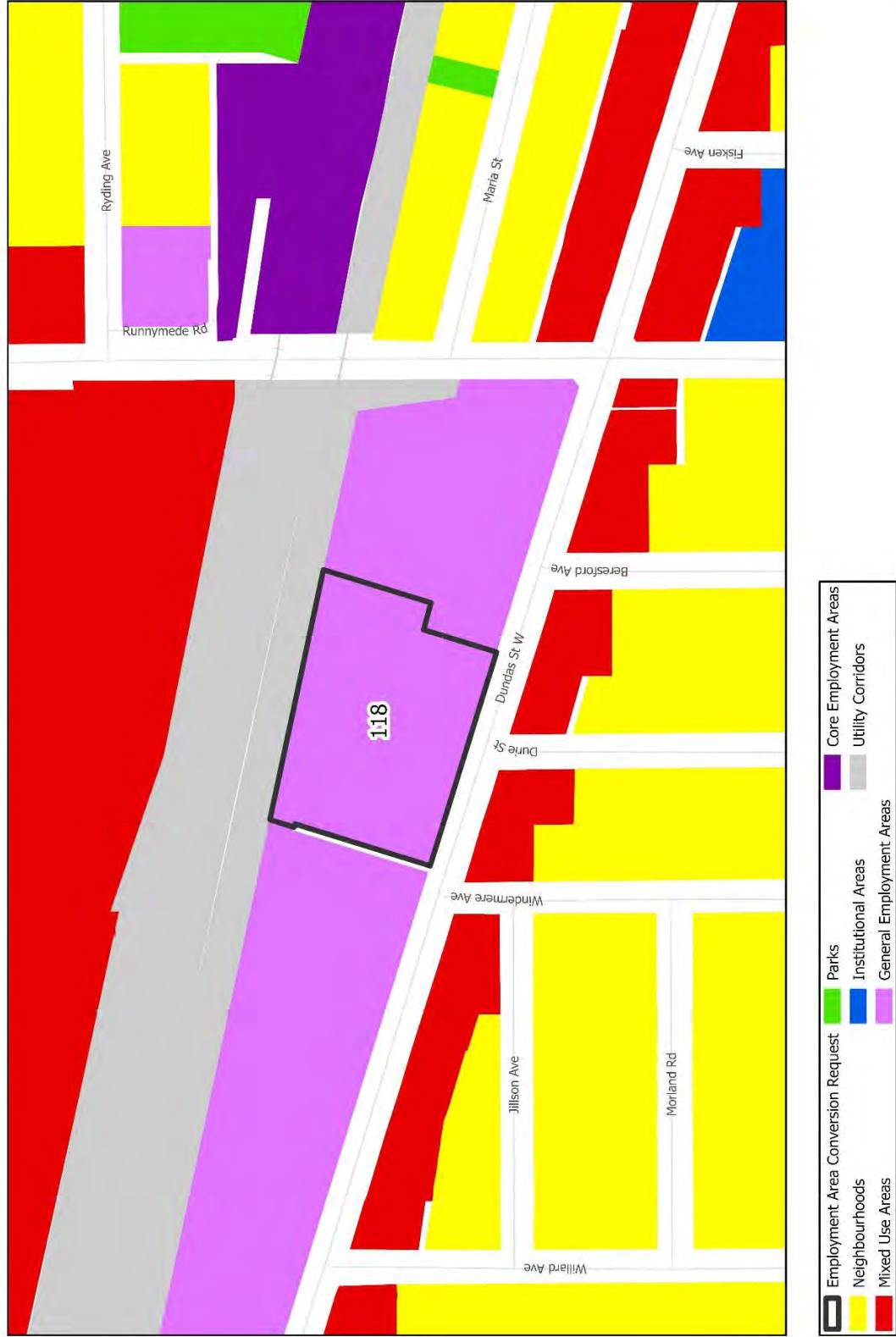


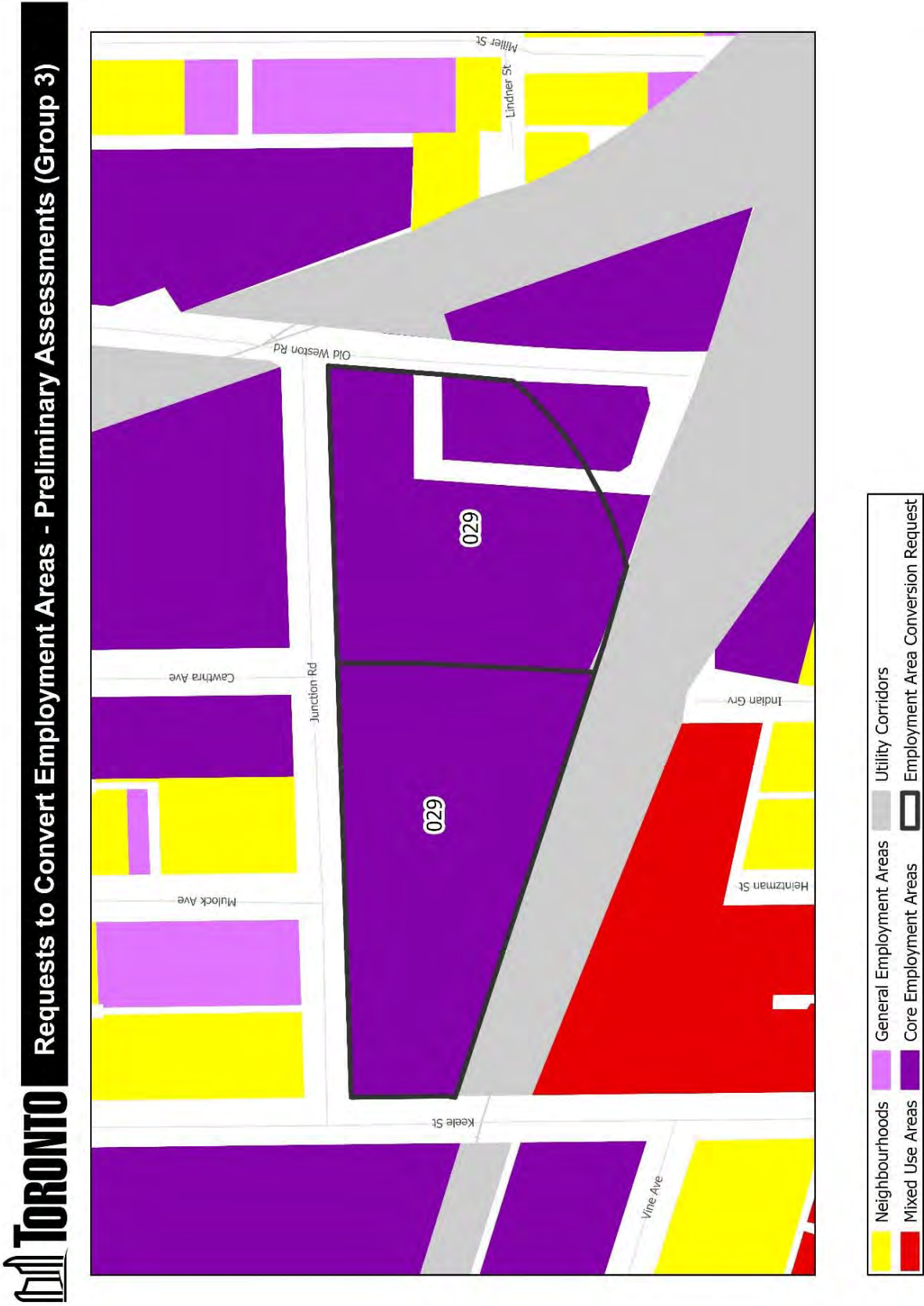


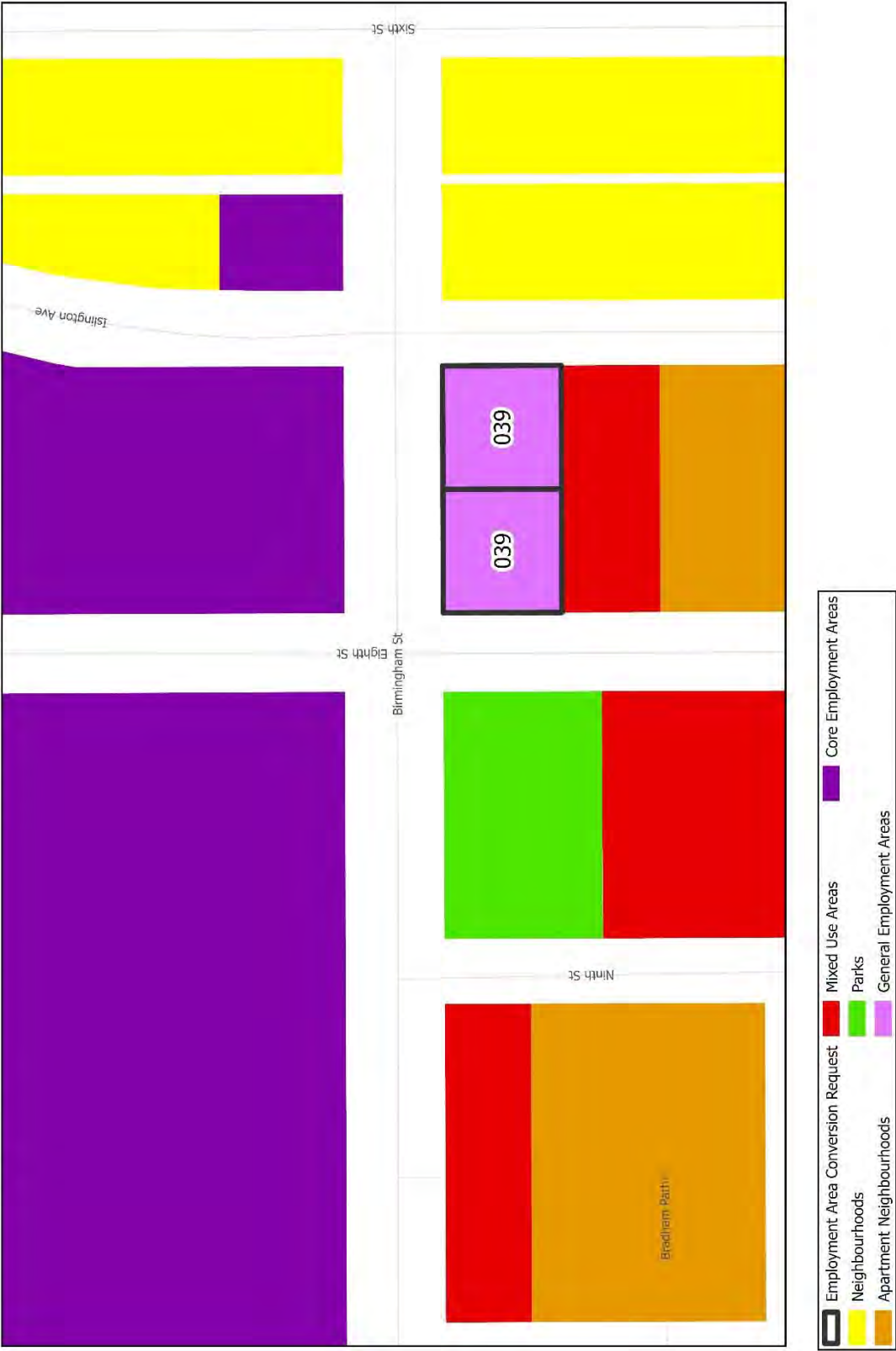


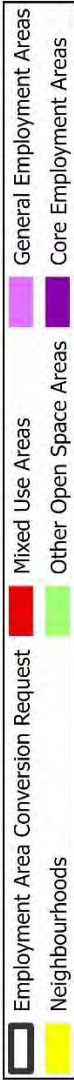




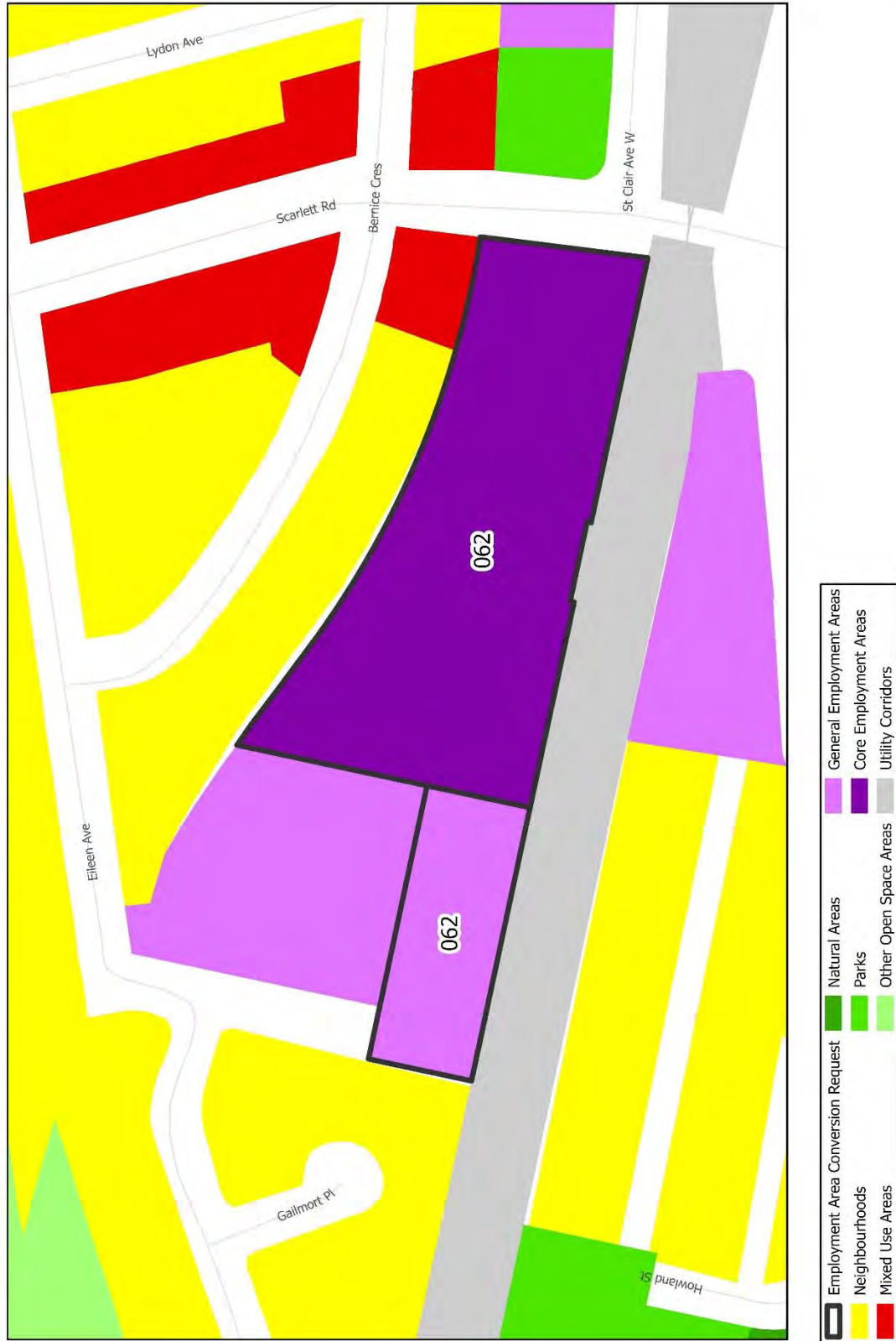


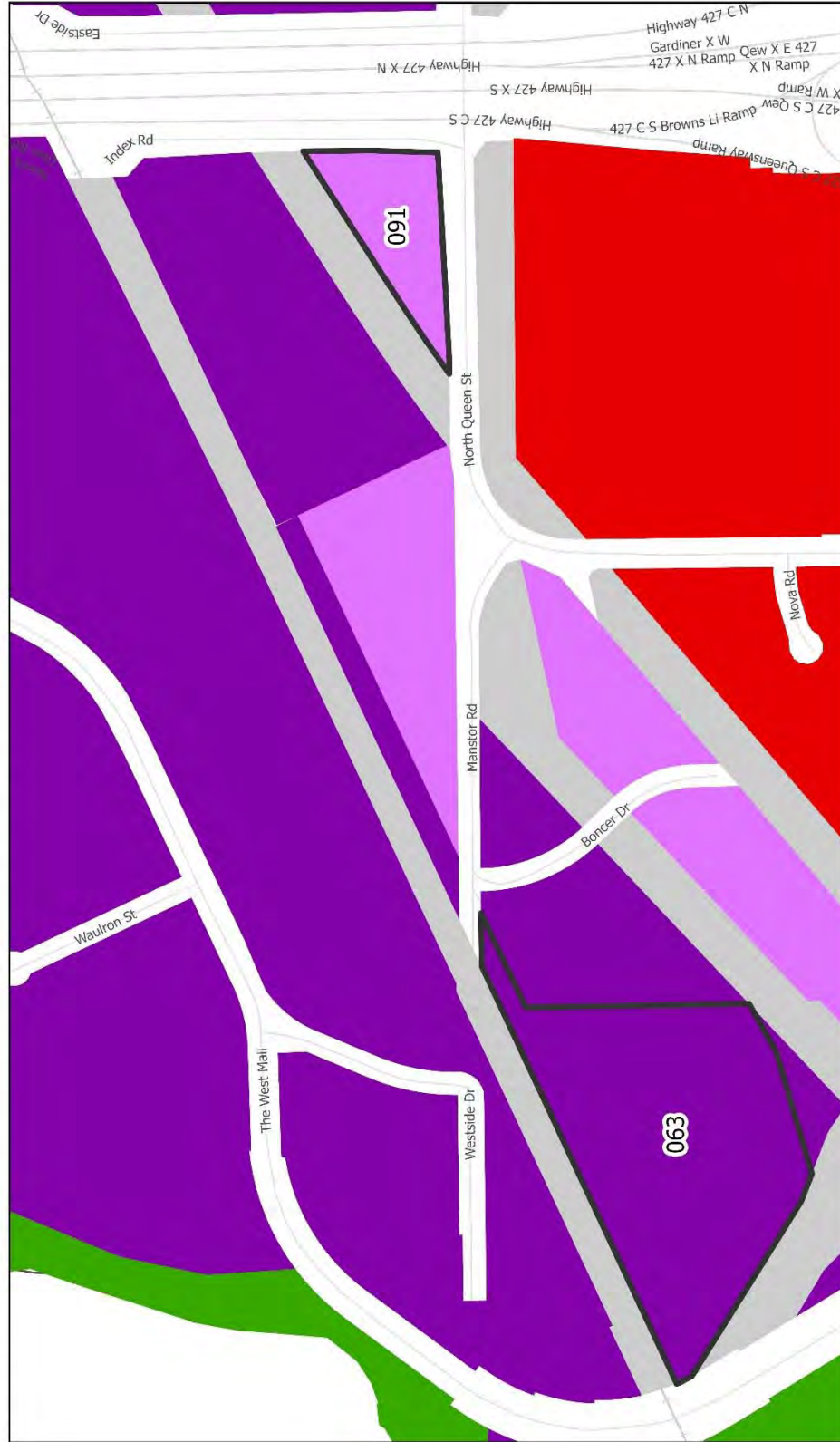




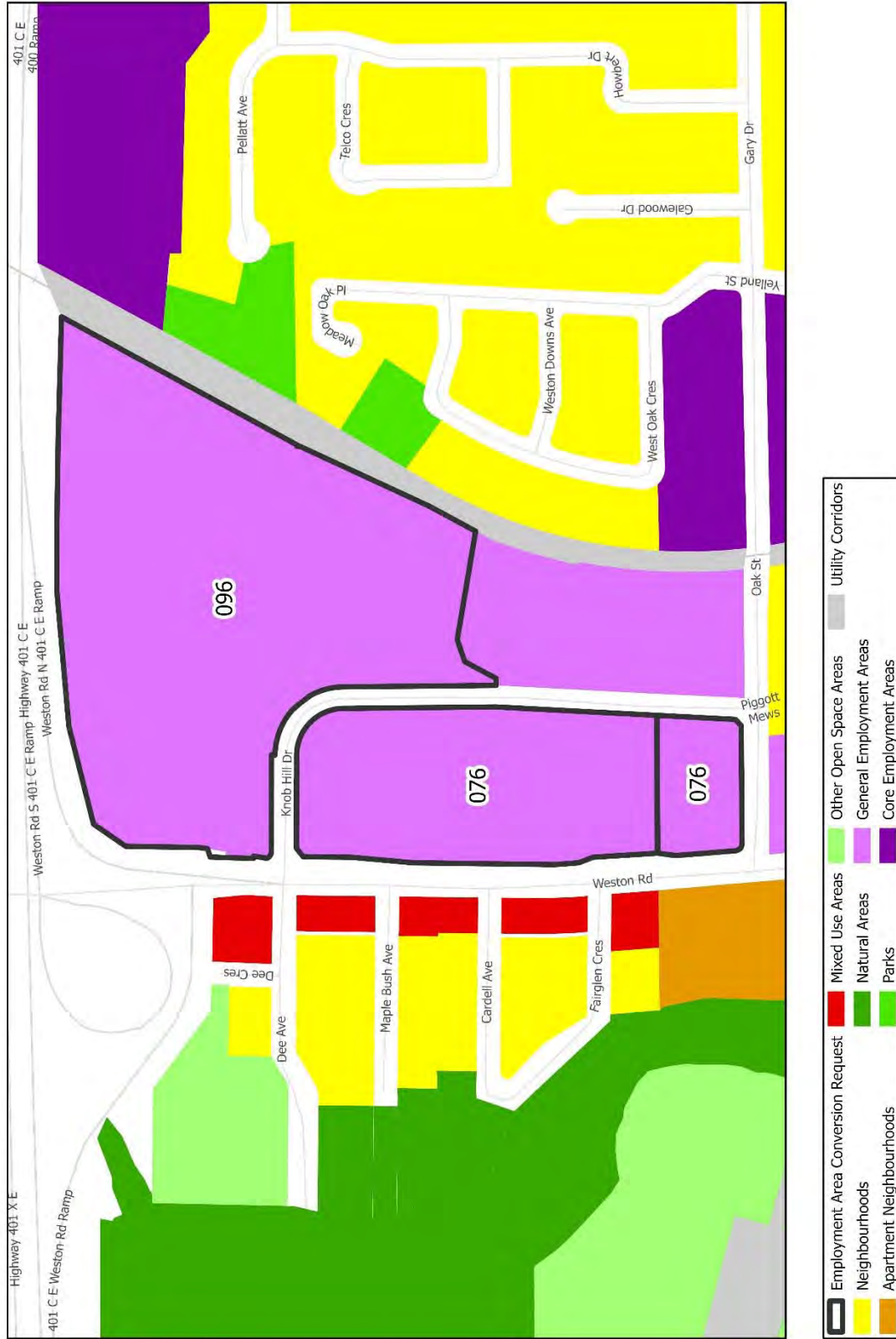








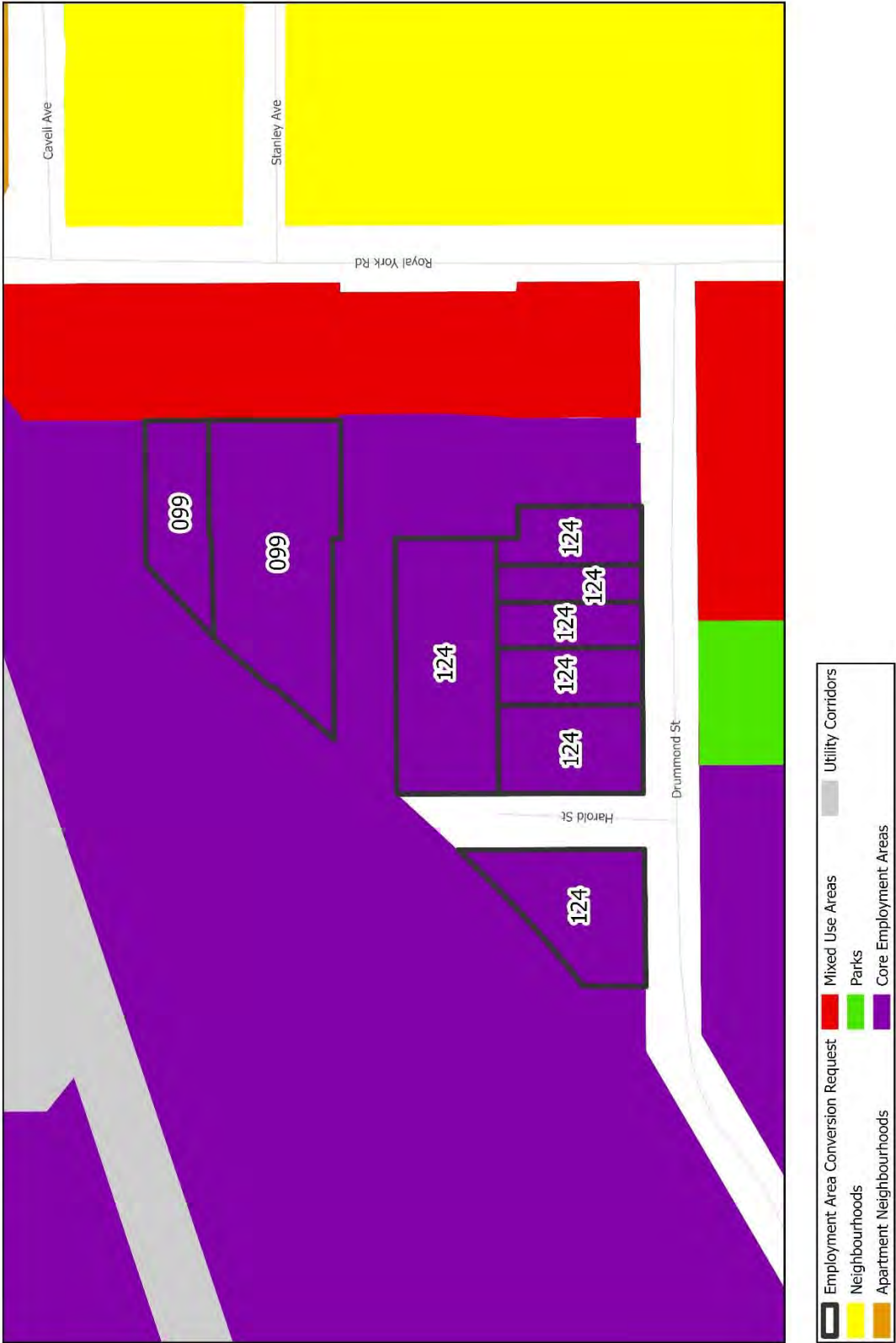
Toronto Requests to Convert Employment Areas - Preliminary Assessments (Group 3)



Toronto City Planning - February 2022

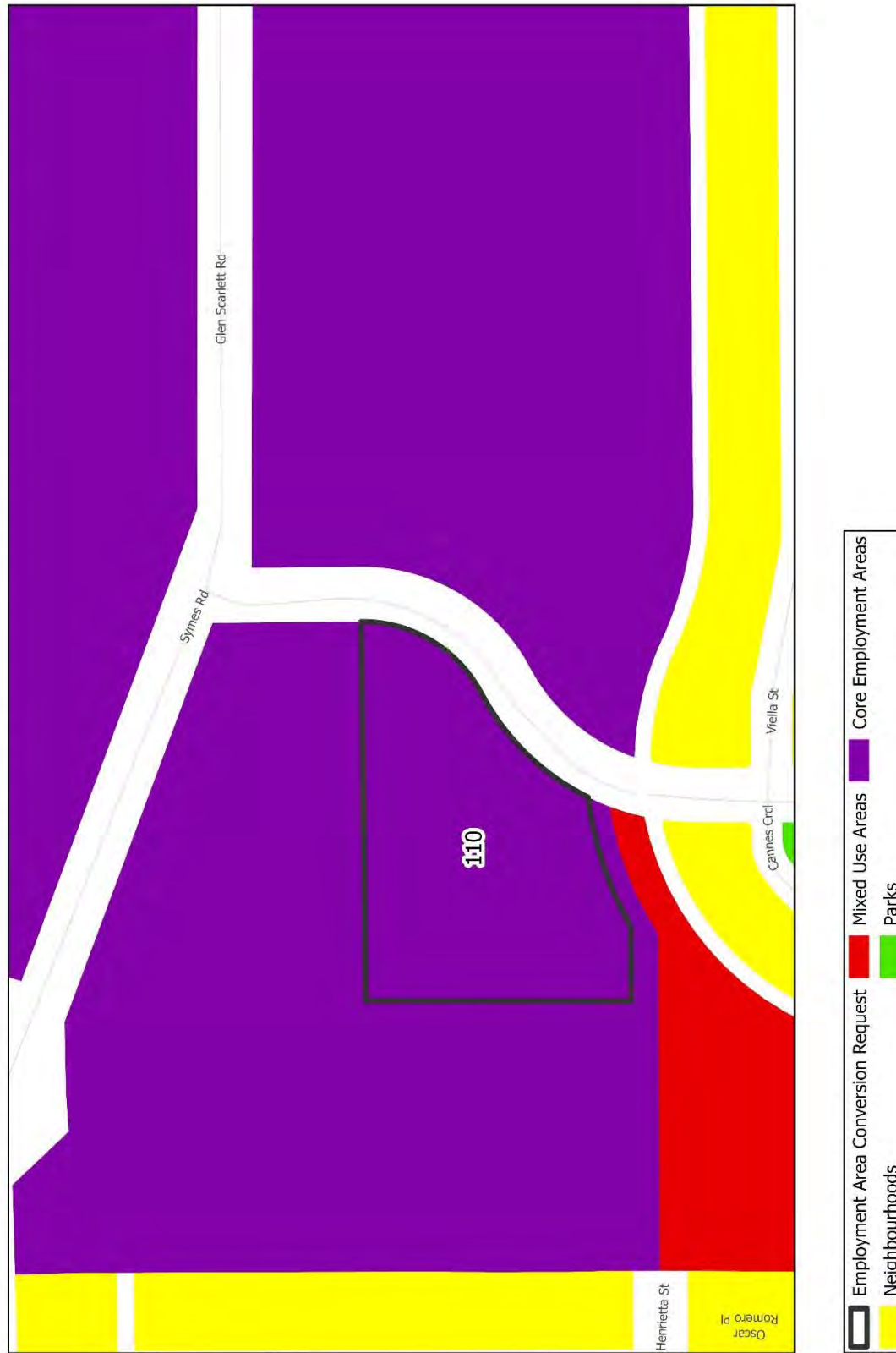
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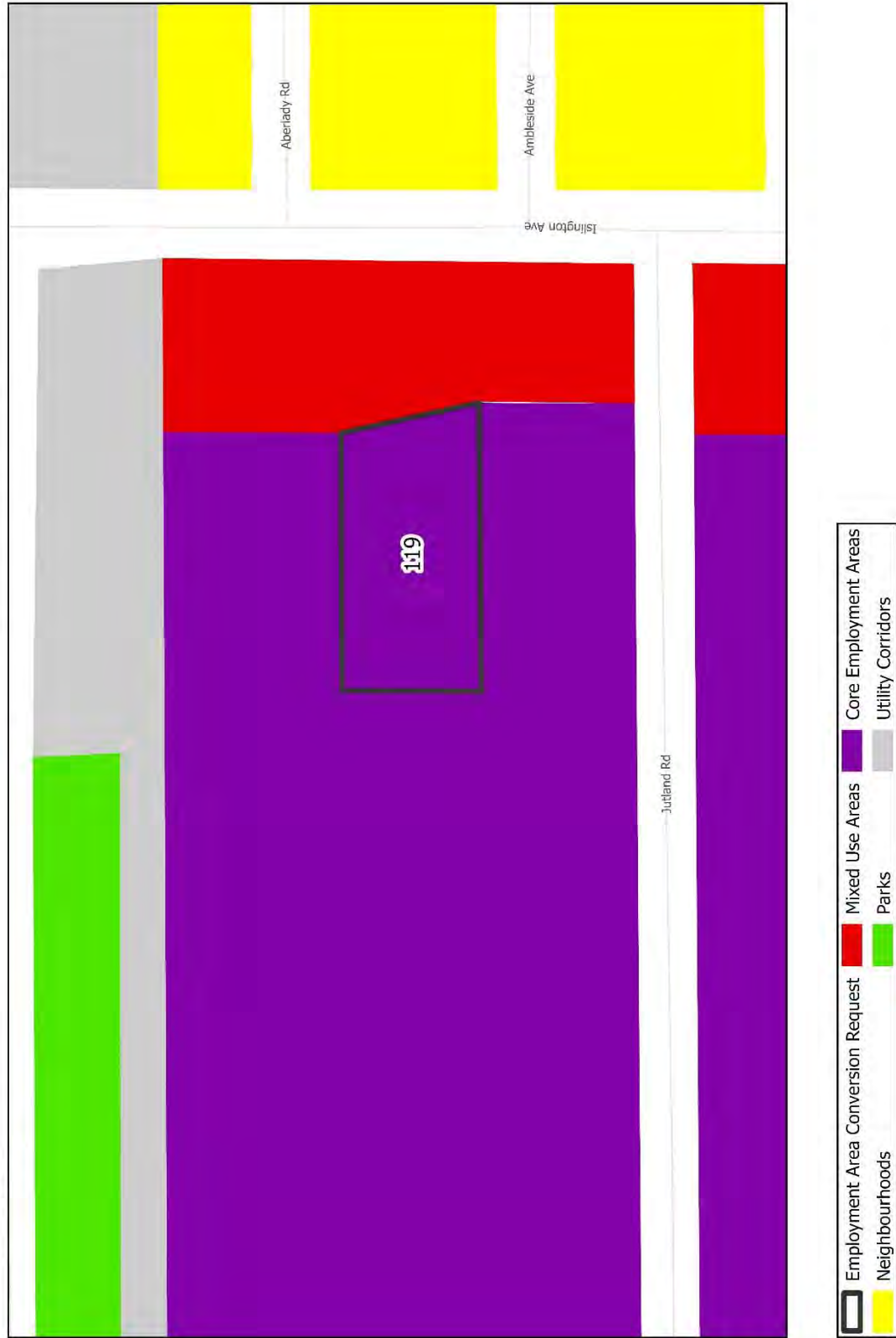


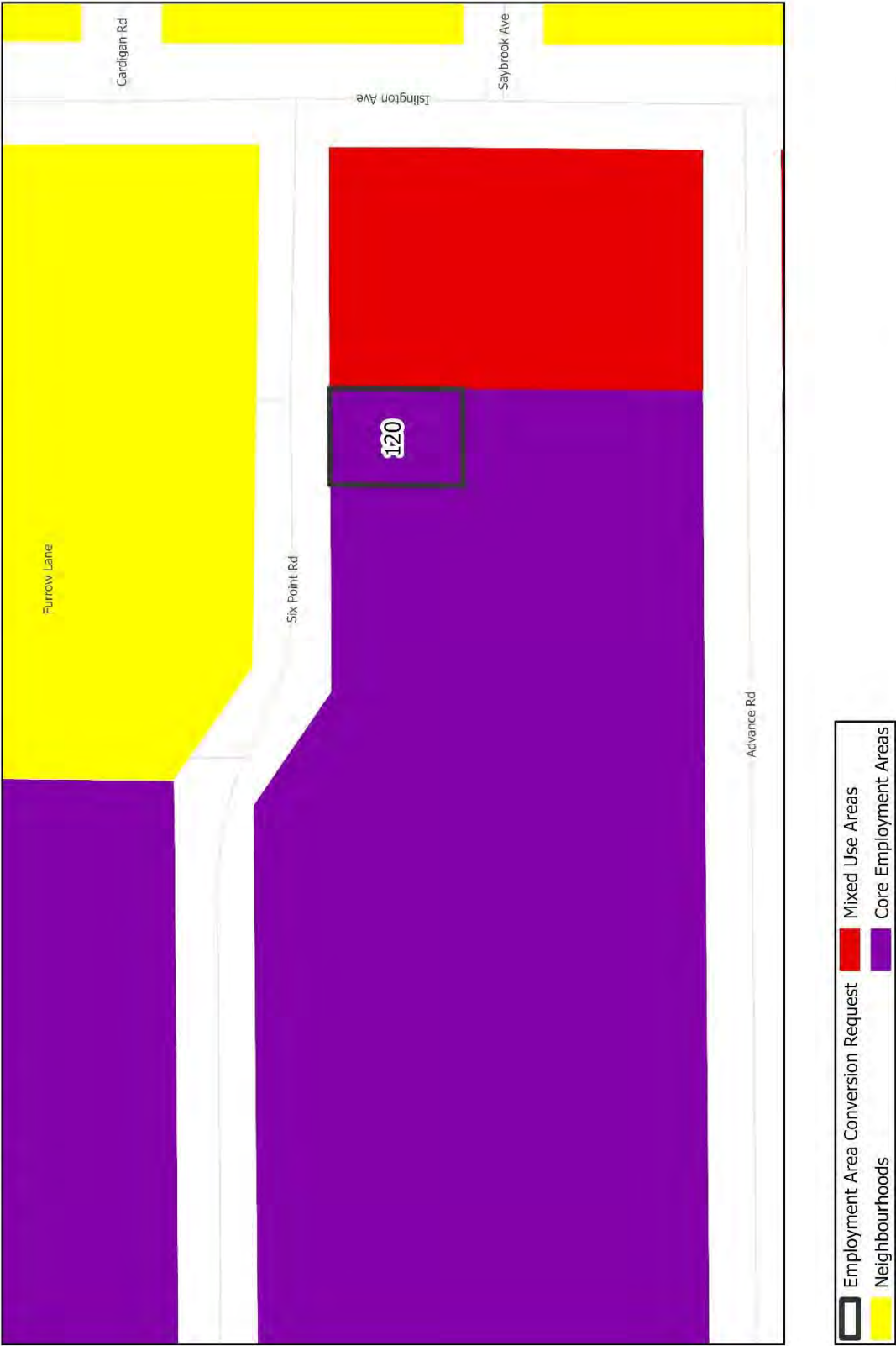


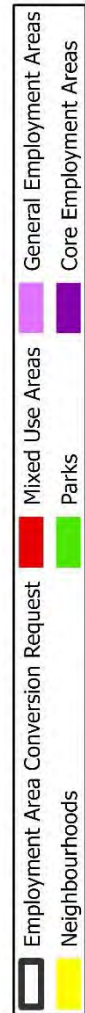
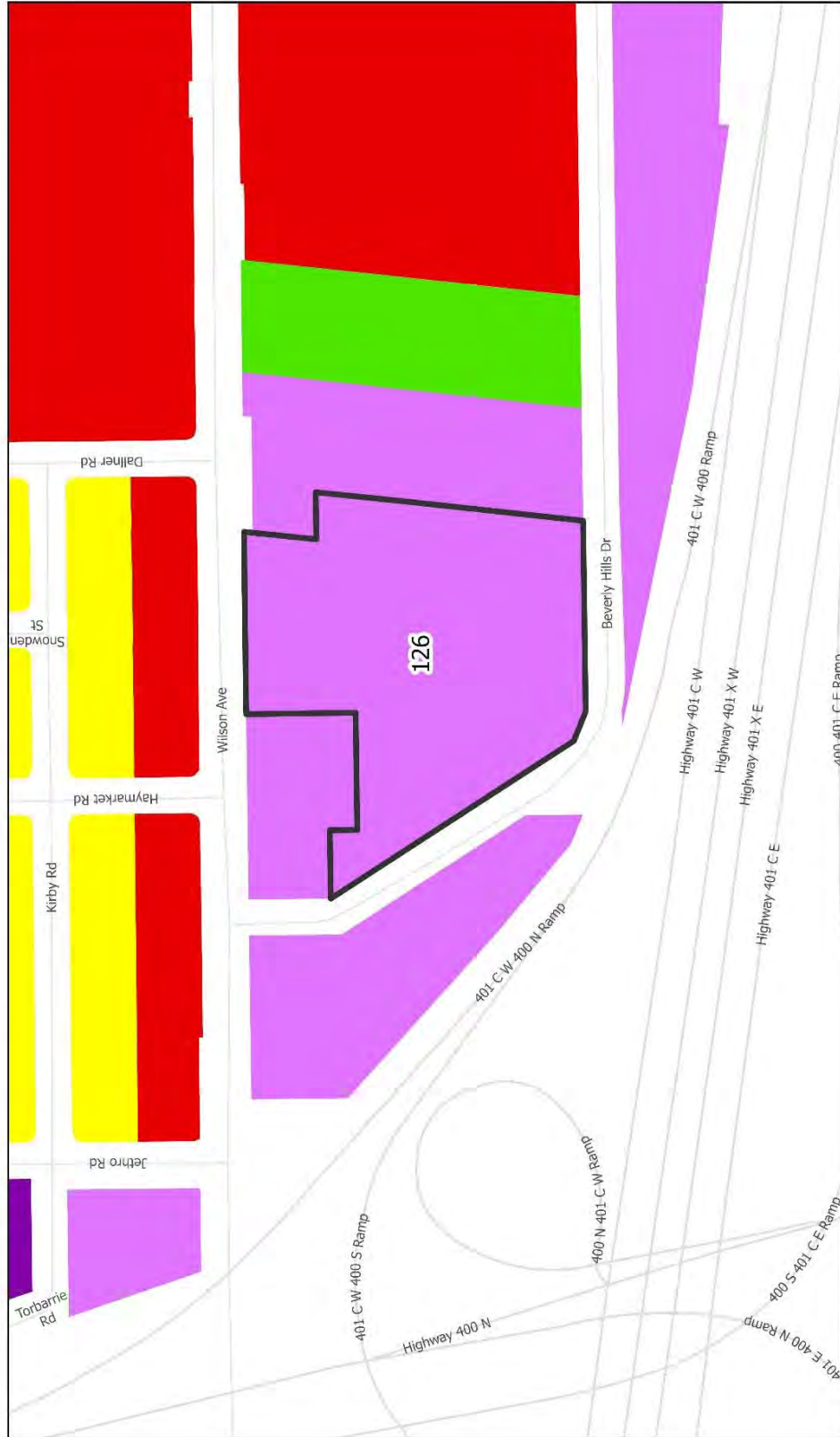


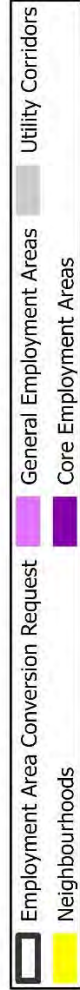
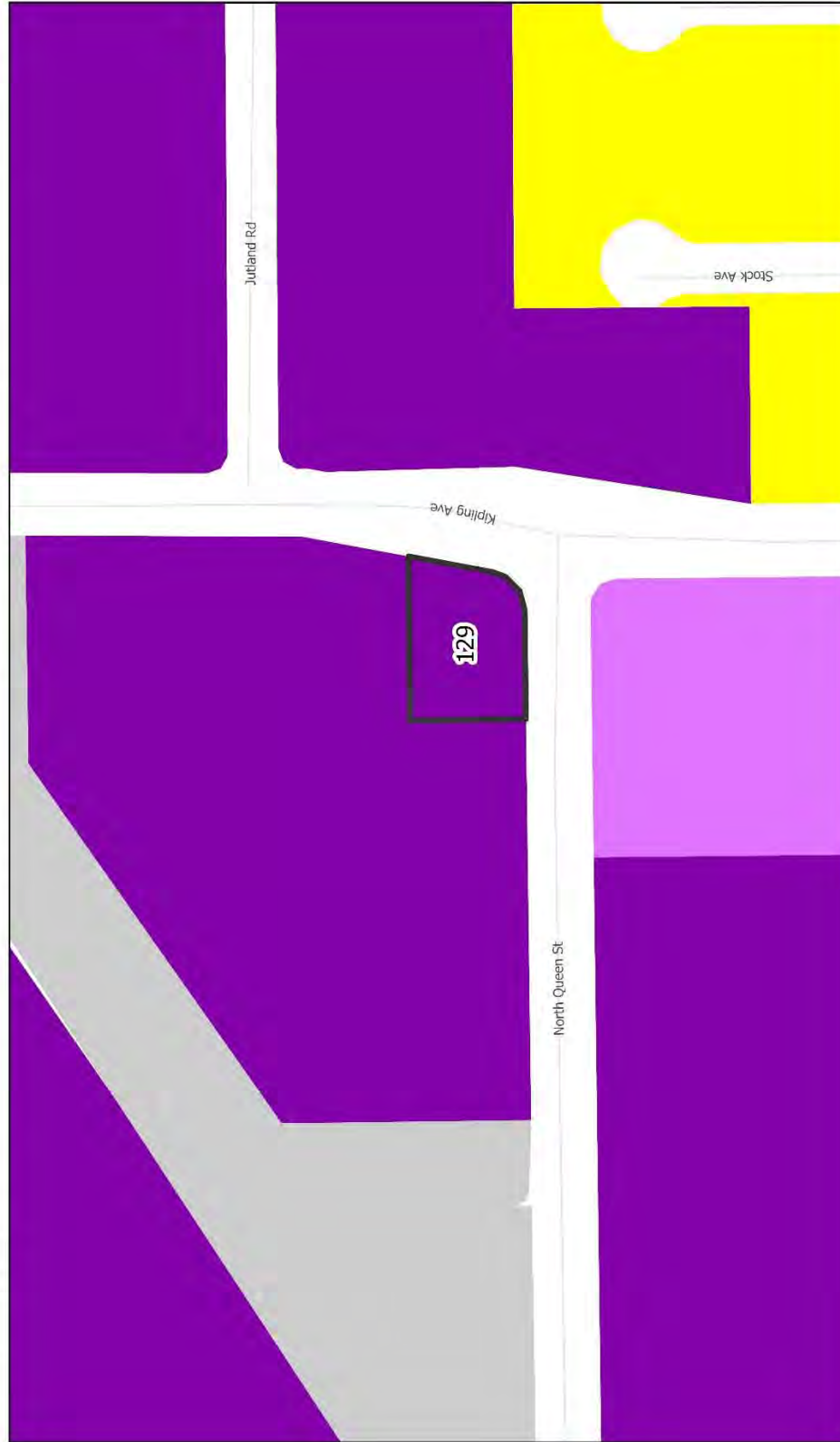








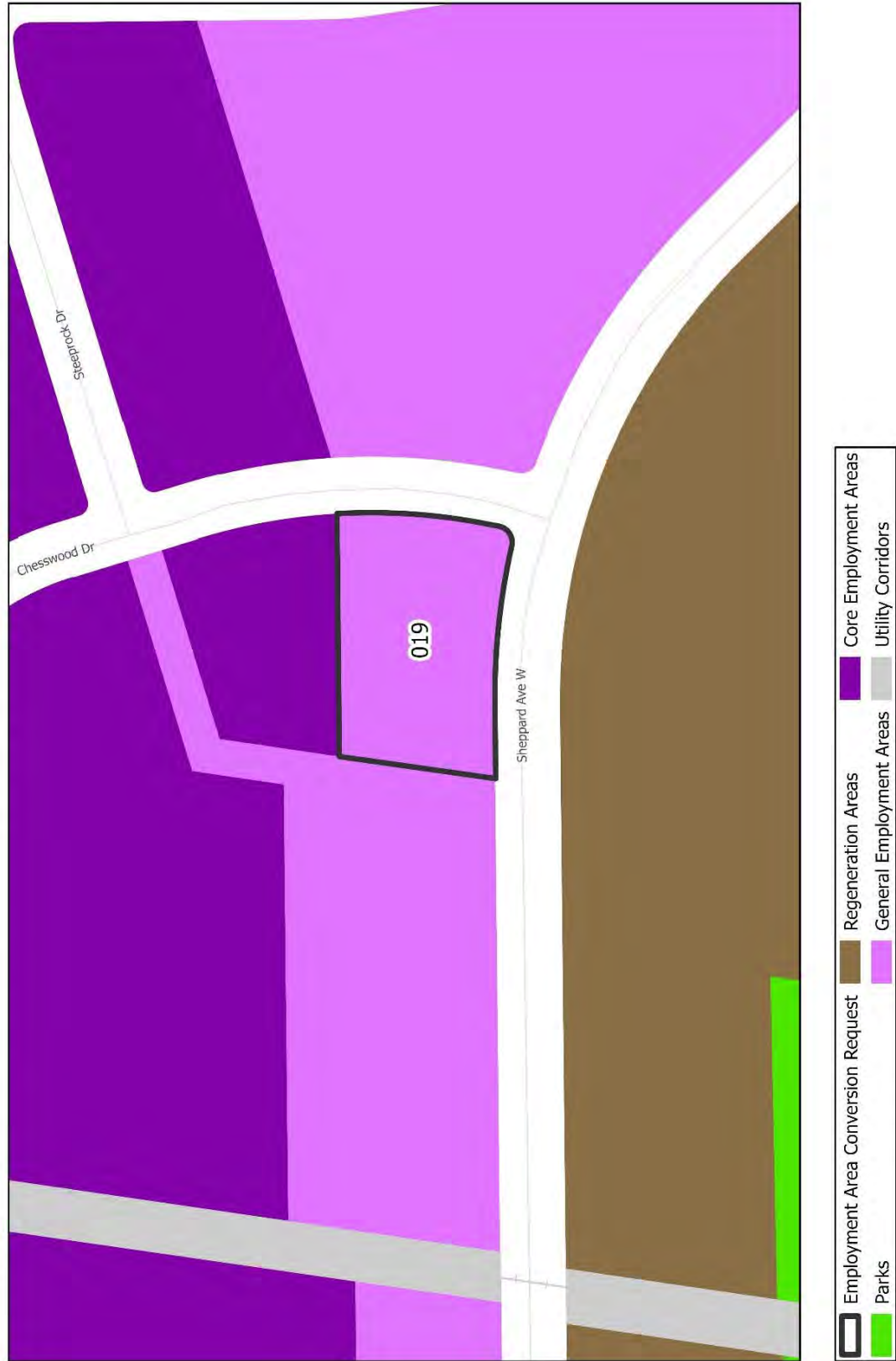


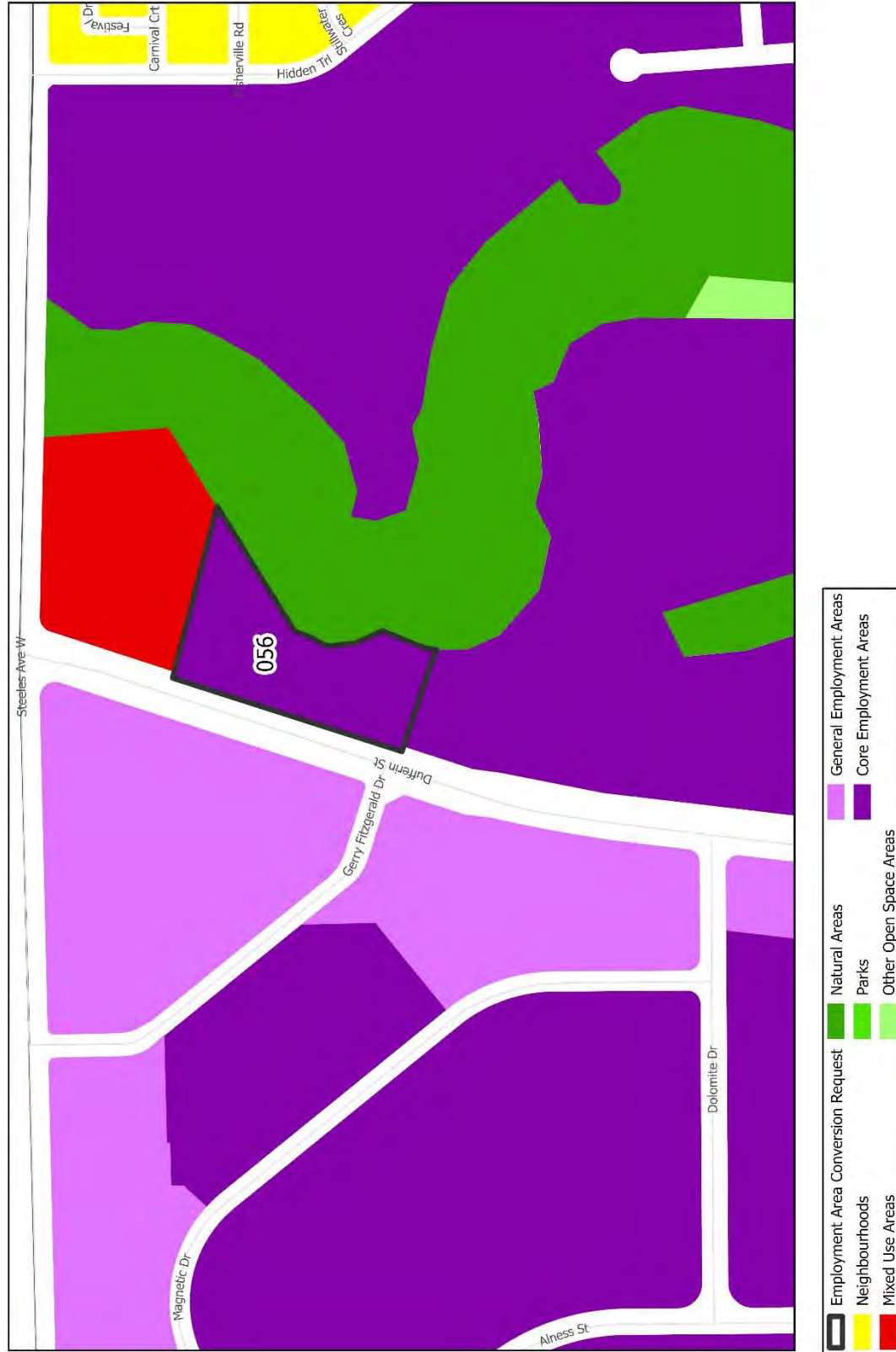






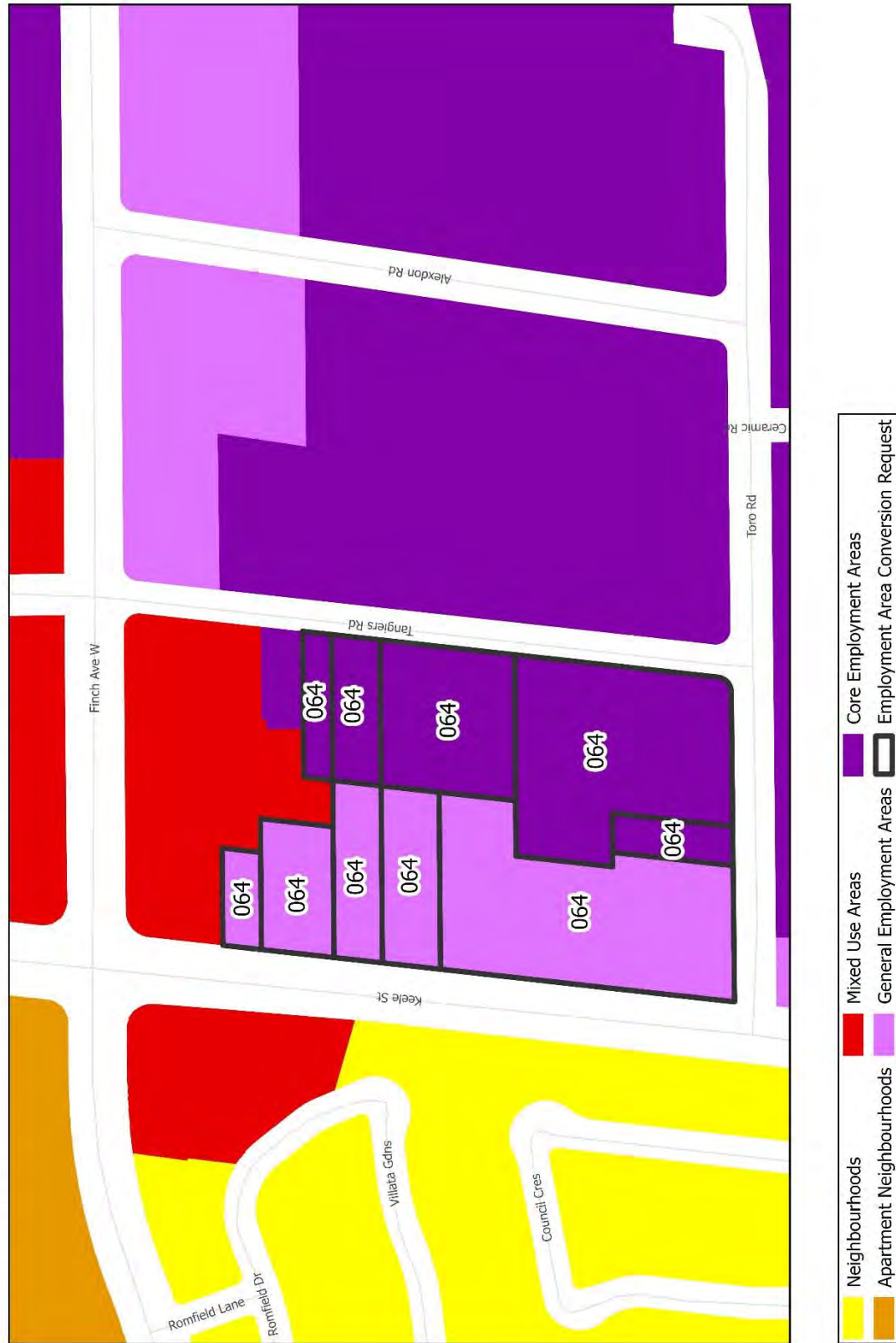






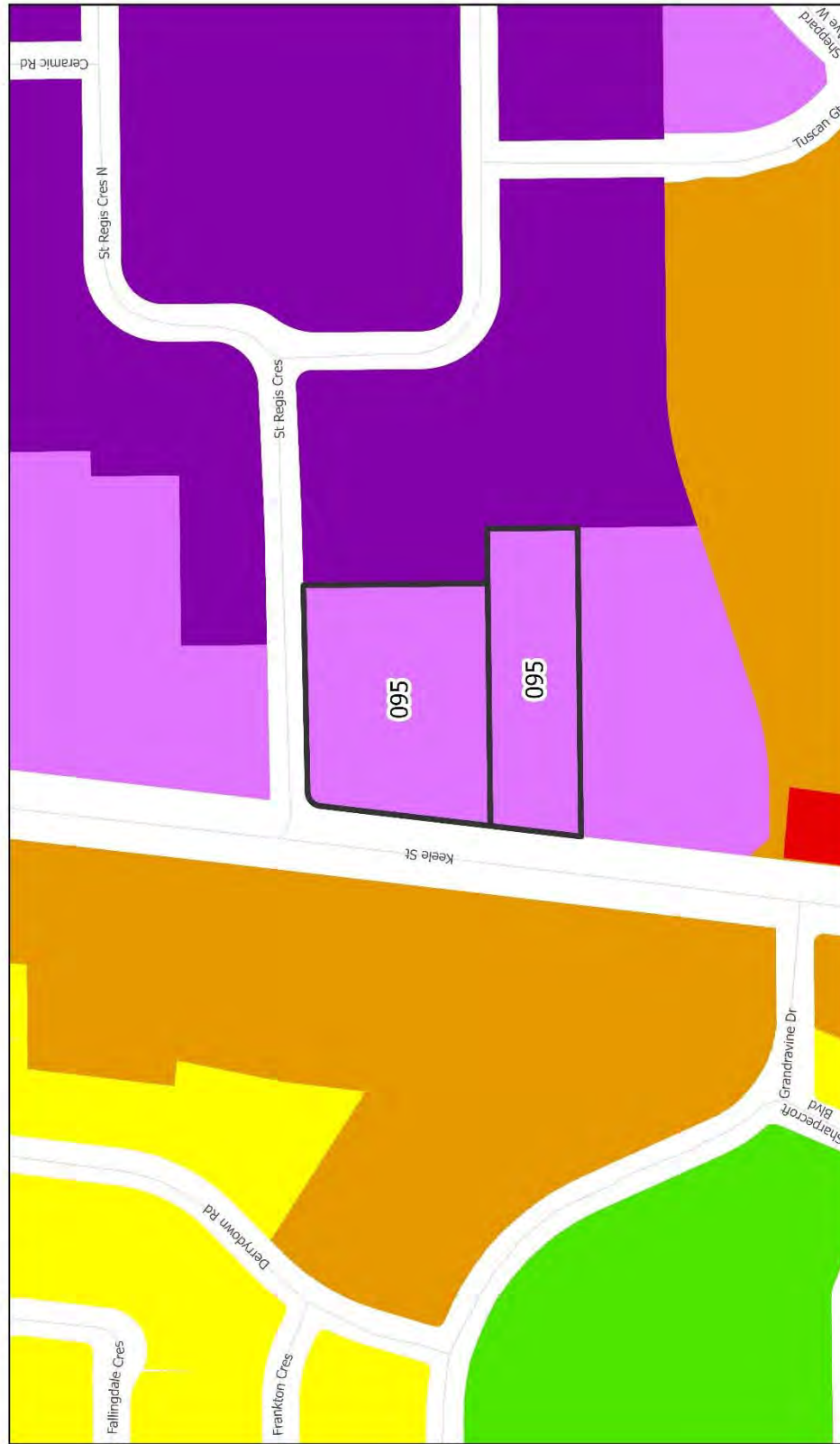


Requests to Convert Employment Areas - Preliminary Assessments (Group 3)

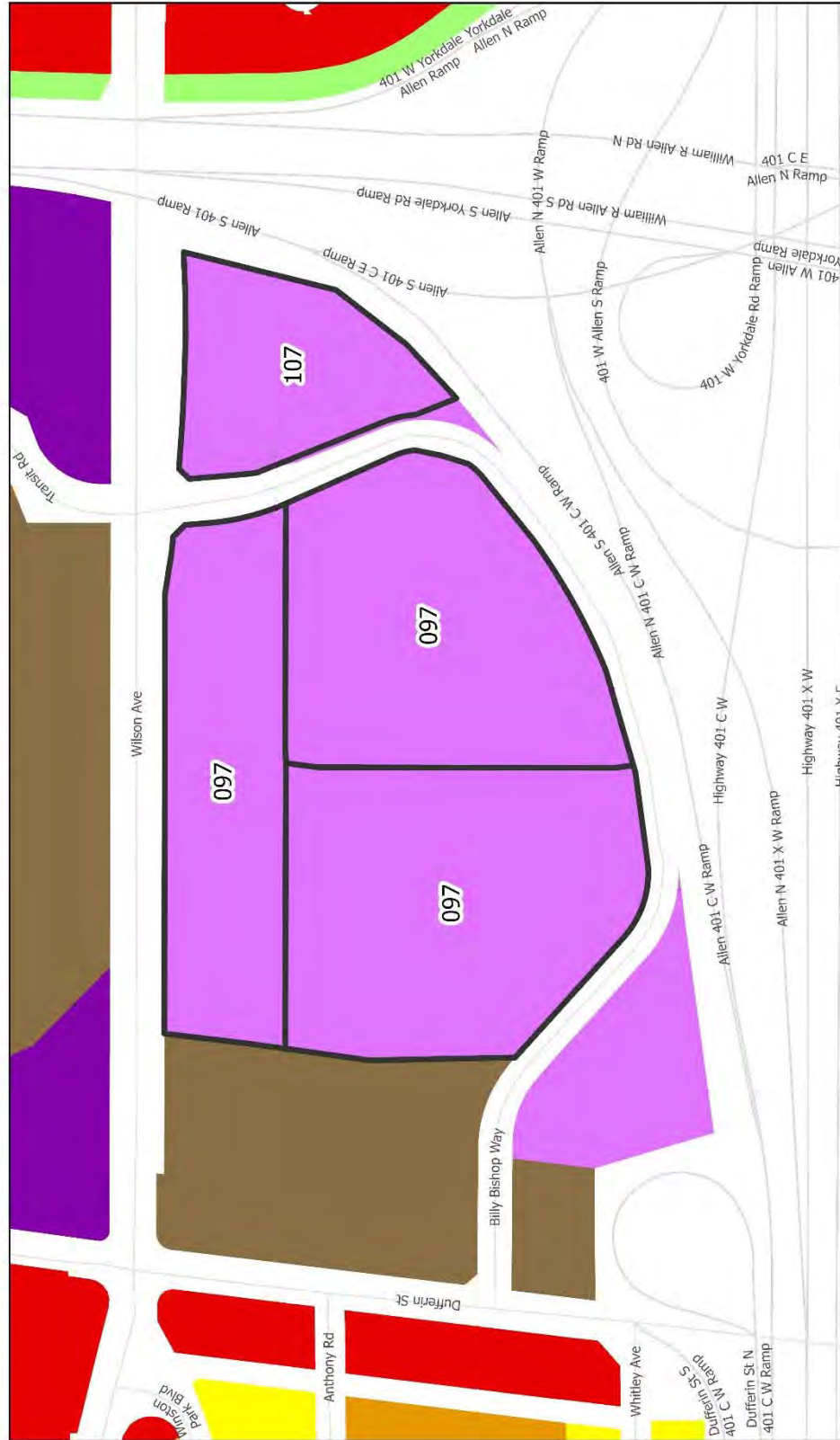


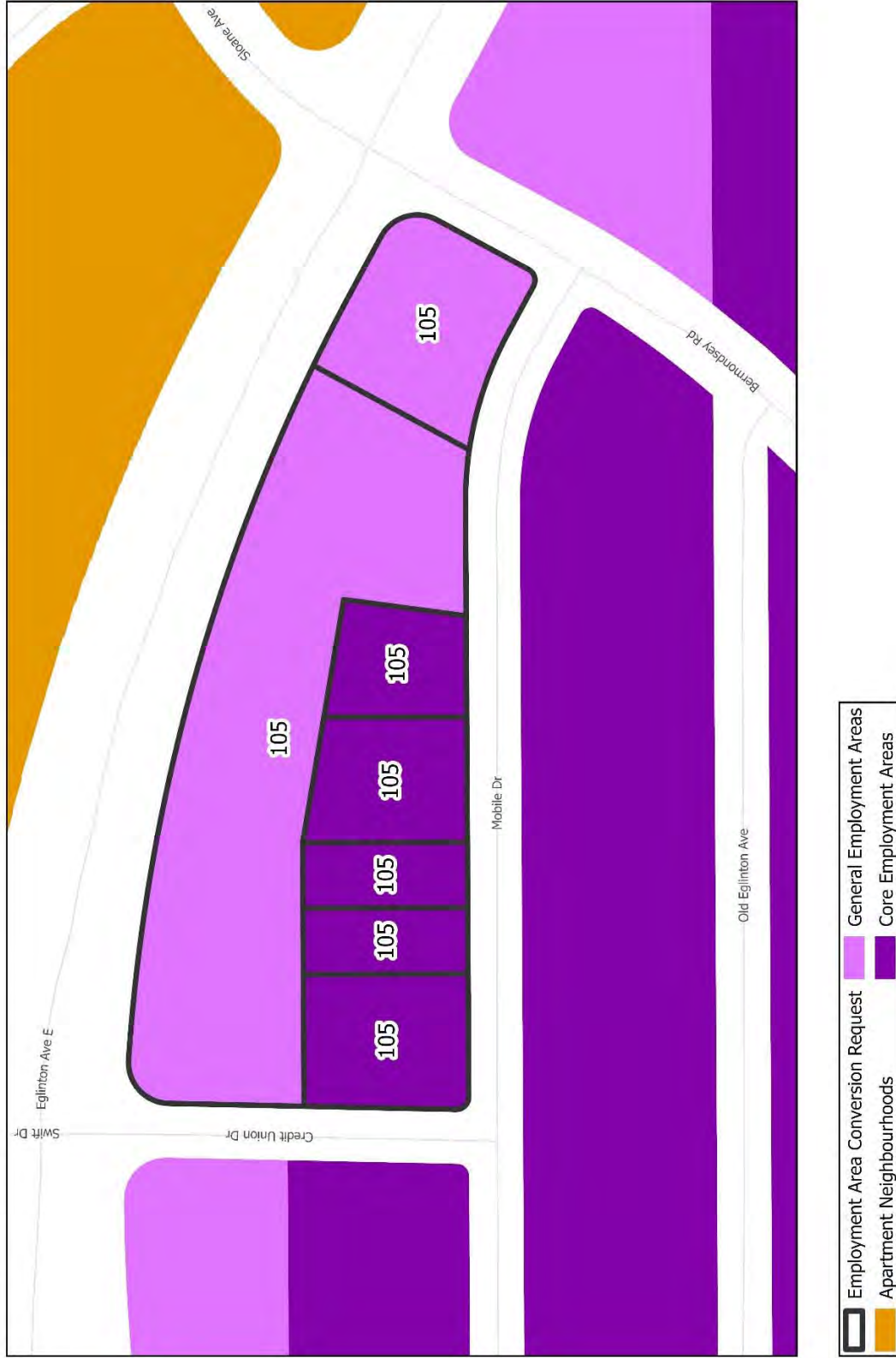


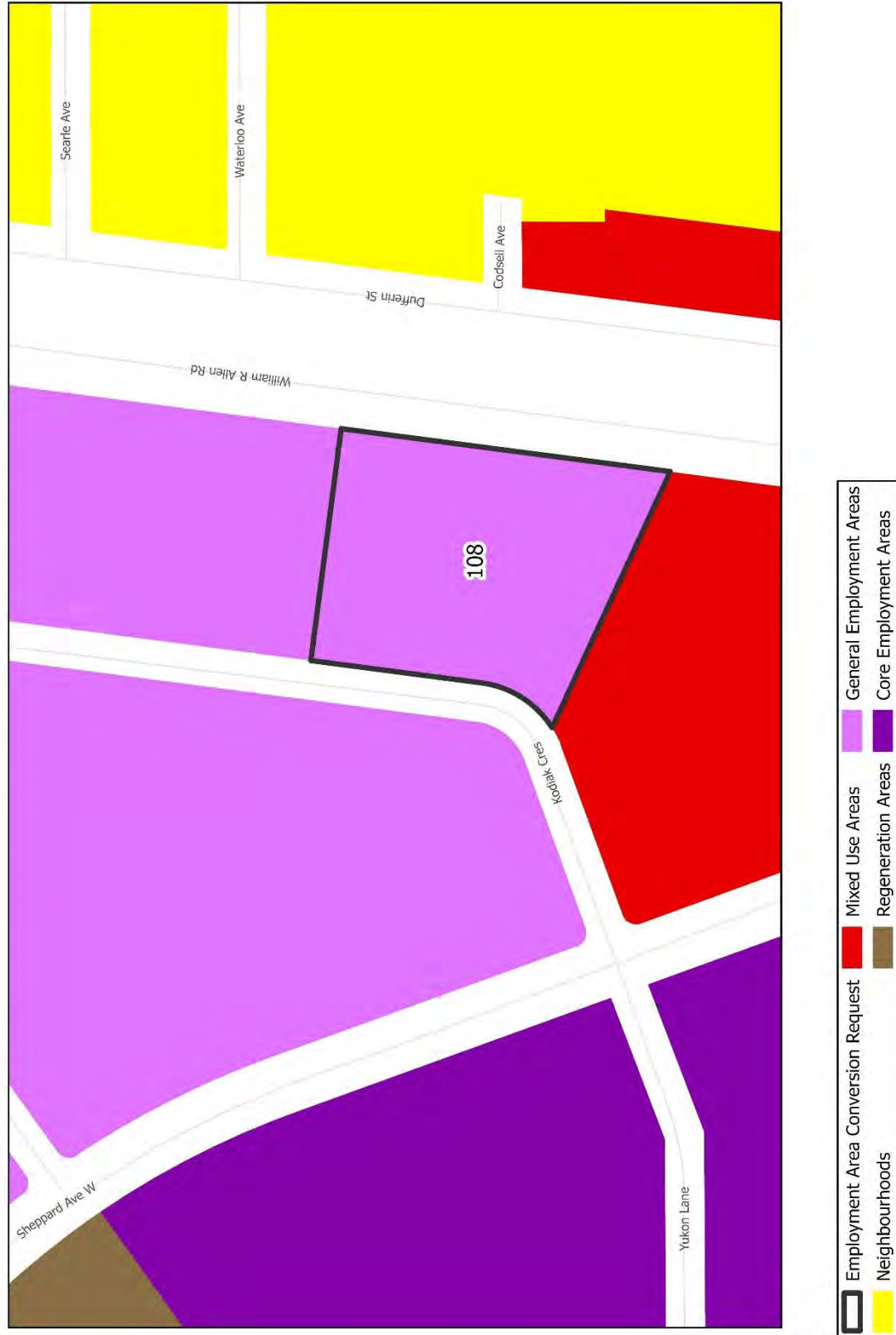




	Employment Area Conversion Request		Mixed Use Areas		General Employment Areas
	Neighbourhoods		Parks		Core Employment Areas
	Apartment Neighbourhoods		Regeneration Areas		

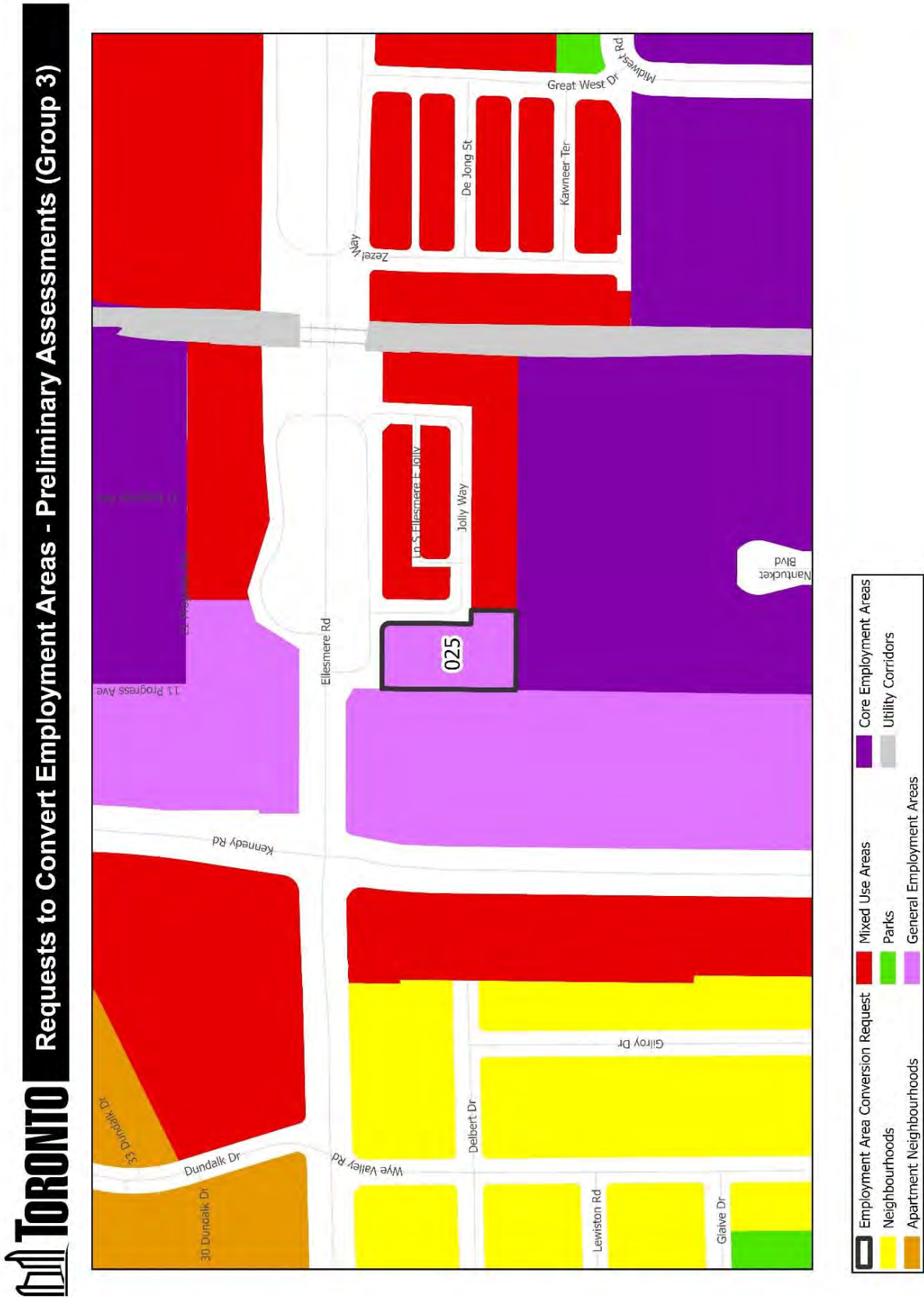








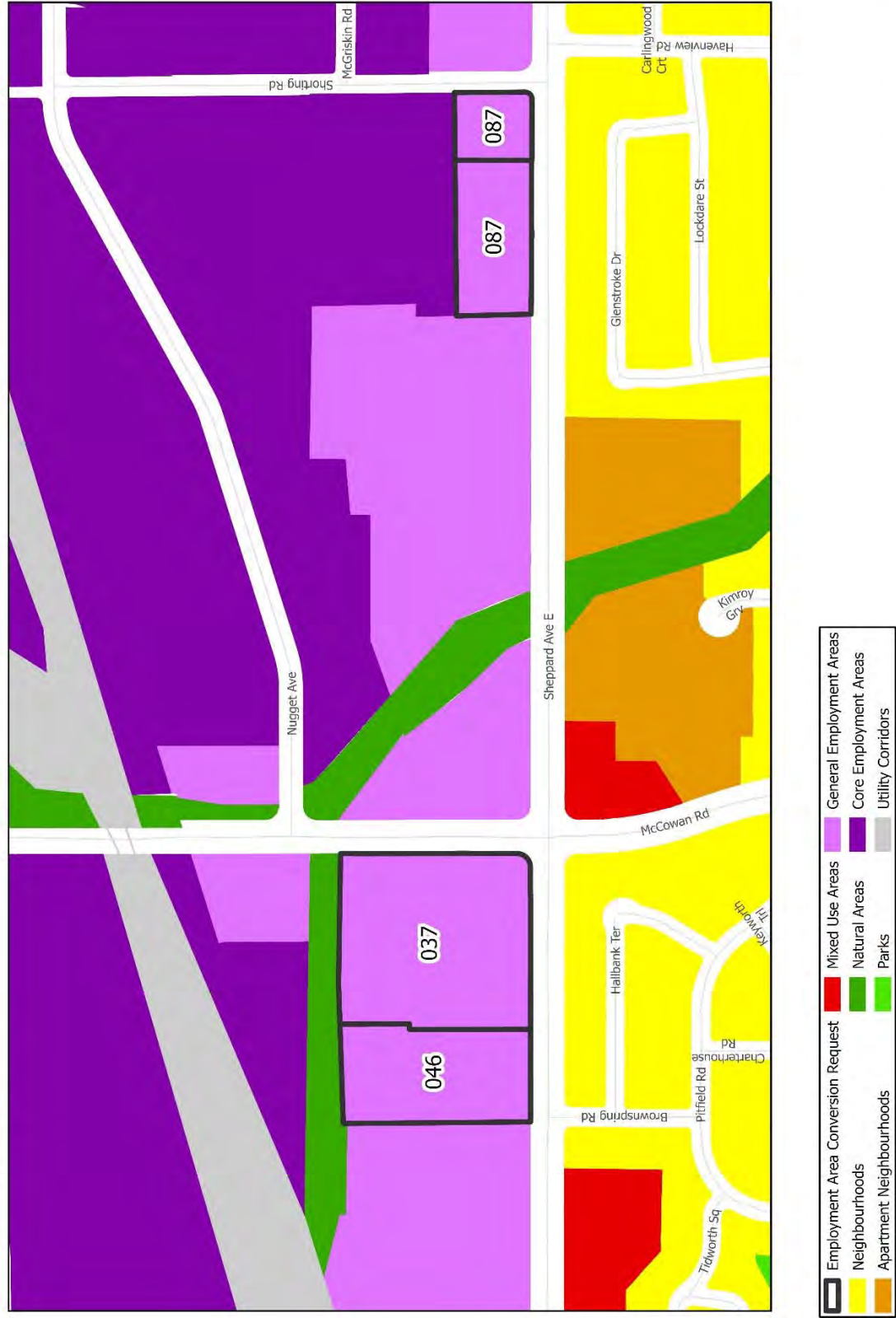
Scarborough Group 3 Conversion Requests

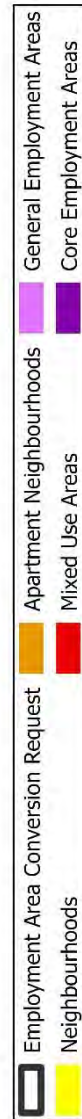
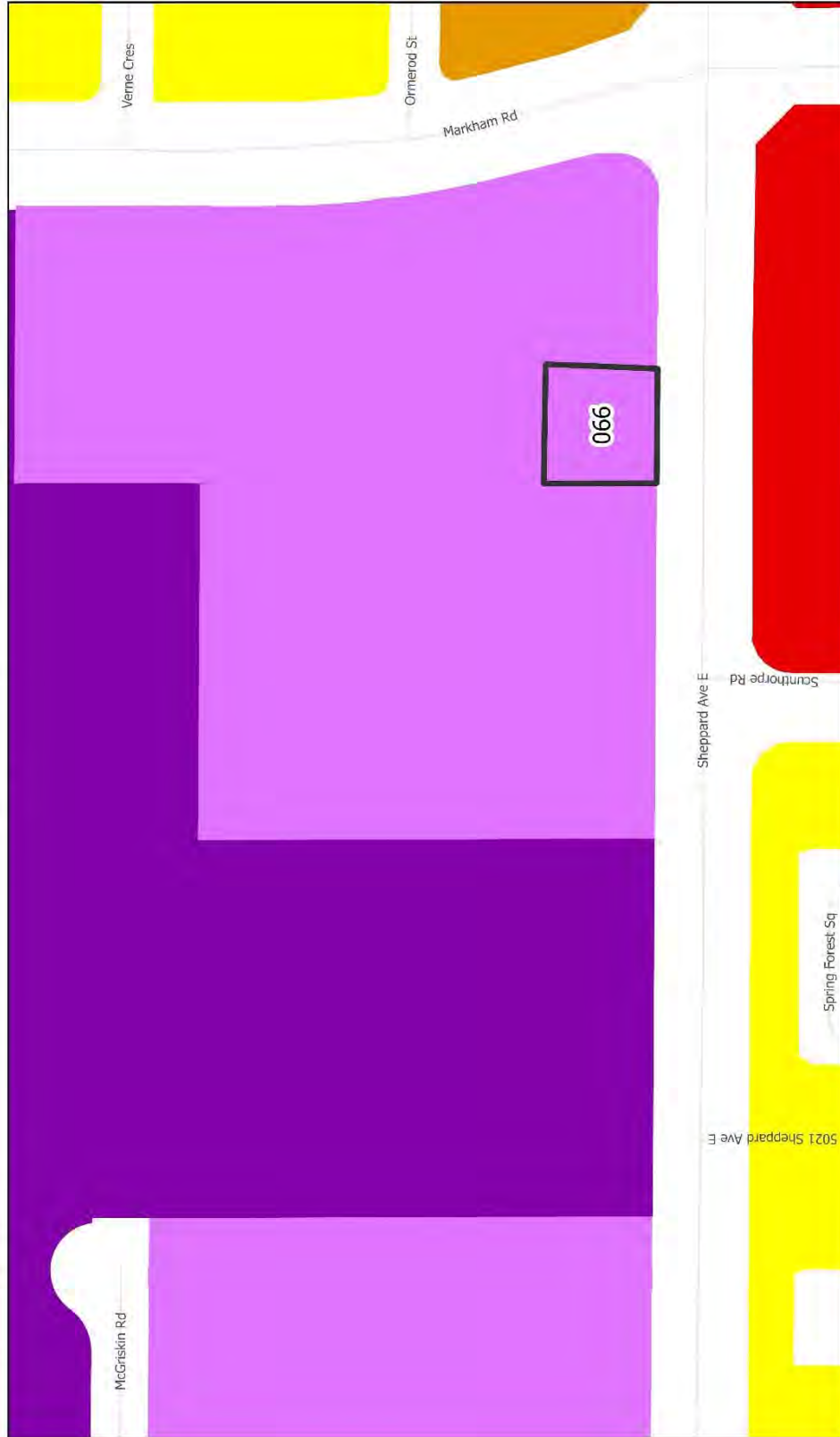


▲ Data Source: City of Toronto

Toronto City Planning - February 2022









Toronto Requests to Convert Employment Areas - Preliminary Assessments (Group 3)

