



July 1, 2022

Planning and Housing Committee
c/o Nancy Martins
10th Floor West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen St W
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Members of the Planning and Housing Committee

RE: PH35.2 - Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Major Streets - Interim Report

Note to Reader: As part of this letter I have quoted directly from the Report. The quoted material is identified by quoted *“italic”* and the location from the report with (page #). The under lines are mine.

The Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Major Streets - Interim Report highlights some good policy and planning items for the city of Toronto.

There are many items in the Report that the Long Branch neighbourhood supports. There are many items that are supportive of neighbourhoods and the protection of the tree canopy. What we are hoping is the city will encourage development to (Page 2 Paragraphs 2) *“improve the city's overall built form by prioritizing gentle density that places greater emphasis on a mix of building types and uses, including low rise residential, retail and services, that support transit use”* along Major Streets and Avenues. For example Lake Shore Blvd in Long Branch is in need of an influx of investment. It is easily reachable on foot for the residents of Long Branch, and pedestrian friendly when they arrive. The street car runs along Lake Shore Blvd 24 Hr a day, giving easy access to downtown. If someone wants to travel to reach the area there is parking. Supporting and encouraging development along Lake Shore Blvd would be a major win for the neighbourhood and the city, which is the goal of EHON. I am sure there are many other Major Streets and Avenues in Toronto that would also benefit from priority development.

- 1) The report talks about the negative effects of some development and how the city acted. (Page 2) *“In December 2021, City Council adopted a new goal of net zero emissions by 2040. Climate and resilience considerations and recommendations are also included in the September 2020 report from the Toronto Office of Recovery & Rebuild.”*

This is a very strong statement that can only be achieved by generating fewer emissions, encouraging new tree growth and protecting the existing tree canopy. One way to achieve this goal is to encouraged development along Major Streets and Avenues.

- 2) (Page 2) *“The City of Toronto recognizes that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and wellbeing of the person and to building sustainable and inclusive communities. Access to safe, good quality and affordable housing is an important determinant of physical and mental health, and a fundamental goal of the City's Housing TO 2020-2030 Action Plan.”*

(Page 14) *“Through the EHON initiative, Neighbourhood designated segments along Major Streets offers the City an opportunity to investigate policies and programs that are targeted at increasing the creation of a diverse range and mix of housing options in lower density ground related formats. Included in this are additional units to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes and address reducing core housing needs amongst various equity deserving groups.”*

Lake Shore Blvd is currently under a SASP that allows 4-6 story mixed use residential properties. Lake Shore Blvd is serviced by 24 hr TTC. There are parks on both the eastern and western border of Long Branch and the lake is a 10 minute walk.

To create affordable housing anywhere in the city, the developers have to have a philosophy of not for profit. This cannot be completed without a public private partnership. Currently there is nothing in EHON to support this partnership. Unless a partnership is detailed and explained, every reference to *“affordable housing”* in all EHON documentation must be removed. It is confusing and misleading to anyone reading these documents.

- 3) (Page 3 Paragraph 2) *“The City Planning Division will continue to consider missing middle housing approaches as part of the Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods work plan through a climate impact lens, specifically working towards more efficient land use and walkable communities, and mitigating impacts on the City's soft landscaping and water permeable areas and tree canopy.”*

The only way to reach this stated goal is to move development to Major Streets and Avenues. Most of the *“City's soft landscaping and water permeable areas and tree canopy”* is in back and front yards of neighbourhoods and will be severely impacted.

- 4) *“1.1.3.3 Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for transit-supportive development, accommodating a significant supply and range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.”*

City Planners, following Section 1.1.3.3, will identify specific areas in need, identify what that need is and then proceed. This is planning based on the needs of an area. This is an opportunity for EHON to be updated to support each neighbourhood's needs. As it has been presented, EHON is being implemented across the city with the same brush.

- 5) (Page 7) *“Chapter 2: Shaping the City builds on these intentions and sets the foundation for directing growth and the urban structure of the city. In Section 2.2 structuring Growth in the City, growth is directed to the Centres, Avenues, Employment Areas and the Downtown to, while among other matters, reinforcing prevailing building types within Neighbourhoods. The goal of protecting neighbourhoods from significant change is further augmented in 2.2.2 Centres, 2.2.3 Avenues. The urban structure established in Chapter 2, is shown on Map 2 Urban Structure. The map shows the locations of the identified areas for growth across the city, including identification of Avenues along major streets.”*

Chapter 2 directs growth to where it can be supported and where it is needed. Map 2 shows that every Street and every Avenue are not the same. Growth must be targeted to where it is needed. The philosophy of Chapter 2 must continue.

- 6) (Page 7) *“Section 2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods recognizes the areas where a transition in density or built form may occur, between neighbourhoods and growth areas, such as Avenues. The policies direct development in the growth areas to demonstrate a transition to ensure the stability of adjacent neighbourhood areas. This section also recognizes that not all neighbourhoods have developed in the same way, or received the same investments over time. Priority neighbourhoods are recognized as those needing specific consideration to improve access to services and transportation options, upgrade buildings, and address issues related to social vulnerability or integration.”*

Some neighbourhoods should have a priority over others for development. Section 2.3.1 highlights this need. The neighbourhoods that need specific consideration should receive priority. If not, only the neighbourhoods that are doing well will also get new development. If developers are selecting neighbourhoods to work in only the neighbourhoods that can give them the most profit will be developed.

Some neighbourhoods do not need increased density as they are developing well under their current guidelines. These neighbourhoods do not need any changes to their existing development guidelines. Some neighbourhoods are under developed and are losing population. These neighbourhoods need support.

Below is a table identifying the neighbourhoods that have grown the most and also neighbourhoods that have lost the most population. This is the most current information from the 2021 Census. BTW all EHON documentation should be updated with 2021 census data: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/92e3-City-Planning-2021-Census-Backgrounder-Population-Dwellings-Backgrounder.pdf>

Table 9: Top 10 Neighbourhood Population Percent Increase, 2016-2021

Neighbourhood Name	%Change
Mount Pleasant West (104)	+32.8%
Church-Yonge Corridor (75)	+29.8%
Waterfront Communities-The Island (77)	+29.4%
Henry Farm (53)	+26.9%
Mimico (17)	+20.2%
Regent Park (72)	+18.5%
Bay Street Corridor (76)	+18.1%
Yorkdale-Glen Park (31)	+15.1%
Long Branch (19)	+13.1%
Downsview-Roding-CFB (26)	+12.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Censuses 2016 & 2021

Table 10: Top 10 Neighbourhood Population Percent Decrease, 2016-2021

Neighbourhood Name	%Change
Milliken (130)	-8.1%
Steeles (116)	-6.8%
Corso Italia-Davenport (92)	-6.5%
Trinity-Bellwoods (81)	-5.2%
Bayview Woods-Steeles (49)	-5.0%
Humber Heights-Westmount (8)	-4.8%
Palmerston-Little Italy (80)	-4.7%
Mount Olive-Silverstone-Jamestown (2)	-4.7%
Agincourt North (129)	-4.5%
St.Andrew-Windfields (40)	-4.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Censuses 2016 & 2021

- 7) (page 4) *“The Planning Act states that Official Plan shall contain policies that authorize the use of an additional residential unit in a detached house, semi-detached house, and row house, and in an ancillary building to those residential building types. These changes provide the opportunity for additional residential density on residential lots to include a main house, an additional residential unit within the house, and an additional residential unit separate from the main house for a total of three units.”*

There is a very important statement in the Planning Act that says *“contain policies”*. The Planning Act does not say that the entire city in every neighbourhood must allow, it says *“contain policies”*. The direction of EHON has been the entire city, with a single brush stroke, and is throwing out the concerns and existing city policy and guidelines. EHON gives developers the right to decide where development is created. It is not the developer’s role or responsibility

to “*build back better*” it is the city’s responsibility to direct what that means and where it should happen. Saying every neighbourhood should be the same shows a total lack of understanding of economics. By giving developers the ability to choose, does not make every neighbourhood the same it only ensures the most desirable neighbourhoods will get development and the neighbourhoods that need growth and increased population will see minimal or no development.

Long Branch and the city view much of the existing policy and planning criteria in much the same way.

Many items of the Major Streets report talks about “*mitigating impacts on the City’s soft landscaping and water permeable areas and tree canopy*” but does not specifically say to build back better along Major Streets and Avenues. Neighbourhoods, in general, are where City’s soft landscaping and water permeable areas and tree canopy is. The tree canopy is in neighbourhood back and front yards not just on boulevards. By encouraging development along Major Streets and Avenues the mature tree canopy in neighbourhoods will have more protection. Where the mature tree canopy exists on Major Streets and Avenues it must be protected also.

Long Branch is a unique neighbourhood in that it contains a large mix of housing and is zoned for that large mix. We have SASP for Lake Shore Blvd, areas that are zoned RA, RM, RD and RT. Based on the 2021 census Long Branch is growing within this guide line. When developers have the opportunity, within the Long Branch RM zone, to build a multiplex, they do not. 20 Garden Place, a property that is zoned RM, was sold a few years ago. The property was subsequently severed and 2 luxury homes were built. The opportunity to build a multiplex was there as, not only is it zoned RM, but 16 Garden Place is a multiplex. One of the luxury properties was recently on the market \$2,299,000. Please look this up on you favorite Real-estate site. This is what EHON will encourage in neighbourhoods and already takes place in Long Branch.

There is an opportunity to focus new development along Major Streets and Avenues and create incentives where the neighbourhood needs special consideration. By doing this the city’s policy and planning goals can be reached.

I would like the opportunity to address the Planning and Housing Committee on July 5 regarding PH35.2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Vella". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven Vella
Co-Chair, Long Branch Neighbourhood Association
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