

4350 Steeles Avenue East - City of Markham – Development Submission – Update Report

Date: October 16, 2025

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Executive Director, Development Review

Wards: All

SUMMARY

The City of Markham has been engaged by Infrastructure Ontario (IO) to provide comments on a development proposal that is being coordinated with internal departments and external partners. This report is submitted regarding the potential amendment to the City of Markham’s Zoning By-law that would permit a mixed-use development as part of the Province of Ontario’s Transit-Oriented Communities (“TOC”) Program.

The Milliken TOC proposal is situated on of 9.3 hectare parcel located on the north side of Steeles Avenue East, west of the Stouffville Regional GO Rail Line. The site falls within a Protected Major Transit Area (PMTSA) within the City of Markham which is awaiting approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The proposal consists of 8 residential buildings with 12 towers ranging from 25 to 50 stories in height (in addition to mid-rise built forms of up to 15 storeys) situated upon podiums ranging from 1 to 6 storeys yielding a total of approximately 5,500 dwelling units. The proposal features 10,100 square metres of non-residential gross floor area and a 1.97-hectare central park. Access to the block is facilitated through a 24.5m wide north-south public road, adjacent to the Pacific Mall lands, connecting Kennedy Road to Steeles Avenue East. Further access within the site is provided through a series of private roads including a secondary connection to Kennedy Road.

Because of the subject site’s proximity to the municipal boundary, the submission has been circulated to the City of Toronto in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act* and a mutually agreed upon protocol to review neighbouring municipalities’ planning applications and studies. The report identifies comments from Development Review staff and provides recommendations to protect the City’s interests concerning the proposal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Development Review recommends that:

1. City Council forward the report to the City of Markham, Planning and Development Services Department for consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Development Review 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.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council has not previously provided comments to City of Markham on the subject site.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING LANDS

The subject site is located on the north side of Steeles Avenue East, east of both Kennedy Road and the Pacific Mall, and west of the Stouffville GO Regional Commuter Rail line within the City of Markham. It is approximately 9.3 hectares in size and is occupied by service parking lots but is otherwise generally vacant. Steeles Avenue is the boundary between Toronto and Markham. See Attachment 1 for the Location Map.

The surrounding land uses are summarized as follows:

North: A mix of commercial and residential uses.

East: Across the GO Stouffville Rail Corridor, a mix of commercial, industrial and emerging residential uses.

South: Across the municipal border City of Toronto within the City of Toronto are commercial and retail uses, with a small pocket of mixed-use development approved at the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Redlea Avenue focused around the Milliken GO Station. Further south are heavier industrial uses.

West: The Pacific Mall commercial building, beyond which across Kennedy Road is a place of worship and singled detached residential dwellings.

THE SUBMISSION

Description

The proposal is for a mixed-use development comprised of 8 residential buildings with 12 towers ranging in height from 25 to 50 storeys (in addition to mid-rise built forms of up to 15 storeys) on base buildings ranging in height from 1 to 6 storeys offering approximately 5,500 dwelling units. The development is proposed to include underground parking spaces, the total number of which will be determined at a later stage. The residential gross floor area proposed is 368,500 square metres, in addition to 10,100 square metres of non-residential floor area within three of the buildings in close proximity to the Milliken GO Station. A 1.97-hectare public park is central within the development proposal and would front a new minimum 24.5 metre wide north-south

public road, connecting Kennedy Road to Steeles Avenue East. See Attachment 2 for the concept site plan.

Density

The proposal has a density of 5.16 times the area of the lands.

Residential Component

The proposal includes approximately 5,500 dwelling units, 3,850 one-bedroom (70%), 1,100 two-bedroom (20%), and 550 three-bedroom units (10%).

Non-Residential Component

The proposal includes 10,100 square metres of non-residential uses.

Access

The proposal includes a new public road oriented in a north-south configuration, from Kennedy Road to Steeles Avenue East, with a minimum width of 24.5 metres abutting the north and east frontages of the adjacent Pacific Mall lands. A series of private roads provides additional vehicular access to the residential and mixed-use buildings along the GO transit rail corridor and separates the proposed public park from the mixed-use area at the southern portion of the site.

Pedestrian access generally coincides with the proposed public and private local road network, in addition to a wide pedestrian north-south route through the development adjacent to the eastern limit of the park. Walking access to the Milliken GO station is facilitated through the recently constructed Steeles Avenue pedestrian bridge, allowing direct access to the north and south rail platforms, as well as bus and bicycle access through the connected stairwells and elevators to Steeles Avenue East.

Additional Information

See Attachment 3 of this Report for the 3D view of the proposal.

Reasons for the Submission

Infrastructure Ontario (IO) submitted the proposed development concept to the City of Markham on behalf of the landowner, Market Village Markham Inc. This approach is representative of the Province's Transit Oriented Communities ("TOC") program of partnering with private sector builders to deliver new mixed-use communities in a transit supportive context.

The subject proposal will be further defined through a comprehensive review of the submission by City of Markham staff to determine which planning instruments would be required to implement the proposal.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

Protocol for Review of Municipal Neighbour's Planning Applications and Studies

On October 24, 2011, City Council adopted the City of Toronto and Neighbouring Municipalities Protocol for the Review of Municipal Neighbour's Planning Applications and Studies. The protocol directs staff to report to City Council on major development applications in adjacent municipalities within one kilometre of the municipal boundary (in this case, Steeles Avenue East) that meet the following prescribed criteria:

- The application proposes over 10,000 square metres of gross floor area, or 100 dwelling units or greater than 150 two-way vehicular trips generated; and,
- The application is of a nature for which City staff seek Council direction or otherwise have significant City staff involvement or major impacts on the City's services and development.

The subject development proposal for this site exceeds the criteria noted in the protocol and therefore requires staff to report to Council.

POLICY & REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Land-Use Policies

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024), and shall conform to provincial plans, including the Greenbelt Plan (2017), and others.

Official Plan – City of Markham Official Plan (2014)

The subject lands are designated Mixed-Use Mid-Rise on Map 3 – Land Use, within the City of Markham's Official Plan, and are part of a Secondary Plan Area/Specific Policy Area within the City's Official Plan. The lands are identified as a Local Centre and within an Intensification Area. The Official Plan directs growth predominantly to areas like Local Centres and Intensification Areas. The Mixed-Use Mid-Rise designation applies primarily to sites along arterial and major collector roads, aiming to support intensification along transit corridors by permitting midrise built forms that encourage a mix of uses and active transportation options.

Milliken Centre Secondary Plan (2024) – Council Adopted; Awaiting Minister Approval

The subject proposal is located within the Milliken Centre Secondary Plan. On July 17, 2024, Markham Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 56 (OPA 56) to incorporate the updated Milliken Centre Secondary Plan into the City of Markham Official Plan, 2014, as amended. OPA 56 is currently with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for review and approval. The Secondary Plan provides an updated policy framework to support a new mixed-use, transit-oriented community comprised of a new elementary school site, three public parks and a variety of multi-modal transit options to support the anticipated future population of 17,000 residents and 4,800 jobs.

The subject site is identified as 'Mixed-Use High-Rise' in the Milliken Centre Secondary Plan land use schedule, which includes area and site-specific policies to provide greater flexibility for increased heights and densities at select transit supportive locations. This designation intends to accommodate high density development with a variety of uses and building types, including residential, retail and office near higher order transit facilities. Within this designation, building heights are intended to generally be located along major roads while transitioning downward in height lower towards the existing neighbourhood context.

In accordance with the Secondary Plan, the subject site has a maximum building height of 30 storeys and a maximum floor space index (FSI) of 3.5, however additional permissions may be considered without an amendment to the plan through area and site-specific policies.

Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA)

The site is within a delineated as a Protected Major Transit Station Area within the City of Markham Official Plan (PMTSA #16 - Milliken). A PMTSA is a subset of a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA). MTSA's are generally defined as the areas within a 500 to 800 metre radius of an existing or planned higher order transit station. Staff's understanding is Milliken PMTSA as delineated in the Markham Official Plan is in effect from the York Region Official Plan 2022.

The Milliken GO station itself is within the City of Toronto and as such Toronto City Council delineated lands within Toronto an MTSA, as originally adopted in 2022 via OPA 575. Many MTSA's and PMTSA's in Toronto were approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing via OPA 575 on August 15, 2025, however a decision was withheld by the Minister on the Milliken Major Transit Station Area.

Zoning

The subject site is zoned "Special Commercial Two - Special (SC2-S)" and "Special Commercial Two Zone (SC2)" within the City of Markham's Zoning By-law 47-85 as amended. It's anticipated that a Zoning By-law Amendment would be required to facilitate a change to Mixed-Use High-Rise Intensification Area (MU-HR-IA) with anticipated exceptions to various performance criteria.

COMMENTS

The following matters have been identified by Development Review staff as comments to be forwarded to the City of Markham to inform their review of the proposal.

Land Use Compatibility

In support of the development submission, a variety of studies have been submitted including, but not limited to, a shadow study, pedestrian wind study, noise impacts and air quality. Based upon preliminary staff review of the materials, the proposal will not have any significant shadow, or wind impacts on the south side of Steeles Avenue East right-of-way.

The location of the proposal relative to the mutual municipal boundary will generally cast shadows from the proposal across the subject site with limited impact on lands south of Steeles Avenue East.

Wind impacts from the proposal were modeled in consideration of the existing built form south of Steeles Avenue, whereby wind conditions remained generally unchanged. The wind study noted the approved development at 4665 Steeles Avenue East, within the City of Toronto, would not influence or generate any significant impact on the proposal based upon distances between the two sites and the prevailing wind directions.

The anticipated noise impacts identified from the proposal with potential for adverse impacts on surrounding developments were limited to rooftop mechanical equipment. The study acknowledged the preliminary stage of the proposal in the planning process and noted there are currently no mechanical designs or equipment specifics at this stage.

The assessment of air quality followed several provincial guidelines and included the City of Toronto Terms of Reference for Air Quality and Odour, and Compatibility / Mitigation Studies. The study concluded that the subject site is expected to be compatible with the employment district south of Steeles Avenue East from an air quality perspective.

To ensure the continued vibrancy and viability of employment uses south of Steeles Avenue East within the Milliken Employment District, Development Review staff recommend that any proposed sensitive uses within the Transit Oriented Community continue to be planned for land use compatibility in accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024). This would include ensuring the requisite compatibility reviews related to noise, odour and air quality be undertaken to demonstrate that the introduction of residential uses on the subject lands to not impact employment lands in proximity to the development. Although not subject to the City of Toronto Official Plan, there is specific policy guidance found in Chapter 3 related to Compatibility and Mitigation Assessments for properties where sensitive uses are proposed in proximity to *Employment Areas* that could assist in ensuring the appropriate analysis is undertaken.

Transit Infrastructure Improvements

As the submission advances, Transportation Implementation Unit staff recommends looking for cross-jurisdictional opportunities to advance shared transportation objectives, identify interventions that prioritize safe, accessible, and well-connected pedestrian crossings along Steeles Avenue East, while also strengthening both existing and planned pedestrian networks along Redlea Avenue and Steeles. The Steeles-Redlea Urban Design Guidelines and Site and Area Specific Policy No. 395 (SASP 395) provide a comprehensive framework for redevelopment within the Steeles-Redlea Regeneration Area.

Moving forward, the City will want to consider how the Markham TOC proposal supports and impacts these guidelines/policies and the future directions of OPA 653 - SASP 853

to balance the needs of industries while managing the transition of areas proposed for redevelopment to create a pedestrian-friendly community with a mix of uses, building heights, and open spaces in alignment with future multi-modal connections within the Milliken Major Transit Station Area.

Servicing

The City of Toronto requires the submission to specify ownership of existing water infrastructure shown within Steeles Avenue East and to verify the current site servicing conditions. The presence of City of Toronto infrastructure may potentially impact the servicing design on the City of Markham lands. Additional information and clarification of how the development proposes to be serviced and accessed via Steeles Avenue East must be provided as part of a revised Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report.

City of Toronto OPA 653 and SASP 853

The Markham TOC submission coincides with land use changes occurring on the south side of Steeles Avenue East, within the boundary of the City of Toronto.

In late January 2025, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved Toronto Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 653, with modifications, to redesignate lands formerly designated as *General Employment Areas* and *Core Employment Areas* to *Regeneration Areas* through Site and Area Specific policy (SAS) 853. Staff are currently undertaking a compatibility study to determine how the area could evolve with this redesignation to inform upcoming study requirements. The study boundary includes Steeles Avenue East, Kennedy Road, Midland Avenue and Finch Avenue East. To date, the Regeneration Area study has not assumed the scale of development proposed for the subject lands which, if advanced, become a key input into the ongoing background work.

Details on the Milliken Regeneration Area study can be found at <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/regeneration-area-studies/>

Traffic Impact/Access

Steeles Avenue East has a right-of-way (ROW) width of 36 metres, this includes sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides and a recently completed grade separation underpass beneath the GO Stouffville line.

The submission provides for a new North-South public road in the City of Markham which aligns with Redlea Avenue within the City of Toronto. Based on the density of the proposal detailed signal timing/coordination study is required to confirm operations at Kennedy Road/Steeles Avenue and Steeles Avenue/Redlea Avenue. Signal offset adjustments and phasing plans should be tested to ensure minimal delay and safety of pedestrians/cyclists. This analysis is to reflect the full build out of the site and include cumulative impacts from nearby approved and proposed developments. Further, an updated trip generation and distribution analysis that reflects the scale and density of

the proposed development is also required for City of Toronto review, ensuring these are aligned with the Transit Orientated Community program objectives.

Public Engagement

Infrastructure Ontario has provided the following dates for Community Consultations: Virtual - October 15, 2025 6:30-8:00 p.m. and In person - October 23, 2025. Details are provided on the Infrastructure Ontario webpage: millikentoc.ca

Conclusion

Development Review staff are reviewing submission and have identified matters as outlined in this report and will further be communicated in the circulation commenting process. The issues relate to the compatibility with the land uses within the City of Toronto Employment Areas south of Steeles Avenue East and the Milliken Regeneration Area Study parameters which are currently under review. There are also potentially direct impacts to the City of Toronto's, infrastructure, that could be an area of concern. It is recommended that City Council receive the report by Development Review staff and forward it to the City of Markham Planning and Development Services Department, to ensure that the City's interests are accurately captured in their review. Development Review staff along with other commenting partners will remain engaged in discussions as appropriate and may report back to Council as needed should the proposal evolve.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

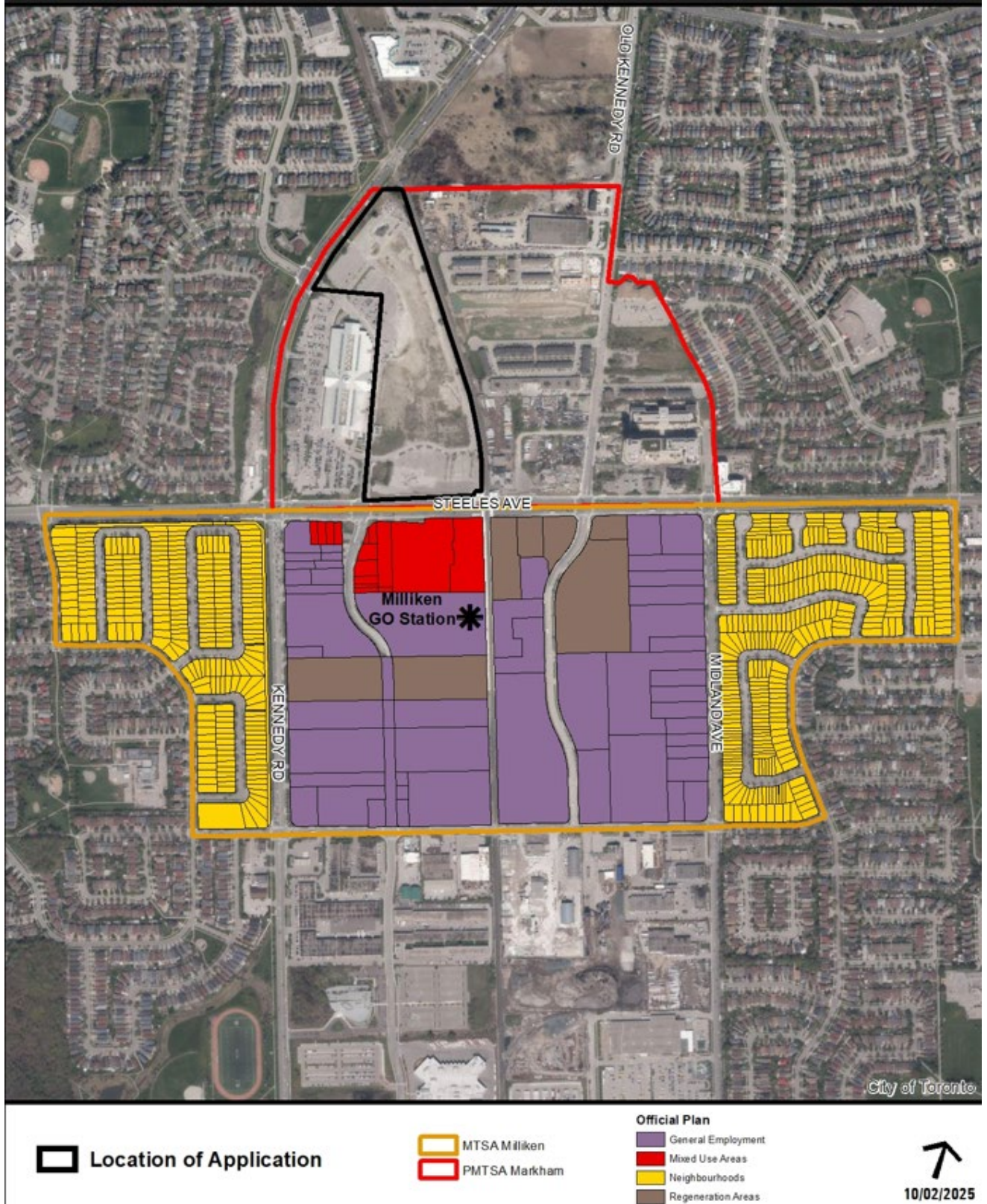
City of Toronto Information/Drawings

Attachment 1: Location Map and Toronto Official Plan Land Uses

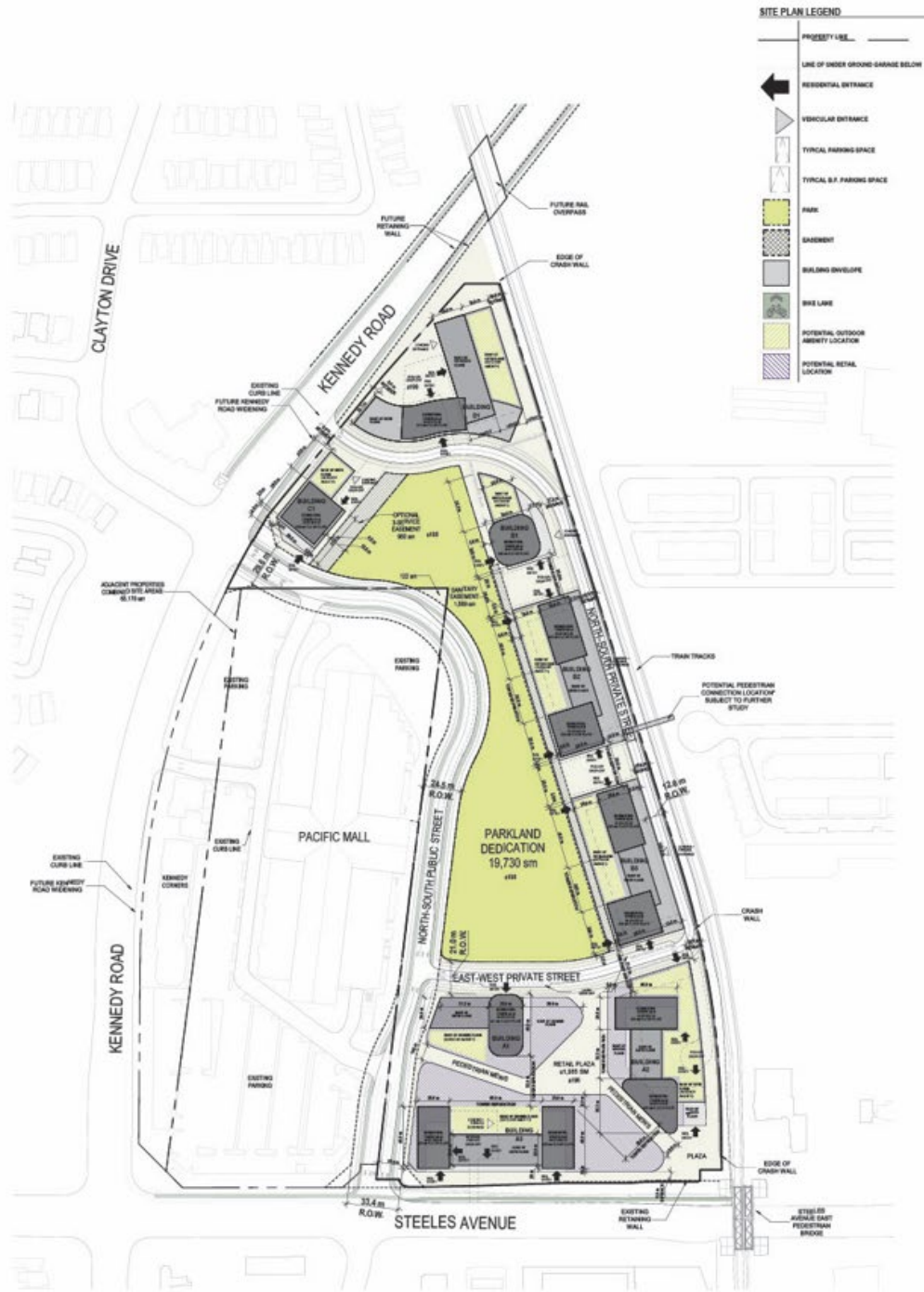
Attachment 2: Site Plan

Attachment 3: 3D Model Looking Northeast

Attachment 1: Location Map and Toronto Official Plan Land Uses



Attachment 2: Site Plan



SITE PLAN LEGEND

- PROPERTY LINE
- LINE OF UNDER GROUND GARAGE BELOW
- RESIDENTIAL ENTRANCE
- VEHICULAR ENTRANCE
- TYPICAL PARKING SPACE
- TYPICAL B.P. PARKING SPACE
- PARK
- SEWER
- BUILDING ENVELOPE
- BIKE LAKE
- POTENTIAL OUTDOOR AMENITY LOCATION
- POTENTIAL RETAIL LOCATION

Site Plan



Attachment 3: 3D Model Looking Northeast



View of Applicant's Proposal Looking Northeast

09/29/2025