

Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study
Final Report to North York Community Council
Meeting on Wednesday April 29, 2026
Agenda ITEM NY32.3

To Councillor James Pasternak, Chair, and Community Council Members:

As I am unable to do a five-minute deputation at the April 29th meeting, I am submitting my remarks.

As stated, the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study will lead to site and area specific policies for the Wynford-Concorde district.

“The City of Toronto (Development Review and City Planning) has undertaken a focused area study of the lands bound by Don Mills Road to the west, Eglinton Avenue East to the south, the Charles Sauriol Conservation Area to the east, and the CP rail corridor to the north. The goal of the Wynford-Concorde Focused Area Study is to develop a planning framework, that focuses on an enhanced public realm and streetscape integrated with a multi-modal transportation network intended to serve the existing and anticipated residential and employment populations of the area.”

“The study has resulted in a proposed amendment to the Official Plan which will result in a Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) for the Wynford-Concorde area.”

To review, the City Planning Division distributed a notice to area residents, councillors, and stakeholders, advising us of the introductory open house which was on December 5, 2023. An estimated 300 people attended this first meeting.

This study’s focus was about public realm, streetscape, and mobility improvements.

At the December 5, 2023 meeting, Marian Prejel, Senior Planner, City of Toronto, who oversaw this Study, said: “We are examining existing conditions, we’re looking at built form, streetscape, public realm connections, cycling, transit facilities, childcare, schools, libraries, recreation and human services. We’re taking that background information and looking at opportunities for coordinated and ongoing improvements. We will look at shared mobility and transportation management.”

Ms. Prejel commented about what this Study would not examine: “We’re not looking at lands outside the Study area. We’re not looking at land use changes. We’re not proposing zoning limits. We are not proposing density limits. We’re not recommending changes to environmental assessment. There will be no changes to Ontario Land Tribunal approvals. We are not duplicating any City of Toronto guidelines.”

As a participant at the Local Advisory Committee meetings, I advocated that the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study should evaluate Ontario Land Tribunal decisions, should examine condo development proposals and appeals. I suggested that the Study review impacts from these developments in terms of density, traffic congestion, public school capacity, and pressure on shopping, public parks, and recreational facilities. I said that having reliable socio-economic data should be essential when doing this Study.

I found the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study LAC meetings to be too brief, barely one hour each. Most of the initial LAC meeting was about staff and LAC member introductions.

As for people on the Committee, I found that there was not enough community representation of varied backgrounds and experience. For instance, we did not have anyone representing public schools and education. There was no one representing retail and business interests. And there was no one with a focused awareness of economics. We were told that the City of Toronto does not go out of its way to search for candidates. I found this disappointing. In fact, at one stage, more than one person represented the Aga Khan Museum until, at one meeting, they were told not to have more than one LAC individual.

Staff from Environics Research were the facilitators for our LAC meetings.

The Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study had the following meeting dates:

December 5, 2023 Public Consultation Open House, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

December 11, 2024 Local Advisory Committee, Meeting # 1, Broadlands Community Centre

February 6, 2025 Community Mapping Workshop, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

June 24, 2025 Local Advisory Committee, Meeting # 2, Flemington Park Community Centre

July 10, 2025 Report Back Open House, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

(September 11, 2025 Don Mills Regeneration Area Study – Launch Meeting)

November 25, 2025 Local Advisory Committee, Meeting # 3, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

December 2, 2025 Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study – Wrap Up Open House and Don Mills Regeneration Area Study Open House, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

At the LAC meetings, I raised the issue of lawyers and planning consultants, representing developers, repeatedly declaring that any Focused Area Studies should not delay or hold up development applications. Also, decisions concerning development applications and appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal should not have, as conditions, any Focused Area Study policies and recommendations.

I recommended that this Study pre-empt developers not having regard to policies and guidelines herein. The Final Report should state that recommendations should apply to all development proposals.

I have challenged David Bronskill (lawyer), Michael Goldberg (planning consultant), and Peter Smith (Partner, Bousfields Inc.) who have argued against having *any* Focused Area Study in the City of Toronto impact a development proposal or application.

In fact, at the September 7, 2022 Ontario Land Tribunal Case Management Conference regarding the Don Valley Hotel site at 175 Wynford Drive, the issue of the Focused Area Study and the potential for area development to be subject to its review was debated.

Pitman Patterson, Counsel, Toronto District School Board (TDSB): “Can we take into account the objectives and the evidence of this Focused Area Study? If we don’t, we could have a problem.”

Andrew Jeanrie, Solicitor for Hotel Development LP and Partner, Bennett Jones LLP: “If there is a position that the Focused Area Study should be taken into consideration, my position would be ‘no’.” [Please note: Please see, below, Jason Park’s letter of Sept. 9, 2021. Similar concerns were raised by the developer of 1-3 Concorde Gate and 10-12 Concorde Place.]

In a September 9, 2021 e-mail letter from developer-lawyer, Jason Park, Devine Park LLP, to North York Community Council, regarding the 1-3 Concorde Gate/10-12 Concorde Place application, complained about the Focused Area Study: “*While we appreciate that City staff now wish to revisit the existing policy context through a ‘Focused Area Study’, it would be neither appropriate nor fair to delay processing of the Applications, or to introduce new standards to apply to the Applications, long after they have been prepared and submitted.*”

For the 1-3 Concorde Gate / 10-12 Concorde Place development proposal, Jason Park, Partner, Devine Park LLP, in a September 9, 2021 letter to North York Community Council, had more comments:

“We are writing to express our collective concerns respecting Recommendation No. 4 included in the [City of Toronto] Staff Report, and to respectfully request that this recommendation be amended or refused.”

“Among other matters, the Staff Report recommends that staff undertake a ‘Focused Area Study’ of the area surrounding the Subject Site (Recommendation No. 3), noting the scale of the subject Applications and a proposal at 175 Wynford Drive as the ostensible rationale for this study. The Staff Report states that the study would develop ‘a planning framework, including a set of policies to guide development for a complete community’, and goes on to recommend that the

Applications be reviewed concurrently with, and within the context of, this ‘Focused Area Study’ (Recommendation No. 4).”

“With all due respect, *we must strenuously object to any suggestion* that the Applications should be prejudiced by undue delay or changing policy standards. Municipal authorities are obligated to consider planning applications in an open, transparent and rational manner, and this recommendation is antithetical to those obligations.” (letter, page 2) (Source: Richard MacFarlane, Written Statement, May 10, 2023, Ontario Land Tribunal Hearing, June 12 to 29, 2023, TAB 1).

More recently, at the Ontario Land Tribunal Hearing on August 13, 2024 regarding 123 Wynford Drive, the original Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Allan McKellar, representing the Wynford Concorde residential community, raised a valid question about the development proposal being subject to recommendations from the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study.

Allan McKellar

“You are aware that because of City Council approval in 2021, the Wynford-Concorde Focused Area Study is supposed to begin, a study which will evaluate this area in terms of facilities, services, transportation, development, and other matters of concern. What is your opinion as to whether the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study should be concluded before a final decision is made at the Ontario Land Tribunal? Also, would recommendations from this Focused Area Study be helpful, including to assess whether an increased density of 546 is appropriate?”

Michael Goldberg, Originate Developments Inc. planning consultant, and one who I have challenged for years at OMB, LPAT, and OLT Hearings, typically declared that development proposals have not been and should not be subject to recommendations from any of the City of Toronto’s Focused Area Studies.

Michael Goldberg

“No, the proposal would not be conditional on any recommendations or outcome of the Wynford-Concorde Focused Area Study. All issues that are relevant are already before this Tribunal. It will be receiving expert opinions, evidence, and testimony, upon which the decision will be based. This application was first filed in 2022. We’re now two years later down the road regarding the planning approval process. It’s reasonable and entirely appropriate that a decision will be rendered at the Ontario Land Tribunal.”

“I might add that it’s not unusual for decisions to be made regardless of a Focused Area Study being conducted, no matter the timeline. Development applications do not stop for Focused Area Studies. If municipalities see that there is a reason to challenge that planning application, they can invoke an Interim Control By-law. But the City of Toronto officials did not avail themselves of the Interim Control By-law.”

Under the *Planning Act*, a Statutory Public Meeting is required. More often, the City of Toronto’s Community Council meetings have been used to ostensibly satisfy the Statutory Public Meeting requirement. I disagree. This meeting is not sufficient. A council meeting, whether virtually or in person, does not constitute public consultation.

Traditionally, statutory public meetings have been held in person at a church, community centre, or school. This involved area residents getting together with local councillors and City officials to engage in a two-way dialogue, and to provide constructive comments and suggestions. The *Planning Act* explicitly conveys that these statutory meetings are to encourage thorough public consultation, leading to a better understanding of the background information, concerns of the public, the planning process, and plans for the community. A resident being only able to submit comments in writing or present a five-minute deputation at the council meeting is not adequate public consultation.

History of approval for the Focused Area Study

Finally, the initial motion tabled at North York Community Council was by former Councillor and Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong in September 2021.

“At the September 13, 2021 meeting of North York Community Council, a Preliminary Report was considered that, amongst other matters, directed Planning Staff to undertake a Focused Area Study. A recommendation was added by the Local Ward Councillor directing staff to consider, and report back in October 2021, on extending the boundary of the Focus Area Study to include 197, 205, and 215 Wynford Drive. This report responds to that Direction.”

This was adopted at the North York Community Council Meeting on October 13, 2021.

“A Preliminary Report for the nearby development application at 1-3 Concorde Gate and 10-12 Concorde Place was adopted by North York Community Council on September 13, 2022. *The report recommended that City Planning Staff undertake a Focused Area Study of the area bound by the Don Valley Parkway to the west, the CPR rail to the north, Eglinton Avenue East to the south, and the Charles Sauriol Conservation Area to the east, and review the applications concurrently and within the context of the Focused Area Study.*” Source: City of Toronto, Request For Direction Report, 175 Wynford Drive, To: North York Community Council, June 7, 2022, p. 3.

On September 12, 2021, FoNTRA wrote to North York Community Council:

“We strongly support the Report’s Recommendation No. 3 - that staff undertake a "Focused Area Study" of the area surrounding the Subject Site. We agree with the Staff Report that "a planning framework, including a set of policies to guide development for a complete community", is required.”

“However we do not support Report’s Recommendation 4 to direct staff to review the applications concurrently and within the context of the Focused Area Study. Instead we recommend that approval of the Preliminary staff report be deferred pending completion of the Focused Area Study (FAS).”

FoNTRA continued: “It is our view that, effectively, *you can NOT simultaneously run a planning study, while also conducting a review of an application that may contradict the likely outcome of the planning study.* The FAS needs to have the full attention of the staff and community without having the intervention of the deadline for the completion of the application review.”

I concur with FoNTRA’s position. The Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study was started way too late, three years after the initial recommendation to do this Study. Condo development proposals and appeals were largely underway and moving to decision-making time, and so policies and recommendations have relatively little positive impact on improving the welfare of our residents by potentially contributing to the Ontario Land Tribunal Hearing outcomes, not after planning and appeal decisions have been made.

In fact, at a Town Hall meeting hosted by Councillor Jon Burnside, on March 27, 2023, the question was asked, when will the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study begin?

John Andreevski, Manager of Community Planning, City of Toronto, replied, “It will launch in the near future.” Jon Burnside asked, “What is ‘near’?” Andreevski said, “I’d say in a month.” From 1 month to about 9 months. The expectation of ‘one month’ was too optimistic. It was way too late in getting underway. The responsibility for this delay rests with City Planning Division.

Despite the delay, I want to thank and commend Councillor Jon Burnside, and Mary Campbell, Senior Policy Advisor, Planning, for keeping track of the Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study and informing our community in a timely manner throughout the process.

I fervently hope that, in the years ahead, this Wynford Concorde Focused Area Study Final Report will have a tangible, positive effect for those who live in this district.

Study Phasing

