

## Overview

During July and August 2017, The City of Toronto and members of the consultant team hosted a series of Pop Up events in the Golden Mile Secondary Plan study area. The purpose of the Pop Ups was to: raise awareness about the Golden Mile Secondary Plan and promote participation in travel survey; share information about what is driving change in the Golden Mile area; answer questions about the study; and learn what residents, business owners, employees, and others think is working well and what can be improved in the study area.

The Pop Ups consisted of several display boards arranged at various public locations throughout the Golden Mile Secondary Plan study area. The boards included information about: the study process; study purpose; study areas; drivers of change; development applications in the area; and next steps. Participants shared feedback by speaking with members of the study team and annotating three feedback boards, which focused on Land Use & Urban Design, Transportation & Servicing, and Community Infrastructure.

The Pop Ups were held at Kennedy/Eglinton Library on July 20, Kennedy subway station on July 26, and the Victoria Park HUB on August 24. Combined, over 100 people participated in the Pop Ups.

Matthew Wheatley, third party facilitator with Swerhun Facilitation, prepared this summary and shared it with City Planning for review before finalizing it.

## Key themes

The following key themes emerged from the feedback provided by participants. They are meant to be read along with the more detailed summary of feedback that follows.

**Concerns about affordability and employment.** Participants raised concerns that redevelopment of the Golden Mile could make the area unaffordable for existing residents. They said the area needs both housing and retail options that are affordable for the people that live in the area. Participants also said the area needs employment opportunities that offer a living wage.

**Congestion is a big issue.** Participants said congestion makes it difficult to move around the area, whether travelling by car, public transit, bike, or on foot. They said they it will be important to find ways to reduce congestion caused by construction, especially with the construction of the LRT.

**Improving transit service.** Some participants said they are looking forward to having the LRT but transit service needs to be improved now. They suggested adding bus service, including some additional express routes. Participants also said new and existing transit stations and vehicles should be fully accessible.

**Community services and programs for all ages.** There was a desire from participants to see a wide variety of community services and programs for children, students, adults, and seniors. Some suggested building a large community centre, similar to a “Community Hub,” to make it easier for people to access a variety of programs and services in one location.

**Creating a positive and unique identity for the Golden Mile.** Participants said they want to see parks and public spaces that are unique, inviting, and safe, so that people see the Golden Mile as a good place to be.

**Pedestrian and cycling safety.** Participants said the area needs safe, designated space for pedestrians and cyclists because the streets are busy with fast moving vehicles. They suggested adding more pedestrian crossings and designing narrower more pedestrian friendly streets.

## Detailed summary of feedback

### 1. Feedback about Land Use & Urban Design

**Public spaces that create a positive identity for the Golden Mile.** Participants said more public spaces and parks are needed for the area, especially with the anticipated population growth. Participants also said they want public spaces that are unique to the Golden Mile and are more inviting to help reduce any negative perceptions about the area. Some participants said public spaces should include public washrooms. There was also a suggestion to use the hydro corridor as an “eco-corridor” or “mini greenbelt.”

**More opportunities for small and affordable retail.** Participants would like to see more “mom and pop shops” and opportunities for entrepreneurs in the area. Participants also said retail in the area needs to remain affordable for the existing population regardless of the size or type. Participants said big box stores with large parking lots make it difficult for pedestrians and people using transit to shop in the area. They suggested bringing stores closer to the street and adding streets and walkways to give the area more of a village feel and make it easier for pedestrians to access the retail.

**A variety of residential options.** Participants said they want to see a range of unit sizes in any future condos or rental buildings, especially units large enough to accommodate families, not just singles and couples.

**Mid-rise and height limits.** Participants said the study should identify building height limits for the area. Some said they would like to see more mid-rise buildings in the area. One participant suggested following the City’s Avenue Design Guidelines and limiting building heights to the width of the street they are on.

**Providing affordable housing.** Participants identified a need for housing that is affordable for the people that live in the area. There were concerns from some participants that “affordable housing” is not actually affordable for the people that really need it and suggested adding subsidized or Rent-Geared-to-Income housing options. Participants also said that rising rents and a lack of rent control makes it difficult for people to stay in their existing apartments, especially when an area is being redeveloped.

## 2. Feedback about Transportation & Servicing

**Increasing and improving transit service.** Several said existing buses are overcrowded and move very slowly, in part because it takes a long time for people to get on and off buses when they have large items from the big box stores in the area. Participants suggested increasing the frequency of buses and the number of express buses until the LRT is up and running. Specific express routes suggested included Victoria Park Avenue to Steeles Ave, and Kennedy Subway Station to Don Mills Road. There was a suggestion to use double decker buses to increase capacity. Participants also said they would like to see quicker response times to bus breakdowns and other delays.

**Cycling and pedestrian safety.** Participants wanted to see separated space for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles to prevent conflicts and collisions between these groups. Participants also said they would like to see more designated crosswalks and traffic lights in the area to make area safer for pedestrians. Some suggested installing pedestrian overpasses and red light cameras at busy intersections to make crossing safer. Others said Eglinton Ave can be dangerous to cross on foot because it is so wide and suggested new streets be made narrower.

**Congestion.** Several participants said congestion is a big problem and makes it difficult for people to move around the area, whether they are travelling by car, transit, bike or walking. Participants said they want to see more strategies in place to reduce congestion caused by construction, especially with the construction of the LRT.

**Parking for LRT users.** Some said there should be parking available for people using the LRT and suggested providing space along the hydro corridor, similar to what has been done at Finch Subway Station.

**Making transit fully accessible.** Participants said existing transit stations and new LRT stations should be fully accessible with ramps, elevators, escalators and washrooms.

**Other transportation issues.** There was a range of opinions about customer service provided on transit with some saying it is quite good and others saying staff need to be more responsive and respectful. There were also suggestions to allow people to buy monthly transit passes at any point, not just the beginning of the month and provide free Wi-Fi at transit stations and in vehicles. One participant identified a sharp turn at Lozoway Dr and Hardcastle St saying there have been accidents in the past. They said it is particularly

unsafe because of its close proximity to Ionview Public School and suggested installing a guard rail. Some participants raised concerns about the Scarborough RT saying the vehicles are hot in the summer and cold in the winter, smell bad, and are noisy.

### 3. Feedback about Community Infrastructure

**Locations and services that are working well.** Participants identified different community services they use and feel are working well in the area, including: The Victoria Park HUB; Don Montgomery Community Centre; the Eglinton Square and Kennedy/Eglinton branches of the Toronto Public Library.

**Safer and easier access to community infrastructure.** Participants said it can be difficult to access different community services and facilities by foot or by bike. They suggested creating pedestrian and bike friendly routes to and from existing community services and facilities throughout the study area. There were also suggestions to locate a variety of services in a central location, like a “hub,” to make accessing the services more convenient.

**A Community Centre with a variety of programs.** Some participants want to see a large community centre in the area that offers a wide variety of programs for different age groups, especially children and seniors. Specific programs and services participants said they want to see, include: swimming; adult literacy and education; employment services; daycare; youth groups/clubs; and a variety of sports programs. Participants said the community centre and other facilities should be fully accessible for all users. Some said they want to see space and programming provided for intercultural celebrations.

**Supporting employment and encouraging entrepreneurs.** Participants said they want see services and facilities in the area that can help people (of all ages – youth, adults, and seniors) get training, find employment, and start small businesses so that they can earn a living wage. Participants also suggested the City explore ways to partner with Centennial College to offer programs and training for local residents.

## Next steps

The City and consultant team thanked participants for their feedback and encouraged them to visit the project website ([www.toronto.ca/renewgoldenmile](http://www.toronto.ca/renewgoldenmile)) to find out more about the Golden Mile Secondary Plan Study, take the travel survey, sign up for the Visioning Workshop scheduled for the fall of 2017, and stay up to date on future consultation activities.