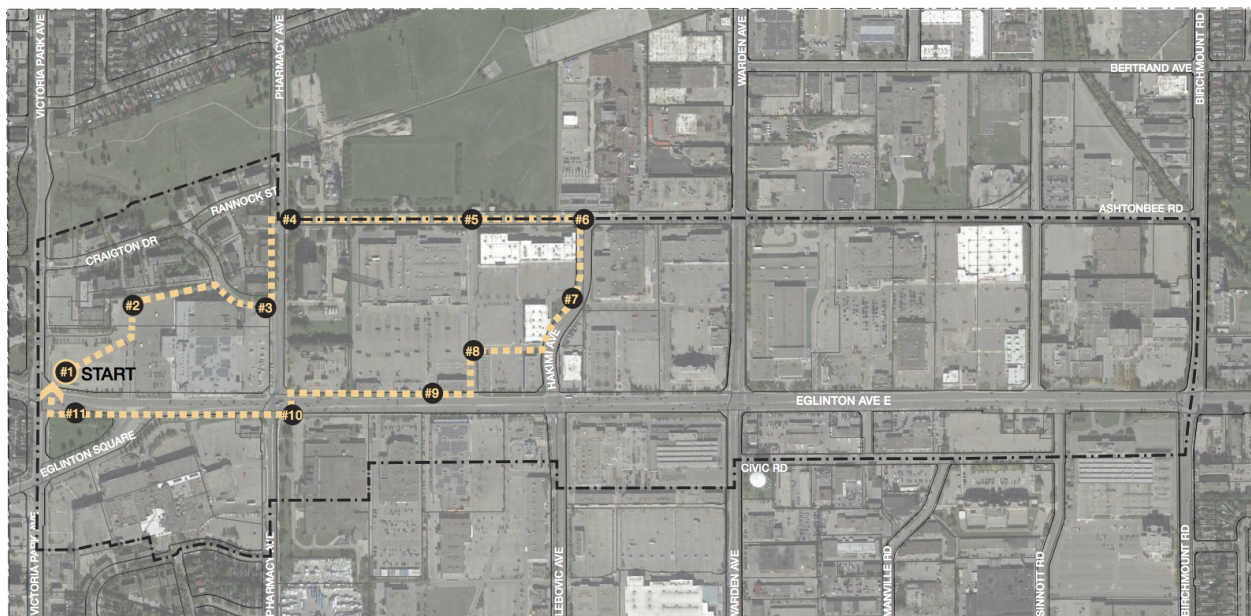


Renew Golden Mile  
Moving Conversation Notes  
Monday, September 25, 2017  
5:30 – 7:00pm

## Overview

On September 25, 2017, the City of Toronto (City Planning) and SvN (planning consultants to City Planning) hosted a Moving Conversation in the Golden Mile Secondary Plan Study Area with members of its Local Advisory Committee (LAC). The purpose of the Moving Conversation was to use the local environment to engage LAC members in a discussion of existing conditions and the potential opportunities within the study area.



## WALKING TOUR

The walk began at corner of Eglinton and Victoria Park Avenue, then moved east along Craigton Drive and north on Pharmacy Avenue to the corner of Pharmacy and Ashtonbee Road. The group then walked east along Ashtonbee, pausing at private driveways and Hakimi Avenue before heading south on Hakimi to a private driveway. From there, the group walked west through lands owned by Smart Centre and then south, to Eglinton Avenue. Finally, the group walked west, concluding on the south-east corner of Eglinton and Victoria Park. Throughout the walk, participants, consultants, and City staff shared thoughts and reflections about the area's existing conditions and potential future opportunities. 12 members of the LAC participated.

These notes are a summary of the feedback received. This summary is intended to complement the LAC Meeting #1 Summary and was prepared by Matthew Wheatley and Ian Malczewski, independent facilitators with Swerhun Facilitation.

## Key themes

The following represent key issues and topics from the Moving Conversation and is meant to be read in conjunction with the more detailed, place-specific highlights presented below.

**Traffic congestion is a big issue.** The study should look at ways to improve connections and address traffic flow, potentially by adding new streets.

**Pedestrian safety and connectivity need to be improved.** If the area was more walkable, fewer people might drive. Some areas feel unsafe because of the speed of traffic (like Eglinton) while others feel unsafe because of a lack of lighting or visibility (such as Ashtonbee east of Pharmacy). Adding street trees, more crosswalks, or a “+15” (elevated walkway) could improve connectivity and safety. Pedestrian connections between shops are fewer and often feel unsafe.

**Improve the access to, and condition of, Ashtonbee Park.** The lack of free parking means people must pay to access this public park. There could be clearer separation of uses in the park to prevent conflicts between users (e.g. cyclists and pedestrians). The park sometimes gets full of garbage, and the condition of the cricket pitches should be improved.

**Infrastructure needs to meet increased demand.** Both hard infrastructure (roads and sewers) and soft infrastructure (such as schools) should be increased in capacity as demand increases. The City should consider putting a cap on development until this infrastructure has enough capacity.

**Protect existing identity and icons.** The Golden Mile has places that are symbolically important, for example, the parcel of land that forms a triangular open space at the intersection of Victoria Park and Eglinton. This area and other important symbols within the Golden Mile should be preserved and/or enhanced so the area’s character remains.

## Place-specific highlights of feedback

The feedback below summarizes the points raised by participants on the walk. Responses from the City and study team are identified *in italics*.

### Stop 3 – Craigton Dr. & Pharmacy Ave

#### [Feedback regarding connections and transportation](#)

Participants said that the Golden Mile Study needs to consider how traffic patterns in the area work — if there is an increase in population by 50,000, it will be difficult to get around unless there are new roads and/or a different road network. It was noted that, if the area was more walkable, fewer people might drive.

#### Feedback regarding land use and built form

Some participants said there should be a transition in the height of buildings from higher to lower in neighbourhood areas.

#### Feedback regarding development and construction

Some participants said there should be measures in place during development to prevent buildings intended for demolition from becoming unsafe. Others asked about the status and details of current development applications. *The City responded that, at this point, there are three applications which require Official Plan Amendments (OPA). The applicants have agreed to work with the City as the City develops a Secondary Plan for the area. There is an opportunity for the community to say what the community should/could look like. Because the applications are at the OPA stage, the applicants have only submitted Concept Plans, not specific plans where the buildings would be or the exact number of units.*

#### Stop 5 – Ashtonbee Rd (behind Walmart)

##### Feedback regarding connections and transportation

Participants said some cars fail to stop at the stop sign behind Walmart, which makes the area feel unsafe. They also suggested finding a way to add free parking back to the area or adjusting the hours of paid parking: the retail lots used to have free parking but, since students would park there, it was changed to paid parking. The result has been people looking to visit Ashtonbee Park have to pay to park.

##### Feedback regarding parks and public space

Participants said that conditions at Ashtonbee Park need to be improved. They noted that Toronto lost an opportunity to host a global cricket tournament in this park because the fields were in such poor condition. Others said the green wall on the south side of Ashtonbee makes the sidewalk cooler and more pleasant, but it doesn't create a safe area to walk at night.

#### Stop 6 – Ashtonbee Rd & Hakimi Ave

##### Feedback regarding parks and public space

Some participants said garbage is an issue in Ashtonbee Reservoir Park because there are not enough garbage bins. Other said that, when the City adds new bins, they are vandalized and/or set on fire.

#### Stop 7 – Hakimi Ave and southern driveway into retail

##### Feedback regarding connections and transportation

Participants noted that it should be easier to move between retail stores, especially as a pedestrian (though it is also difficult for cars). They also said pedestrian wayfinding signage would be helpful. One suggestion was for the City to consider creating a +15 system (similar to Calgary) – an enclosed, elevated walkway that helps people walk from store/mall to store/mall.

*City Planning said there are pros and cons to this approach –elevated walkways are good for weather protection but can also create a sterilized pedestrian environment at street level.*

#### [Feedback regarding parks and public space](#)

Many participants felt the area needs more trees, saying that, when existing trees die, they are not replaced.

#### [Questions regarding growth and the overall study](#)

Participants asked if Emergency Services are involved in understanding how to accommodate growth. *City Planning noted that, as part of the Official Plan, the provision of Emergency Services is planned along with the growth of the City. With a Secondary Plan process like this Golden Mile study, the City reaches out to Emergency Services so they can plan proactively.*

Participants also asked how hard infrastructure increases to meet increased demand. *City Planning responded that the Secondary Plan Study includes an infrastructure study to assist the City in determining what infrastructure is needed. There is also a Community Infrastructure Study looking at soft infrastructure.*

#### Stop 8 – Inside Smart Centre parking lot

##### [Feedback regarding connections and transportation](#)

Participants said there needs to be improved connections between destinations. Currently, a vehicle must do three U-turns to get from Petro Canada at the north-east corner of Eglinton and Pharmacy to other stores.

#### Stop 9 – Eglinton Ave (in front of Smart Centre)

##### [Feedback regarding connections and transportation](#)

Several participants noted that, for pedestrians, Eglinton seems to feel dangerous to walk along. They suggested there should be a study to look at the number of pedestrians who cross Eglinton where there are no traffic lights.

#### Stop 11 – Eglinton Square Parkette

##### [Feedback regarding public space, heritage, and identity](#)

The triangle of land at Eglinton and Victoria Park is iconic and tied to the history of the area. For some, this area indicates that “they’ve arrived at home.” Keeping the triangle land is important to the identity of the area — perhaps it could be completely forested or have a tower on the site to provide a look out. It could be the “Central Park” of the Golden Mile.

## Participant List

- **City of Toronto City Planning.** Russell Crooks
- **City of Toronto City Planning.** Xue Pei
- **City of Toronto City Planning.** Thomas Schwerdtfeger
- **City of Toronto.** Sasha Terry
- **LAC Member.** Kathy Black
- **LAC Member.** Michael Halpern
- **LAC Member.** Su Langdon
- **LAC Member.** Elena Floros
- **LAC Member.** Mike McGivery
- **LAC Member.** Paul Charbonneau
- **LAC Member.** Jenn Spence
- **LAC Member.** Laura Dijana Higgins
- **LAC Member.** Mimi Lau
- **LAC Member.** Nancy Collins
- **LAC Member.** Michelle Colley
- **SvN.** Alex Heath
- **SvN.** Jason Petrunia
- **SvN.** Shonda Wang
- **Swerhun Facilitation.** Ian Malczewski
- **Swerhun Facilitation.** Matthew Wheatley