

# Laird in Focus Planning Study – Visioning and Principles Workshop

**Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017**

Session 1: 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Session 2: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Leaside Memorial Arena, 1073 Millwood Road – William Lea Room

## SUMMARY REPORT

### Meeting Overview

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 approximately 100 people participated in the Visioning and Principles Workshop for the Laird in Focus Planning Study. Staff from Community Planning, Urban Design, Transportation Planning, Parks, Toronto Water and Transportation Services as well as Councillor Burnside and his staff attended to answer questions and to receive feedback. Staff from the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board were also in attendance. The event repeated twice, once at 4:30 pm (with approximately 60 participants) and once at 7:00 pm (with approximately 40 participants). Each workshop event started off with a presentation by the Consulting Team introducing the project team, the study and the study context, before continuing on to an overview of the initial findings for the study area with respect to land use and built form, streetscape and public realm and servicing and mobility. Following the presentation, participants were invited to participate in round table discussions designed to help formulate a vision statement and foundational design principles to guide the study going forward.



This summary report was written by The Planning Partnership (lead consultants for the study). It summarizes the feedback received and is not intended to be a verbatim transcript. Summaries of the feedback received through the small table discussion activities follow in the body of this report.

**Meeting Purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to present the initial existing conditions findings and to gather feedback on the preparation of a vision statement and foundational design principles to guide the study going forward.

**Meeting Background**

The Consultant Team presented initial findings to the public to frame the subsequent visioning and principle discussions. The key themes covered by the initial findings presented include:

- Context
- Land use and built form
- Public realm and streetscape
- Servicing and mobility

Following the presentation, participants were directed to discuss, and record answers to two questions to provide feedback to the project team:

## **How do we create community along Laird and Eglinton?**

*Think about the character defining elements of Leaside;*

*Think about Laird as a “seam” or a “divider”;*

*Think about the transition from residential neighbourhood to employment area.*

## **What are the key principles that form the foundation of the design concepts?**

*Think about land use and built form;*

*Think about streetscape and public realm;*

*Think about servicing and mobility.*



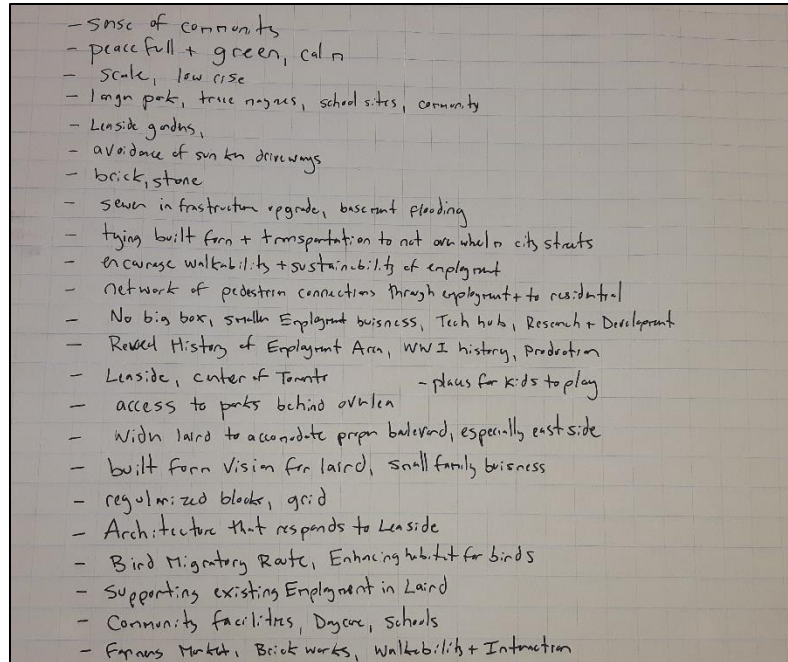
## **FEEDBACK RECEIVED**

The following feedback was provided by participants during the workshop portion of the meeting.

### **How do we create community along Laird and Eglinton?**

- Focus on providing community, family-oriented facilities to build a sense of community and social cohesion.
- It is important to maintain and extend the Leaside character onto Laird (i.e. building materials).
- Future plans should maintain and protect the traditional employment role of the area and encourage the establishment of additional small businesses – this is not an appropriate location for big box development.
- Improve transportation for all modes, including both traffic flow and provision of appropriate facilities on Laird and Eglinton.
- The Laird and Eglinton area needs to be developed as an important destination in of itself, or to include multiple destinations. It is important that people come to spend time in the area rather than use the corridor just to pass through.
- The Laird public realm should be designed to facilitate “interaction” through community events, infrastructure and facilities.
- There is some conflict between the desire to improve vehicle flow through the corridor and a preference to slow vehicle speeds to increase safety.

- The greening of the study area should be a priority, including green spaces and the use of trees and plants in streetscaping.
- It is important to plan for age friendly design, considering the needs and safety of children through to seniors.
- Vanderhoof Avenue should accommodate retail and act as a pedestrian route to the Eglinton mixed use area.



Example Comment Sheet

## What are the key principles that form the foundation of the design concepts?

### Land Use and Built Form

- Building heights on Laird should generally be limited to low-mid-rise development, with some participants preferring only low-rise.
- The choice and quality of building materials is critical to maintaining the character of the area.
- New development needs to add greenery to Laird and Eglinton and create places to linger and interact through a high quality public realm.
- New buildings need to appropriately transition in height and land use to existing neighbourhoods, including with respect shadowing and privacy.
- Laird and Eglinton need to have development with more dynamic street frontages, which can be achieved through a combination of built forms and land uses.

### Public Realm and Streetscape

- Increase the safety and quality of the pedestrian experience along Laird and provide additional amenities.
- Laird should not act as a barrier to active transportation users – crossing should be improved and added to.
- Streetscaping needs a more balanced mix of hard- and soft-scaping (i.e. more greenery).

- There should be a strong link to the Leaside heritage character to establish a sense of identity for the corridor.
- The public realm must meet the needs of a range of users and trip purposes, including users of all ages, dog walking, shopping, school travel, street entertainment.

## Servicing and Mobility

- The City should focus on opportunities for green infrastructure, especially with respect to innovative stormwater management strategies.
- The area roads need to be improved and added to, to create a denser network with additional route options – an appropriate truck route should be identified.
- There are issues with traffic flow and congestion on Laird.
- Infrastructure upgrades should include increasing the mobility choices available, such as increasing the active transportation connections across Laird and between the corridor and adjacent areas.
- A better active transportation network is needed along the Laird corridor, around the LRT station and between the residential and employment areas.

Land Use and Built Form		Public Realm and Streetscape		Servicing and Mobility	
Principle	When I think of this principle I think of...	Principle	When I think of this principle I think of...	Principle	When I think of this principle I think of...
CAPES.		SAFETY. - CROSSINGS. - SPEED HUMPS - SLOW TRAFFIC.		PREVENT INFILTRATION. OF TRAFFIC. NOT IN RESIDENTIAL	
NO TALL BUILDINGS BESIDE LOW-RISE.		WIDE SIDEWALK. TREES. BIG BOULEVARDS		PROVIDE VISITOR PARKING.	
FAMILY SIZED APARTMENTS.		COMMUNITY FEEL. OPEN SPACES / GATHERING. SMALLER SCALE BLDGS. WALKING / PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY.		DEDICATED PARKING AWAY FROM HUB.	
COMMUNITY CENTRE FAMILY FOCUS	→ DON MILLS CENTRE SKATING RINK.			TRAFFIC DEDICATED CYCLING LINES. CYCLING ON KEY ROUTES. - LAIRD. PHYSICAL SEPARATION.	NEW BLOCK CYCLE LANES.
SMALL STORES ON LAIRD / LOCAL AND ECUMENICAL BUSINESS.				GREEN DRAINAGE. GROUNDWATER RECHARGE. USE BOULEVARDS. GOOD DRAINAGE. BIUSUABLE.	KOJCEA - COMMUNITY SPACE FROM DRAINAGE AREA.
TECHNOLOGY HUB IN EMPLOYMENT AREA. eg. MARs North	MARs.			PLANNED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE. - SEWAGE - WATER	

Example Comment Sheet