

Laird in Focus

Community Information Session

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

6:30-9:00 pm

Leaside United Church, 822 Millwood Road

SUMMARY REPORT

Meeting Overview

On October 17, 2017 approximately 150 people participated in the Community Information Session for the Laird in Focus Planning Study. The session included a presentation from the team followed by an open house and one-on-one conversations at the display panels to obtain input. The options were prepared using input received through public consultation, including the design charrette held in June, 2017. A total of 18 panels were on display.



Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the planning and urban design scenarios for each of the study areas and to gather feedback to inform the next steps of the study process.

This summary report summarizes the feedback received and is not intended to be a verbatim transcript. The feedback received at each of the panels and in the feedback forms follows in the appendices of this report.

Meeting Background

A total of 18 panels were on display during this community information session. Participants were invited to write out their comments on the panels and speak with City staff and members of the project team. The panels provided information on the following topics:

- Emerging vision and principles
- Charrette results
- Eglinton Avenue study area scenarios
- Laird Drive study area intersection and streetscape scenarios
- Leaside Business Park traffic and truck movement
- Options evaluation framework

FEEDBACK RECEIVED

The following is a summary of comments provided on feedback forms, at the various study panels and in conversation with City staff and the consulting team.

Key Themes

- Ensure that proposed densities do not negatively impact and are sensitive to the existing residential neighbourhoods.
- There are significant traffic issues in the area, both vehicular and truck traffic; the proposed plan needs to ensure that traffic issues are not worsened and does result in increased traffic within residential neighbourhoods.
- Future development must reflect a true mix of residential and employment uses.
- There is significant support for increased park and community facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents.
- It is important to create an environment that supports pedestrians and cyclists, including dedicated infrastructure, an attractive streetscape and a high number of local destinations.
- New development along Laird Avenue should serve a diverse population, including providing a range of residential unit types, local businesses/shops and live/work opportunities.

Summary of What We Heard

Study Area A: Eglinton Avenue Study Area

Height and Density

- 40 storeys is too tall - No buildings taller than 30 storeys
- Mid-rise buildings fronting onto Eglinton is more appropriate
- Some liked the taller buildings and believed that they should be located further back from Eglinton Avenue
- Some density makes sense on Eglinton Avenue as it is a major arterial

Transportation

- Interest in Redway Road extension (from Leslie Street to Bayview Avenue)
- Need appropriate truck routing
- Brentcliffe Road should be a truck route – doesn't make sense to go all the way to Laird Drive
- Excited about cycling improvements
- Too much traffic and congestion
- Would like to see what Laird Station will look like
- How will such high numbers of new residents get to work downtown?
- Would like a boulevard on Eglinton Avenue

Land Use

- Should have an appropriate mix of uses at the LRT

Parks and Open Spaces

- Comments that larger off-site parks should also be considered
- Businesses should be located within the employment area not parks
- Support the proposed park spaces

Community Facilities

- Need community Recreation Space

Study Area B: Laird Drive Study Area

Height and Density

- Drop the density on Laird Drive
- Mid-rise is still too tall – should be three or four storeys given that the parcels back onto the rear yards of single family homes
- Access should be from Laird Drive, not side streets – don't want laneways behind our homes
- Streetscape is not attractive
- Want activities at grade (commercial/retail)
- Significant concern with respect to interface between higher density development and rear laneways on west side of Laird and the existing residential community
- No taller than 12 storeys
- Support for scenarios with surface parking as this is associated with reduced building heights – more consistent with residential neighbourhood
- Density can't be avoided and this process helps to shape it

Transportation

- Concern about increased traffic and impacts on traffic safety on and across Laird Drive – already too much and can't handle more
- Concern about increase of traffic infiltration
- Divided support for cycling facilities on Laird Drive
- Would like pedestrians and cyclists separated on Vanderhoof Avenue
- Mixed feedback regarding permitting through traffic along Vanderhoof Avenue across Laird Drive, although new configuration better for pedestrians
- Concern about permitting through traffic on Parkhurst Boulevard, proposal for a barrier
- Consider straightening Wicksteed Avenue/McRae Drive intersection
- Support absence of median
- Need more crosswalks
- Confusion with respect to value of a more connected street network from the east to west side of Laird Drive
- In the Options Evaluation, Principle 1 should also mention cycling
- The addition of new streets helps to keep the new development together
- Need bigger and better roads

- Need to ensure that traffic is not pushed from one neighbourhood to another
- Regulations should reduce number of cars permitted in new condominiums
- Concern regarding the interface between street trees and hydro lines

Land Use

- Need to ensure an appropriate balance of employment and residential uses – a true mix of uses
- It is important that there is a high number of pedestrian destinations
- Future development along Laird should meet the local, everyday retail needs of the community (i.e. traditional main street shops)
- Concern with respect to getting the right housing mix - for families, seniors, affordable options
- Support for live/work units and low rise development at Parkhurst and Laird
- Support for townhouses and stacked townhouses at Stickney and Laird
- Development should accommodate a variety of age groups

Parks and Open Space

- Ensure the provision of parks to serve a range of users (children, dogs etc.)


Community Facilities

- It is important to ensure there are sufficient community amenities and social services
- Consider the capacity of community services, schools etc. when proposing residential densities
- What are the potential school requirements?
- Support for a new multipurpose community centre

Other

- Concern with respect to water table and underground stream
- How much extra pollution will this cause?

APPENDIX A: WORKSHOP PANELS AND COMMENTS



Welcome.
We are midway through the "Laird in Focus" study and wish to share planning & urban design scenarios for the 3 sub-areas: Eglinton Avenue, Laird Drive, and Leaside Business Park. The team has also derived streetscape options for Laird Drive, Vanderhoof Avenue, and Brentcliffe Road.

The options presented here build on the charrette results of June 3rd. That day was divided into morning and afternoon sessions and focused on the Eglinton Avenue sites along with individual sites along Laird Drive. Separate tables explored the future of Leaside Business Park and streetscape options within the study area.

Common elements that were carried over from the charrette in developing scenarios were:

Eglinton Avenue:

- Break down existing blocks into smaller parcels using streets and pedestrian links;
- Provide a street network that connects to existing streets; and
- Create an open space network comprised of parks and privately owned/publicly accessible open spaces; and
- A range of building types of varying heights.

Laird Drive:

- Where lots are of an appropriate size, explore building forms that conform to the City's "Mid-rise Guidelines";
- Avoid long building facades; and
- Provide rear-lane access while encouraging active ground floor uses.

The team will evaluate the scenarios presented here with the objective of selecting those elements that score highest and incorporating them into a preferred development option. We are also interested in your feedback on the options and encourage you to record your thoughts on the panels.

Thank you for your time and contribution to the study. We look forward to following up with you in the upcoming month as we move forward in crafting a preferred direction.

OCTOBER 17, 2017
Alternative Development Options

Laird In Focus

Partners: City of Toronto, The Planning Partnership, steers davis gleave, f h a, sgs

Alternative Development Options

- Like CNIB development height
- Have a maximum 30 storeys

Emerging Vision

The Laird Focus Study Area will integrate with Leaside. New forms of development will respect the character of the residential and business community, while evolving to meet the needs of future residents. The Study Area will be accessible to people of all ages, in all modes of travel. It will provide a diversity of uses and businesses set in a high quality public realm. Laird Drive will be a vibrant main street and pedestrian promenade. Development along Eglinton Avenue will have a connected public realm of streets, blocks, parks and community amenities, and create a walkable, landscaped neighbourhood.

Emerging Principles

- 1 Create a vibrant and unifying main street that integrates with the broader Leaside community and is accessible to all people in all modes of travel. This Plan shall ensure that new forms of compatible development will:
 - Accommodate a mix of uses, densities and building heights to create a liveable, dynamic community; and,
 - Include animated street frontages in a mixed-use built form.
- 2 Respect the historic character of Leaside, while evolving to meet the needs of future residents and businesses. This Plan shall ensure that new forms of compatible development will:
 - Transition appropriately to adjacent residential neighbourhoods; and,
 - Incorporate excellence in architecture and urban design.

OCTOBER 17, 2017 ALTERNATIVE DESIGN OPTIONS
Emerging Vision and Principles

Laird In Focus

Emerging Vision and Principles

- Balance employment with residential

- 3 Establish a high quality and well-connected public realm, contributing to a walkable, cycle-able and beautifully landscaped neighbourhood. This Plan will ensure that the public realm will:
 - Be accessible to people of all ages and abilities;
 - Connect to adjacent ravines, parks and open spaces;
 - Leverage under-used space and introduce new public spaces that can welcome and accommodate residents, workers and visitors.
- 4 Ensure there is an appropriate link between the consideration of development proposals and the required investments in service infrastructure and community facilities. This Plan shall ensure that new forms of compatible development and investments in service infrastructure and community facilities will:
 - Optimize the use of existing infrastructure and facilities;
 - Provide new infrastructure and facilities that promote innovation and sustainability in a fiscally responsible manner; and,
 - Ensure that new infrastructure and facilities are planned to allow flexibility for the accommodation of future development potential.
- 5 Support the investment transit and ensure that the consideration of development proposals is linked to the ability of the transportation network to accommodate growth. This Plan will ensure that the public realm and new and innovative transportation network investments will:
 - Seamlessly connect to, and integrate with the Eglinton Crosstown LRT;
 - Implement the important elements of complete streets;
 - Promote a safe and accessible active transportation system; and,
 - Integrate new mobility strategies with the existing transportation network.

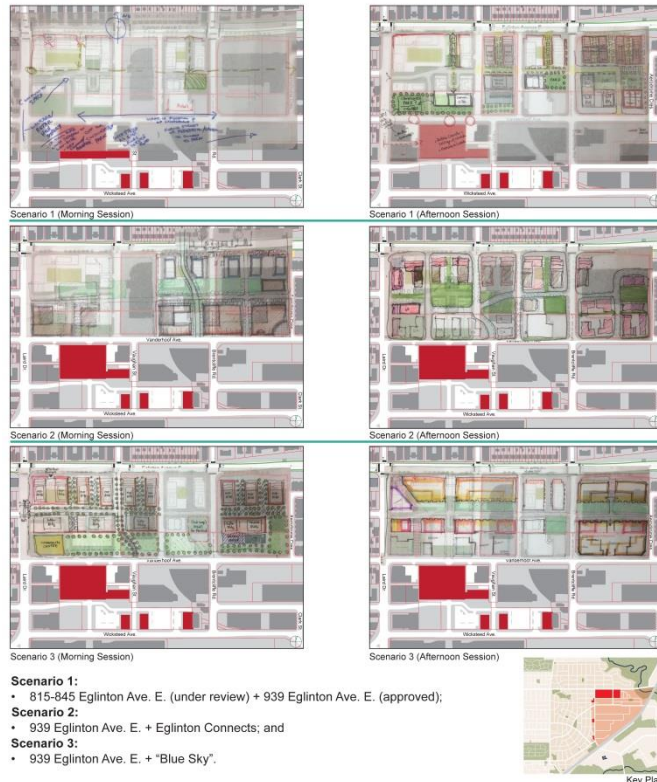


In Focus

OCTOBER 17, 2017 ALTERNATIVE DESIGN OPTIONS
Emerging Vision and Principles

Emerging Vision and Principles

No written comments.



In Focus

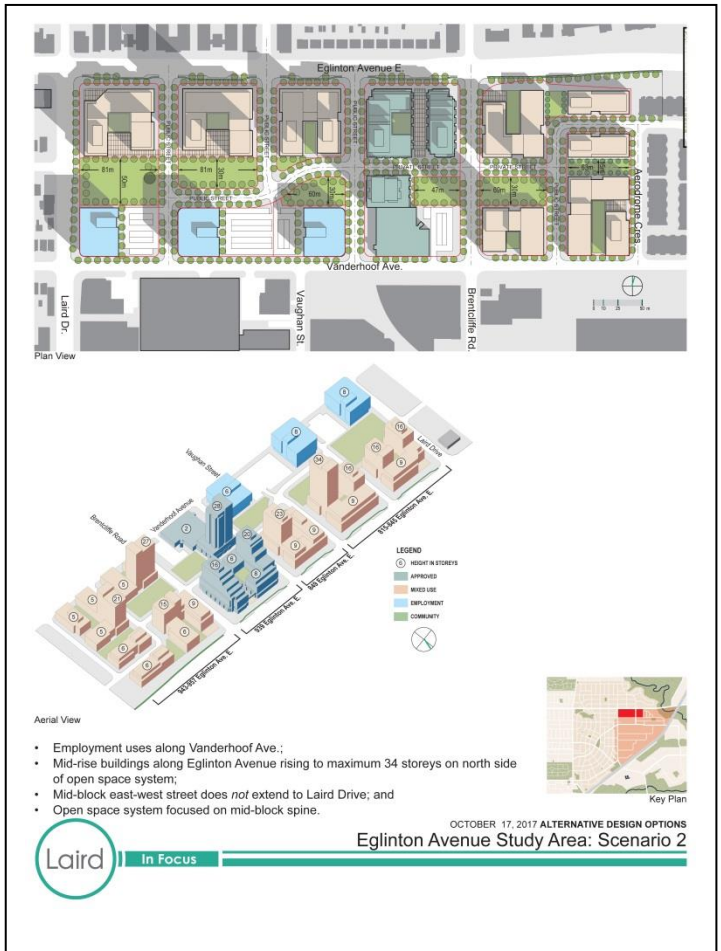
OCTOBER 17, 2017 ALTERNATIVE DESIGN OPTIONS
Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Charrette Results

Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Charrette Results

- Scenario 3 – Afternoon Session: Please don't consider this. We already have enough traffic filtering through residential Leaside



In Focus

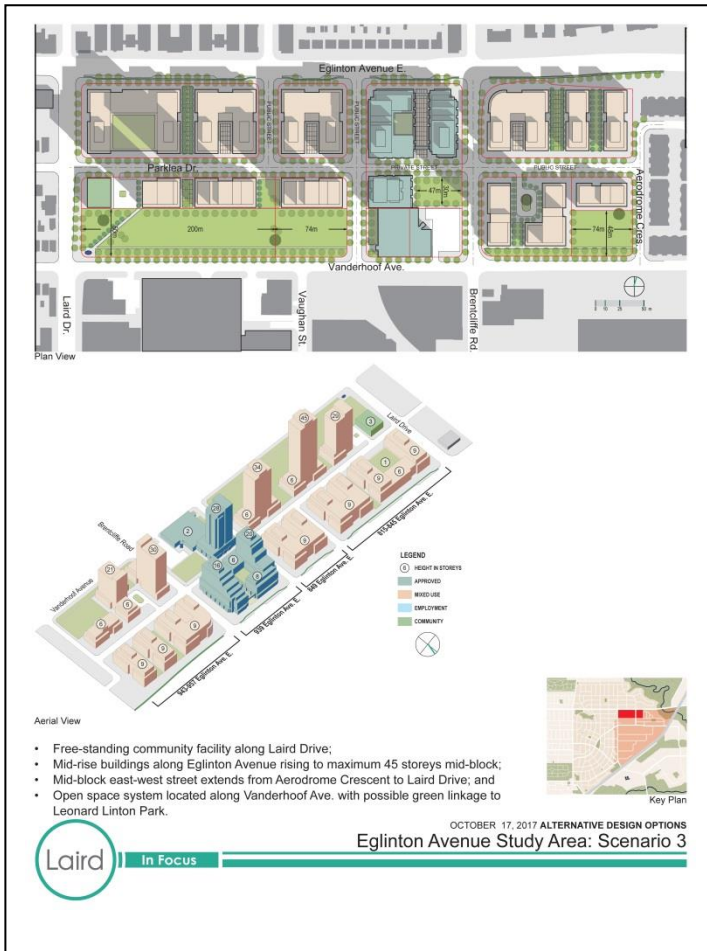


Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Scenario 1

- Accidents occur at Vanderhoof Avenue and Laird Drive on a regular basis
- Building and community centre to be moved west
- Park area is recommended on the corner
- Close off the private street to through traffic at Laird Drive, this will cause more traffic
- Don't allow vehicular traffic north on Brentcliffe Road and Don Avon Drive
- Make more pedestrian destinations

Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Scenario 2

- Need retail, grocery store, LCBO, hardware store, services, doctor, and dentist
- Real mixed use at the LRT
- Way too much density
- Need affordable housing for families
- Affordable housing isn't possible
- Housing for seniors
- Playgrounds for kids
- Dog parks



Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Scenario 3

- Far too high
- Mid-rise only, no high-rises
- 45 storeys is nonsense, this is way too much
- 45 storeys is too high
- Concern regarding the volume of traffic now, the width of Laird Drive is too narrow
- 28 storeys should be the maximum for Eglinton Avenue
- Why do any of the towers have to be taller than this? Stop at 28 floors
- What is the density allowed for a residential community? This seems way too high
- Like the community centre
- Consider the local school capacity
- Too many buildings, too high, too much density

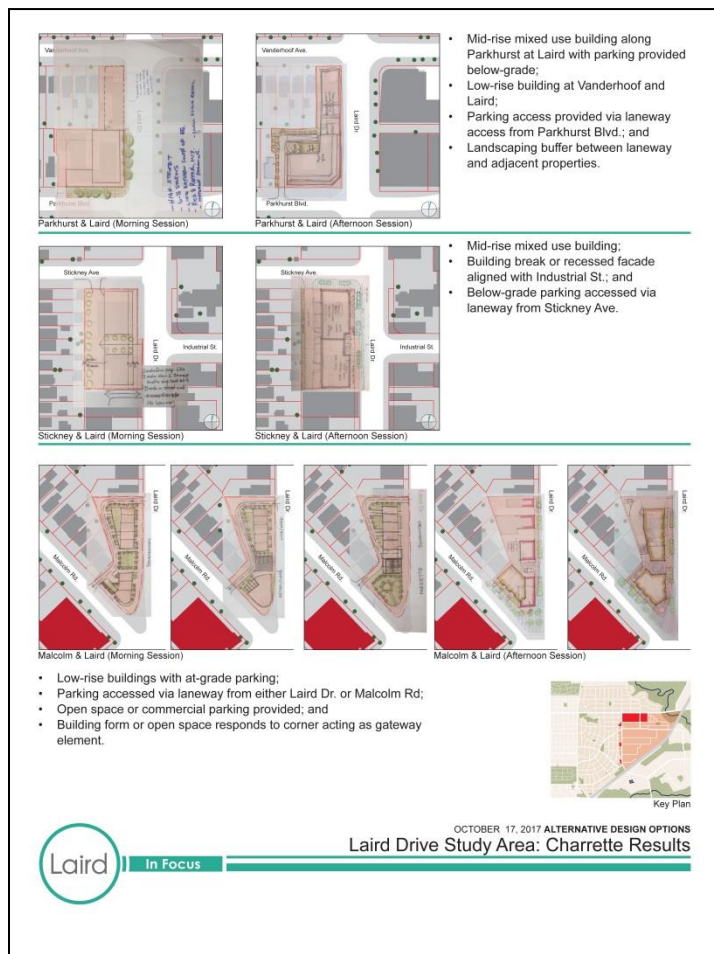
OPTION	LIKE	NO OPINION	DISLIKE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Scenario 1				
Scenario 2				
Scenario 3				

OCTOBER 17, 2017 ALTERNATIVE DESIGN OPTIONS
Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Evaluation

Laird In Focus

Eglinton Avenue Study Area: Evaluation

No written comments.



Laird Drive Study Area: Charrette Results

No written comments.



Laird Drive Study Area: Parkhurst and Laird

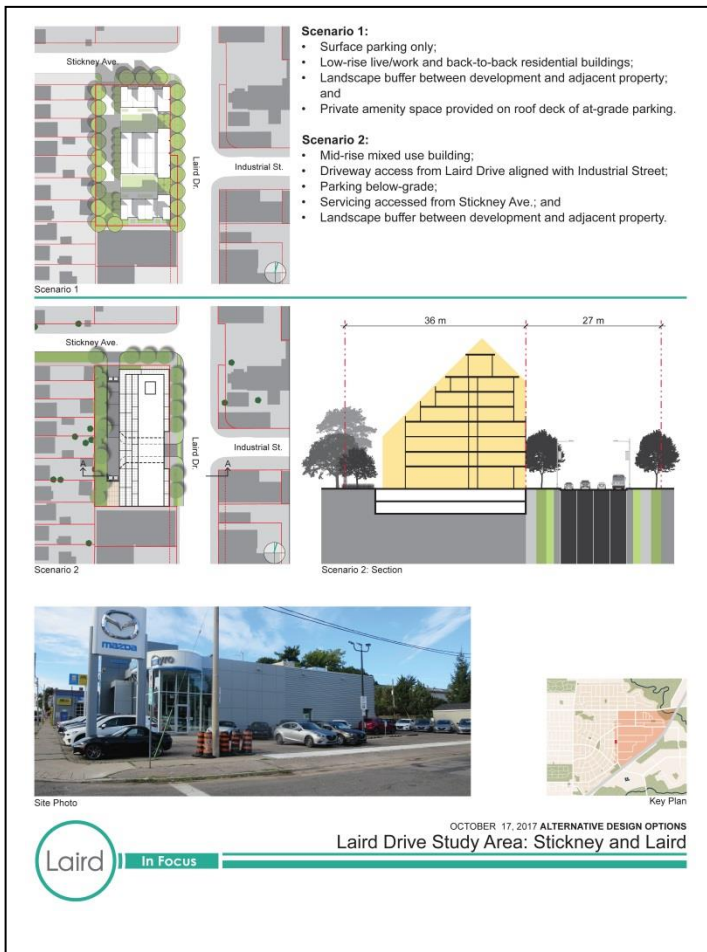
- They all look good
- Don't like Scenario 1 or 2

Scenario 1

- Low-rise commercial building at Laird Drive and Vanderhoof Avenue are good
- Live/work units along Laird Drive and Parkhurst Boulevard are good
- Rear lane parking accessed from Parkhurst Boulevard are too close to the corner

Scenario 2

- Don't like the mid-rise building at Laird Drive and Parkhurst Boulevard



Laird Drive Study Area: Stickney and Laird

The numbers in brackets (x) indicate how many individuals indicated they agreed with a statement.

Scenario 1

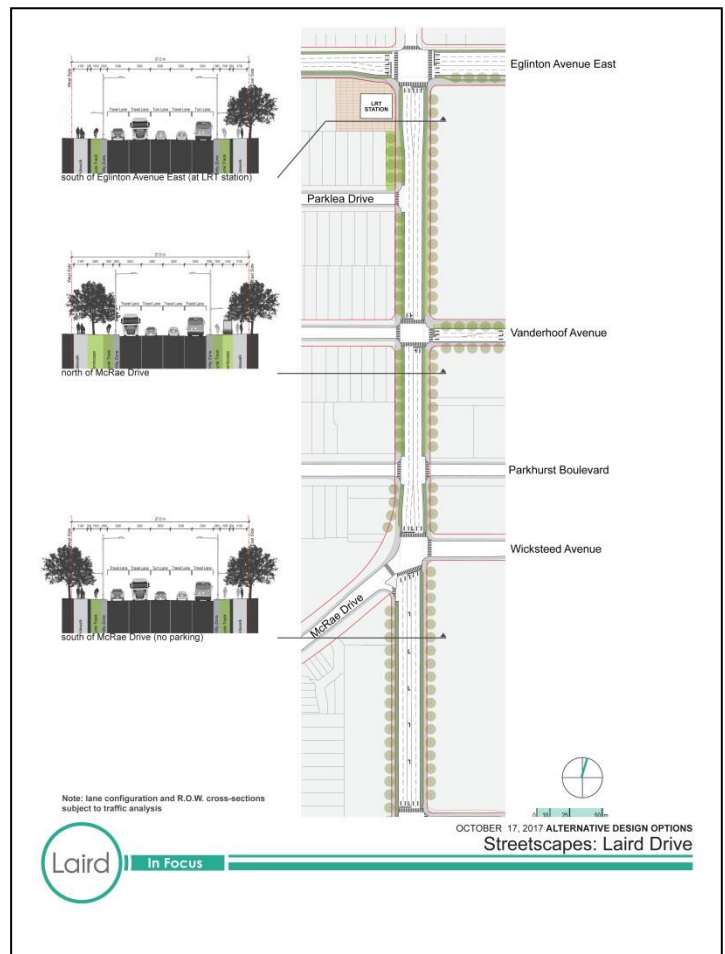
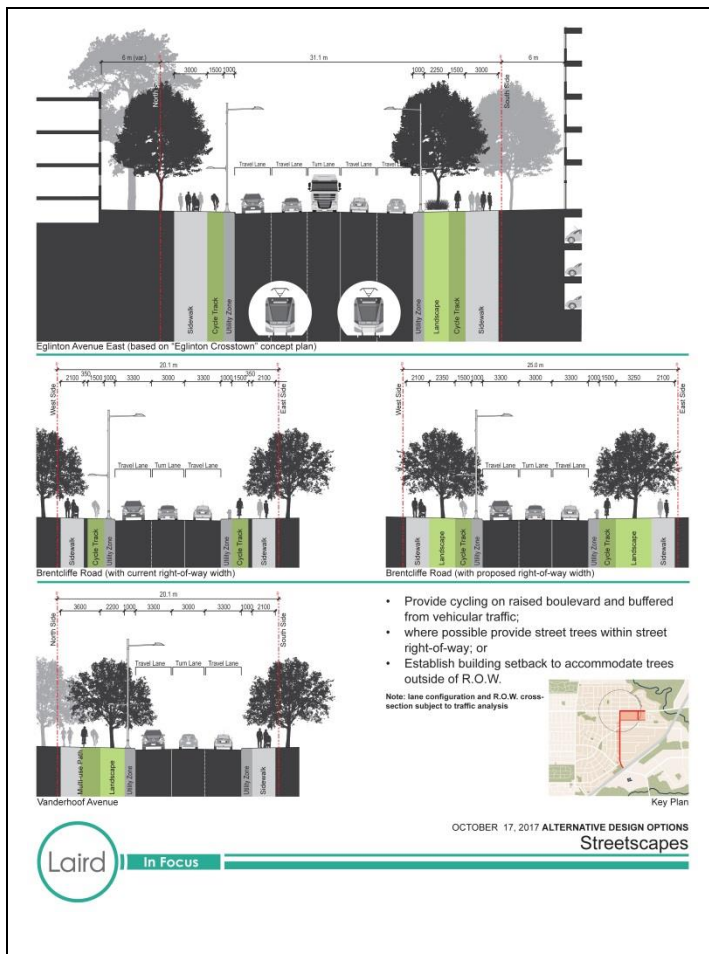
- Like this scenario (x8)
- Like that there is no laneway (x7)
- Like townhouses and stacked townhouses (x7)
- Like the four storey stacked townhouses

Scenario 2

- Dislike this scenario (x8)
- Buildings shouldn't be higher than the tree line, maximum four storeys (x7)
- Put seven storeys on the east side (x7)
- Larger balconies
- Just have a landscaped buffer, no laneway, it will be quieter
- Maintain existing trees, 2 metre high fence, 10 metre landscape buffer, prefer entrances off Laird Drive without a laneway
- Prefer a mix of building heights
- Do not want a constant street wall
- Need to study the groundwater and the effect on development

Laird Drive Study Area: Malcolm and Laird

- The bump-out is useless



Streetscapes

- Cyclists should be separated on Vanderhoof Avenue's multi-use path
- Have a barrier to prevent cyclists from crossing over landscaped buffer onto sidewalk
- Walmart, yes or no?

Streetscapes: Laird Drive

Vanderhoof Avenue

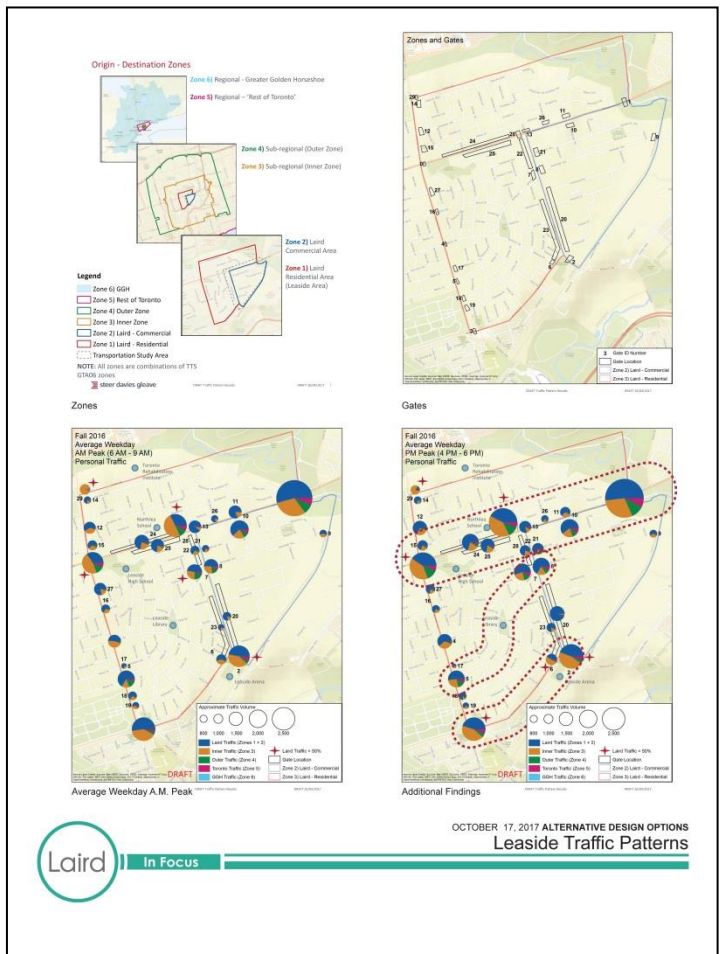
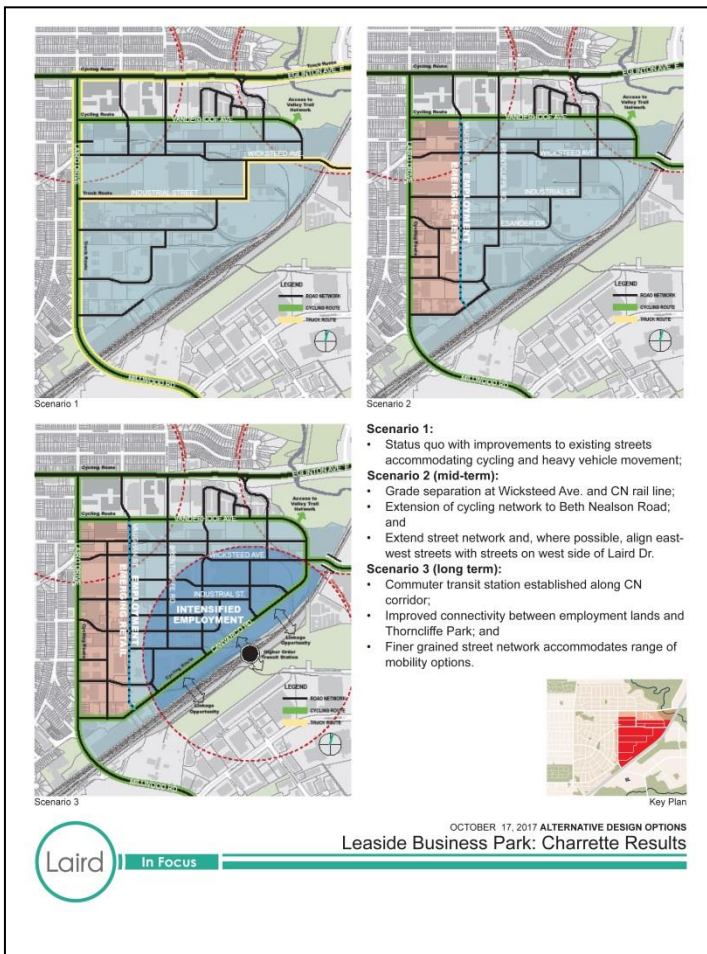
- Changes will be better for pedestrians
- No through traffic on Vanderhoof Avenue [across Laird]
- This is a big concern. Currently, traffic can't go across Laird Drive from east to west. This proposes a traffic light and having a three lane street becoming a small residential street. There is already enough traffic filtering through Leaside
- Allow through traffic, mostly 'Leasiders'

Parkhurst Boulevard

- Need a boulevard preventing traffic crossing Laird Drive from one side of Parkhurst Boulevard to the other
- Don't have through traffic on Parkhurst Boulevard

Other

- Straighten up the Wicksteed Avenue / McRae Drive intersection
- Not having street medians is good
- Need more crosswalks
- Consider water runoff, underwater stream

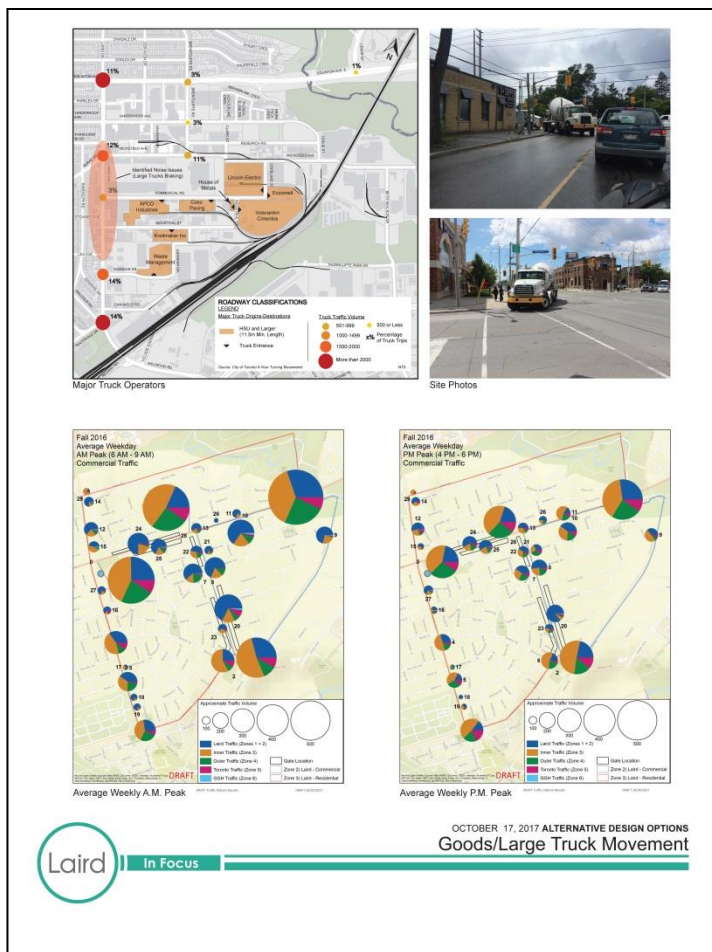


Leaside Business Park: Charrette Results

- Why extend the street network and align east-west streets with streets on the west side of Laird Drive?

Leaside Traffic Patterns

No written comments.



Goods/Large Truck Movement

No written comments.

PRINCIPLE	CRITERION	STUDY AREA A			STUDY AREA B		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1 Create a vibrant and accessible street and pedestrian realm	A. Does the option provide for a mix of uses?						
	B. Is there a mix of building heights?						
	C. Is there a variation in building heights?						
	D. Does the option accommodate commercial or residential activity that supports streets and open spaces?						
	E. Does the option define and support Eglinton Ave. E., Laird Dr. and Vanderhoof Avenue?						
2 Respect the historic character of Leaside while permitting its evolution	A. Does the option provide built form transition to adjacent neighbourhood?						
	B. Does the option demonstrate urban design excellence as determined by site personality, built form relationship to the public realm, appropriate building setbacks, and scale of buildings?						
	C. Does the option acknowledge the character of the community?						
	D. Does the option promote a spacious landscape character that integrates with Leaside?						
	E. Does the option promote new employment within lands designated for employment uses?						
3 Establish a high quality, well-connected, safe and comfortable public realm	F. Does the option's shadows impact adversely on the adjacent neighbourhood, parks, and open spaces?						
	A. Is the option accessible to people of all ages and abilities?						
	B. Does the option facilitate pedestrian and cycling movement within?						
	C. Does the option facilitate pedestrian and cycling movement to adjacent destinations?						
	D. Does the option provide for street trees and landscaped sidewalks?						
4 Ensure growth is co-ordinated with investments in infrastructure and community facilities	E. Does the option provide/encourage connectivity to adjacent reserves, parks, & open spaces?						
	F. Does the option provide a variety of new parks and open spaces?						
	G. Is there variation of building types?						
	H. Does the option meet the mid-rise and tall building guidelines in reducing shadow impact, allowing skyviews, and promoting pedestrian comfort in terms of scale and wind impact on city streets and open spaces?						
	A. Does the option require new or significant improvements to existing capital infrastructure?						
5 Support recent and continued investment in rapid transit	B. Does the option provide necessary new infrastructure & facilities (as identified through Eglinton Corridor)?						
	C. Is new infrastructure provided in an innovative, sustainable, & resilient manner as measured by efficient use of space, required capital investment, storm water management potential, etc.?						
	D. Does the option accommodate for future population and job growth?						
	A. Does the option seamlessly connect/align with the Eglinton Crosstown LRT?						
	B. Does the option maximize the percentage of residents and employees with acceptable walking distance of rapid transit?						
	C. Does the option demonstrate a "Complete Streets" approach?						
	D. Does the option promote a multi-modal, innovative, safe, & accessible active transportation network?						
	E. Does the option improve transportation network connectivity?						
	F. Does the option reduce traffic pressure at Laird and McRae, and at Eglinton and Brimley?						
	G. Does the option minimize the share of single vehicular uses?						
	H. Is the option supportive of complementary in employment area uses?						

Options Evaluation

Principle 1: Create a vibrant and accessible street and pedestrian realm. - Add cycling

C: Is there a variation in building heights? – It's all too high, makes me want to move out of Leaside

Principle 2: Respect the historic character of Leaside while permitting its evolution. - Add balance of employment and residential space

C: Does the option acknowledge the character of the community? – No

Principle 3: Establish a high quality, well-connected, safe and comfortable public realm.

B: Does the option facilitate pedestrian and cycling movement within? – Yes

C: Does the option facilitate pedestrian and cycling movement to adjacent destinations? - Yes

Principle 5: Support recent and continued investment in rapid transit

G: Does the option minimize the share of single vehicular uses? – Discriminates against singles with mobility problems

APPENDIX B: INPUT FROM FEEDBACK FORMS

Height and Density

- We do not want buildings over 12 storeys
- Scenario 1 is the best in all instances where surface parking and access reduces the height of mixed use buildings, and the street face is more in line with adjacent residential (2 storey maximum) buildings
- Eglinton Avenue is a major arterial road so height and density is understandable. The north side of Eglinton Avenue is low rise apartments, so density is not completely at odds
- Intensification is a reality we can't avoid, and I think this process is helping to deal constructively with this reality
- Eglinton Scenario 1: like the streets added because it keeps development together and improves the possibility for a neighbourhood feel
- Eglinton Scenario 3: 45 stories is just too tall!
- How will this transform Leaside as a family oriented neighbourhood?

Transportation

- It is almost impossible to drive on Laird south of Eglinton and north of Eglinton on Bayview. This development is way too much for Leaside, we can't handle 5000+ more cars.
- We want bigger and better roads
- Stop north Leaside from blocking traffic and pushing it south
- Allow fewer cars in the new condos
- Having a visual of Laird Station would be helpful
- With this extraordinary increase in population how will workers get downtown in the morning?

Parks and Open Spaces

- The park space is nice, should have a boulevard on Eglinton Avenue
- Need more information regarding water table / underground streams would be helpful
- Huge support for the multipurpose community centre, including the library, pool, gyms and community use space
- Trees are great until they grow up into hydro lines and need to be pruned into ugly forms to compensate for the lines

Other

- Very impressed with the creative and thoughtful planning scenarios

- How much extra pollution will this cause?
- How about a range of accommodation, will they be all rentals, and what will they cost?
- Good presentation, concerned with respect to providing community services for this area as well as 'Old Leaside'. Leaside sorely lacks mental health, employment and other social services (seniors programs)