

# Laird in Focus

## Community Information Session

**Tuesday, December 5, 2017**

St. Anslem Catholic School,

Session 1:

**5:30 pm** - Presentation and Question and Answer Period

**6:15 pm** - Breakout Sessions

Session 2:

**7:30 pm** - Presentation and Question and Answer Period

**8:15 pm** - Breakout Sessions

### SUMMARY REPORT

#### Meeting Overview

The workshop on Tuesday, December 5, 2017 included two sessions, each consisting of a presentation of the Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment findings and the Draft Emerging Preferred Alternative. The presentations were followed by a question and answer period and small group discussions focused on the three main topic areas: recommended direction for the Eglinton Study Area, the West Side of Laird Drive, and Transportation and Mobility.

#### Meeting Background

A total of 9 panels were on display during the community information session and were grouped to provide the context for three topic areas: Eglinton Study Area, the West Side of Laird Drive, and Transportation and Mobility. The panels provided information on:

Eglinton Study Area:

- Planning Context
- Conceptual Framework for Study Area
- Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Option Evaluation
- Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Framework
- Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Vision

West Side of Laird Drive:

- Laird Drive Study Area B: Mid-rise Sites
- Laird Drive Study Area B: Mid-rise Buildings

Transportation and Mobility:

- Streetscape Plan
- Street R.O.W. Cross-sections



## Community Consultation Meeting

*The City of Toronto holds public consultations as one way to engage residents in the life of their city. We invite you to get involved.*

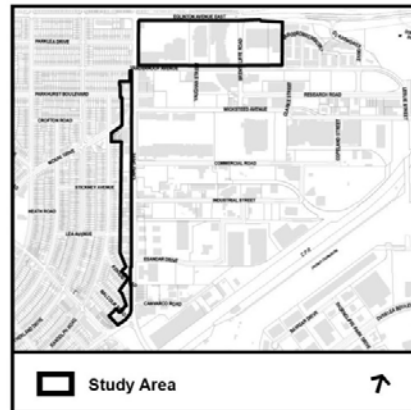
### Laird in Focus Planning Study

#### Presentation and Breakout Discussions: Draft Emerging Preferred Alternative

Join us on **Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017** for a presentation and focused breakout sessions to explore a preferred emerging alternative plan for the Laird in Focus Planning Study.

**Laird in Focus** is a study led by the City of Toronto City Planning Division that will develop a planning framework to guide future development of the Laird Drive and Eglinton Avenue East area. The study will refine and build upon the existing planning structure as well as recent planning initiatives undertaken in the area. It will develop a vision and policies for a complete community which supports new streets and blocks, parks and open spaces, buildings, community services and facilities, enhanced public realm and a transportation and servicing strategy.

The **purpose of this meeting** is to engage the community in the review of a preferred emerging alternative plan prepared by the consulting team and informed by the input received through public consultation and at our October 17, 2017 public meeting.



[www.toronto.ca/lairdinfocus](http://www.toronto.ca/lairdinfocus)

#### MEETING DETAILS:



**Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

##### Session 1

5:30 pm Presentation and Q+A  
6:15 pm Breakout Sessions

##### Session 2

7:30 pm Presentation and Q+A  
8:15 pm Breakout Sessions

**Note: Both sessions will be the same**



**St. Anslem Catholic School**  
182 Bessborough Drive  
Gymnasium

#### Further Information

If you are interested in the Laird in Focus Planning Study but cannot attend this meeting, please visit [www.toronto.ca/lairdinfocus](http://www.toronto.ca/lairdinfocus) or contact the City's Study consultants, City Planner or local Councillor listed below:

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#### Notice to correspondents:

Information will be collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

Our public meeting locations are wheelchair/mobility device accessible. Other reasonable accommodation or assistive services for persons with disabilities may be provided with adequate notice. Please contact Josh Reis, at 416-395-7059, [josh.reis@toronto.ca](mailto:josh.reis@toronto.ca) with your request. The City of Toronto is committed to taking the necessary steps to insure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Notice of Public Meeting



## FEEDBACK RECEIVED

The following is a summary of comments provided on flip chart paper during group discussions, during the question and answer period, and from comment sheets received by the study team following the meeting.

### Key Themes

- Emphasis should be placed on the public realm and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and safety
- Ensure traffic and servicing issues in the area are not worsened
- Consider the impact on exiting parks, schools and daycares in the area and future requirements
- Built form should reflect a mix of uses and be sensitive to the surrounding, local, neighbourhood context

### What We Heard

#### Height and Density

- Some in the community understand that change is coming, but wish that it didn't have to be so much
- Laird Drive starts and ends in residential communities, we need to be aware of that
- Six storeys is better than what was approved at 150 Laird Drive
- Consider the transitions to backyards and shadowing from development on Laird Drive
- Generally agree that density along Laird Drive should be focused at Laird Drive and Eglinton Avenue and that it should taper down from that intersection south
- There is a disconnect between what developers want and what the City wants
- Owners on Laird Drive want to build to the lot line
- Property at Parkhurst Boulevard and Laird Drive was formerly one lot. Concerned that a 7 storey building would remove future building potential on other lots
- This is not an accomplishment. You've egg crated 7,000 people into an area. This should be driven by LRT demands, driven by humanity. This will destroy the city in 20 years. There are no schools and the parks are too small to hit a ball in
- Concerned about what the intensification that is planned, particularly for Area A (the Eglinton/Vanderhoof, and Laird/Aerodrome block), means for the traffic conditions in the Business Park
- How are the Provincial density targets developed, and are they appropriate for this station area?
- It would appear that only the mid-rise/tall building model is open for discussion, and the densities are to be in line with the one parcel for which approval has already been given

- Intensification along Eglinton is to be expected given the public dollars being put into the Crosstown LRT Line. This does not mean that the tall building portion of the proposed model is appropriate for all the parcels fronting on Eglinton within the study area. Obviously as one gets further away from the Laird station, one would expect densities to drop off significantly
- Some members of the community would recommend that the Study consider the approach taken in Midtown in Focus (Proposals Stage) where specific buildings locations and specific heights are attached to those buildings. It is felt that this will provide the City with much stronger ability to hold on to its height and massing recommendation at the Ontario Municipal Board, compared with a general building type (mid-rise/high-rise) heights or range of heights recommendations

### **Transportation**

- Like the servicing and access off of Laird Drive. Don't like the laneway at the rear of Laird buildings
- Worried about the capacity of servicing to accommodate new development and the capacity of roads to accommodate additional traffic
- There needs to be more parking in the area. Vehicles and movement should be taken into consideration. People who buy the condos will have to drive to stores, drive to the new LRT station, and will park in the area to take transit. Those without parking will find other places to park in the area. People drive and park in the area to take the bus
- How will parking for retail and existing buildings be addressed?
- No on-street parking should be accommodated on Laird Drive
- Concerned about the Study's apparent direction to date of encouraging use of Wicksteed/Laird for truck traffic to exit the Park, and the lack of attention to the Beth Neilson/Overlea route
- Lack of attention to developing links to the Leslie LRT station which for the establishments east of the railway tracks is far closer than the Laird Station
- Leaside Business Park is the only remaining largely-industrial area in proximity to downtown. Transportation is key to maintaining the Leaside Business Park as a major employment district in Toronto

### **Community Facilities**

- Where will kids go to school?
- What are the impacts on hospitals?
- The display panels indicated that the south-east corner of Laird and Eglinton would be occupied by a private building and immediately south of it, a community centre and a green space. This is a missed opportunity considering that this intersection could provide a unique and rare chance to develop a civic space that would work at both the community and city scales

- Placing the Community Centre and the adjacent open space at the south/east corner of Laird and Eglinton would create a Civic Node - envision a community piazza, framed by the new transit pavilions for Laird Station serving as a grand entrance to the new iconic Leaside Community Centre
- At a City scale, this minor but significant change, of switching the location of the piazza/community centre with the private building, would provide a dynamic visual break which would not only mark our Leaside Community but also celebrate transit along the Eglinton Corridor. At a Community level, it would provide the long needed connection and neighbourhood hub that would unify the North and South communities of Leaside – perhaps it will become our future Civic Centre
- The Community currently experiences traffic congestion, lack of school space, pressures on public infrastructure (hydro, water, sewage and storm water facilities) and on community services (libraries, parks, recreational facilities, etc.), and needs to see how such matters are to be addressed in any emerging development scenario. Unfortunately there's still no information on how these impacts will be addressed

### **Public Realm**

- Need to pay special attention to the base of buildings: Triviso condo at Lawrence and Dufferin is a good example
- Laird Drive is currently not an attractive street
- How do we cross Laird Drive safely?
- Consider the small town, Leaside character
- I think that this is good progress and is in the right direction. Laird and Eglinton offer an incredible opportunity for city building. It's a rare opportunity to have LRT stations and civic uses. Consider a park at the corner framed by transit and civic buildings/node. There is nothing linking the north Leaside neighborhood and south Leaside neighborhood

### **Land Use**

- Be conscious of how decisions and construction affect businesses
- Minimize impacts on businesses in the short term
- I want the buildings and businesses in my neighbourhood to stay
- Large amounts and high proportion of residential uses compared with employment generating uses

### **Heritage**

- Heritage is important
- What are the heritage recommendations for other areas outside the Laird study area?

## **Other**

- Concerned about a high water table
- Extend the Transportation Study to include the eastern part from the CP Rail tracks to Overlea Boulevard and the Don Valley. The railway track splits the Business Park; it does not form an edge. Today the “divide” is more between properties fronting on Laird, and the rest of the Park than between different sides of the railway
- Apparent lack of consideration for the huge investment in infrastructure (such as electric power installations) represented by the existing industries in the Business Park, such as Tremco, Siltech and Lincoln Electric
- Phase 3’s “10 big moves” seem to be reasonable and appropriate, and we can support them in principle, however they are quite high level and lacking in definition and detail

## **Question and Answer Period**

- There were properties identified in the heritage study, has anyone talked to the heritage consultants in the community?  
A: As part of the Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment study the City and its consultants (EVOQ) have consulted with heritage experts in the local community.
- A cycling system is good when it is interconnected to a greater system. Is there a cycling master plan or larger plan for the area?  
A: The proposed cycling network and linkages builds on the City’s 10-year Cycling Master Plan, adding further linkages and connections between the LRT station, neighbourhoods, community centres, and natural systems
- How are you going to get a mix of affordable housing?  
A: The amount of affordable units and their mix will be determined in later stages of this planning process.
- What is the maximum height proposed? How do you accommodate all the people in this area?  
A: The heights are generally based on the approved development along Eglinton. Heights and density will be determined as the project progresses
- What are the road widths being proposed? Can they be widened to accommodate cycling without affecting existing movements?  
A: The team is proposing to increase the right-of-way along Laird to improve the streetscape and streetscape elements
- What is happening at the Laird Drive and Wicksteed Avenue/McRae Drive Intersection?



A: The study team is exploring a possible reconfiguration of the intersection that would remove the channelized eastbound right turn lane to improve pedestrian safety

- Has consideration been given to the elementary schools and increase in population? The schools are all overprescribed. How are we accommodating for community services? What are we doing about schools and open space?

A: The City and School Boards have been involved in the process. School boards will determine the need for new schools based on projected population and development

- There was a reference to phases. Are there years associated with each of the phases?

A: The phases do not have an associated time frame but are based on a series of triggers that may occur over time. The timing of when these triggers may occur varies

- Will the study have the ability to influence development proposals or developments that are currently being planned (Canadian Tire)?

A: The consultant team will provide recommendations to the City that will assist in the review of current and future development proposals.

- Concerns about pedestrians being run over. What emphasis has been placed on the pedestrian environment?

A: Pedestrian safety is of the utmost importance, the team has proposed/envisioned curb bump outs, cycling lanes (cycle tracks – separated), proper linkages, multi-use trails and a pedestrian plaza connecting the station and community centre, for example

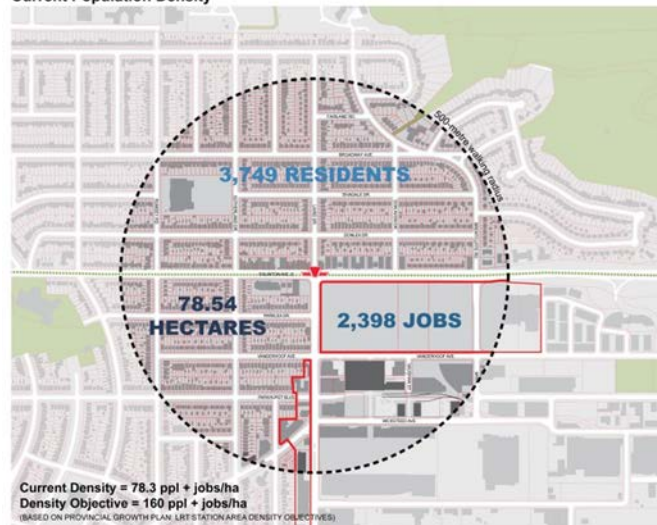


Participants at small group discussion

## WORKSHOP PANELS AND COMMENTS

### 1. Eglinton Study Area

Current Population Density



OPA 231



EglintonCONNECTS



Study Area Structure Plan



- ① Growth in Leaside will be focused in one area reducing development pressures elsewhere.
- ② Laird Drive's will be a vibrant, mixed use street with a beautiful streetscape that accommodates cyclists, strollers, and lingerers.
- ③ Eglinton Avenue East is re-imagined as an attractive, tree-lined boulevard with a variety of active, at-grade uses.
- ④ Vanderhoof Avenue will be transformed into a beautiful greenway linking Laird to the Don Valley Ravine.
- ⑤ A new mid-block Main Street will provide a quiet interlude from the busyness of Eglinton Avenue.
- ⑥ Throughout Leaside cycling will be accommodated along safe, dedicated routes.
- ⑦ Parks will be integral to new development, be accessible to all, and contribute to a larger open space network.
- ⑧ A new facility will serve the communities of North and South Leaside along with the emerging new neighbourhood.
- ⑨ Buildings will be massed with a sensitivity to adjacent neighbourhoods; taller buildings will be located internal to development sites.
- ⑩ The Employment Lands will be supported with improved infrastructure that facilitates growth and evolution.



Employment Lands: Movement Network



Immediate Term

Medium Term

Long Term



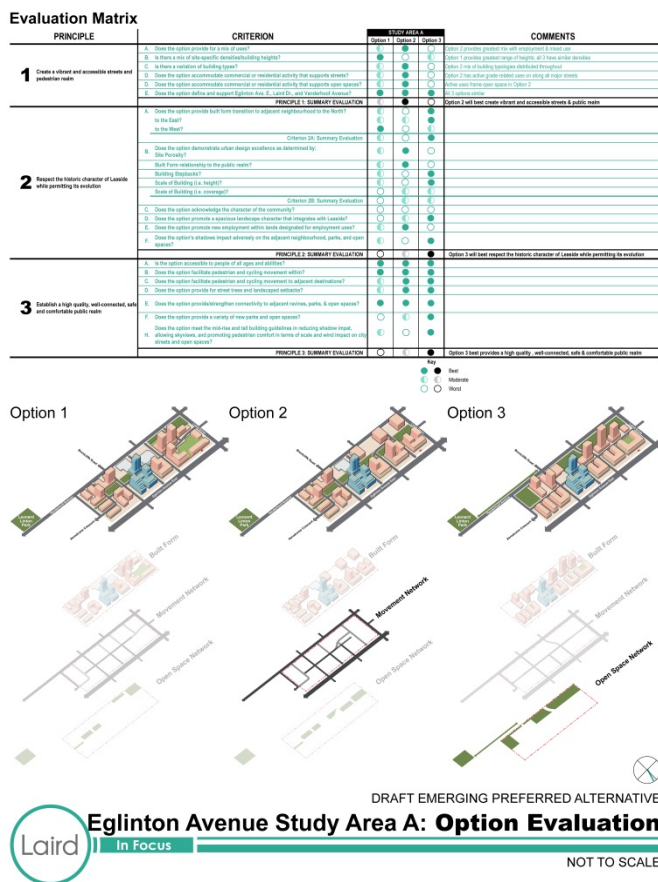
#### Planning Context

No written comments

#### Conceptual Framework for Study Area

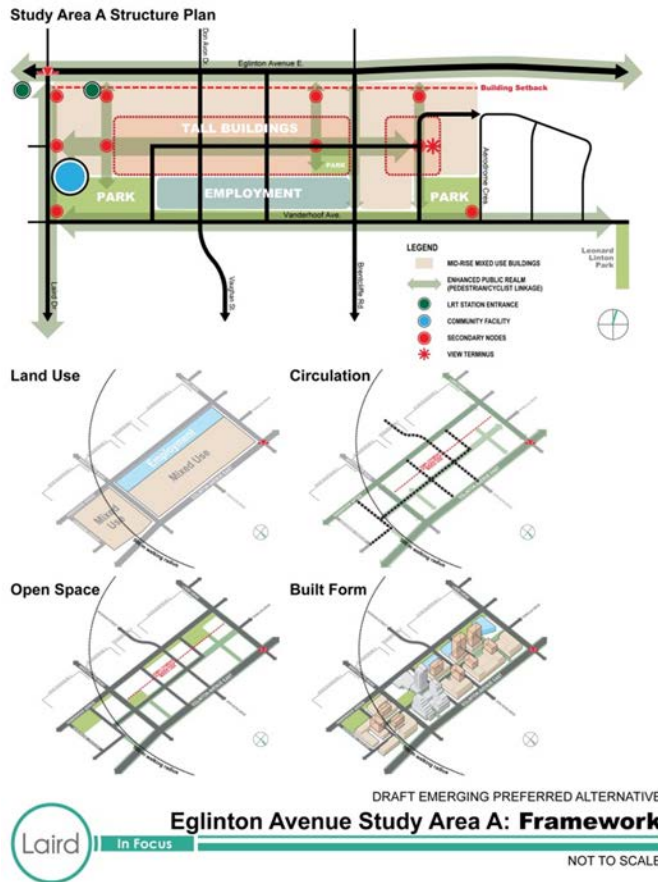
- Truck movement kept for long term on Beth Nelson
- Grade separation with GO Transit
- Do not align industrial streets with local, residential roads





*Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Option Evaluation*

No written comments



*Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Framework*

**Height and Density**

- 28 storeys is too high
- Heights should be 25-28 storeys high, or 30-34 storeys if designed well
- There are already towers at Celestica, Inn on Park, and Sunnybrook Plaza, what we need is more schools and more parks
- Ensure a mix of tenure
- There should be no all glass and concrete towers

**Community Facilities**

- Eglinton and Laird should be a civic node
- Make sure the community centre is large enough
- Need a school strategy that considers portables, expansion, and new sites?
- Where are the schools?

**Other**

- Half of the area's workforce should actually live in the community
- There should be no surface parking

Illustrative Plan



Eglinton Avenue Streetscape



Mid-block Street



Community Facility & Park



Community Park



DRAFT EMERGING PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

## Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Vision

NOT TO SCALE



In Focus

## Eglinton Avenue Study Area A: Vision

### Height and Density

- Why must buildings be 28 storeys?
- 28 storeys is too tall
- 8 to 10 storeys would be a good scale (or only three)
- Buildings should reflect Leaside character, not all steel and glass (should be brick)
- Ensure a mixture of uses, including employment

### Community Facilities

- Need space to include a school
- Create a civic node at the corner by placing the park at the south-east corner of Laird and Eglinton

### Public Realm

- Connect to the ravine
- Screen service and loading areas
- Support walking on Vanderhoof and Laird
- Ensure that Laird is safe and walkable for pedestrians
- Skating in the winter at Don Mills Centre



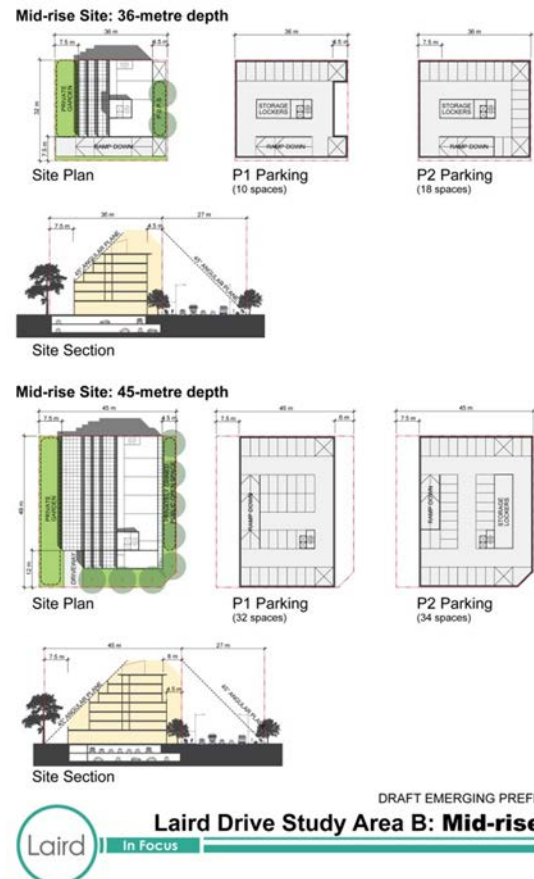
In Focus

## 2. West Side of Laird Drive



*Laird Drive Study Area B: Mid-rise Sites*

No written comments



*Laird Drive Study Area B: Mid-rise Buildings*

No written comments

### 3. Transportation and Mobility



#### *Streetscape Plan*

##### **Transportation**

- Signalize design without car movements into Don Avon neighbourhood
- Signal optimization
- Create justification for signal at Don Avon
- Consider existing parking demand in the area
- Don't align new roads with neighbourhood roads (creates traffic infiltration)
- No signal at Vanderhoof Avenue, concerned with traffic flowing into residential neighbourhood
- Maintain median design on Laird to control infiltration
- Median at Vanderhoof
- Leave Brentcliffe for trucks

##### **Cycling**

- Prefer bike lanes on Vanderhoof Avenue
- Bikes on Wicksteed Avenue

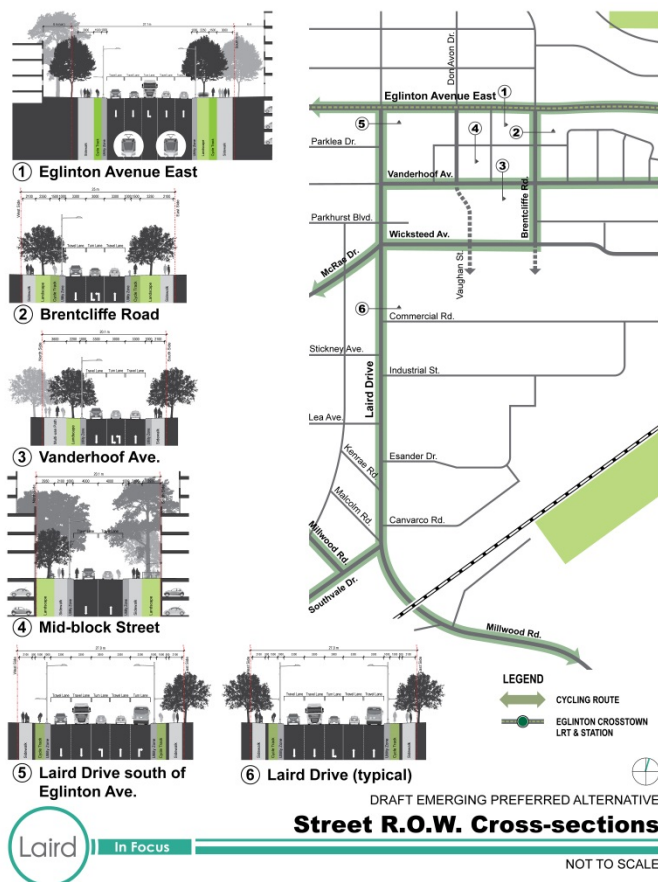
##### **Community Facilities**

- Community centre should be moved north, closer to Eglinton
- Day cares

##### **Public Realm**

- Like how the buildings lower to the street
- Restrict signage
- Consider pedestrian bridge or tunnel connecting to the LRT station
- Planned to have the future LRT exit on the North Side





## Street R.O.W. Cross Sections

### Cycling

- Consider wider bridge design to fix bike lane
- Consider bike lanes without removing the median
- Cyclist safety is an issue
- Cyclists must be separated

### Other

- Remove the median
- How is parking going to be accommodated west of Parklea Drive?

## Comment Form

- Please ensure that pedestrian safety - including child pedestrian safety - is fully addressed. Including physical measures (e.g. Intersection shrinkage)