City of Toronto / July 2019 / Final Report

Keele Finch Plus

Built Form & Visualization

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CONTENTS

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1.0
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Investment in higher order transit along Finch Avenue West and the Line 1 subway extension at Finch West Station will contribute to city-building aspirations and tie together the varied neighbourhoods within the Keele Finch Plus Study Area. This new transit infrastructure is anticipated to encourage redevelopment with a compact built form, a range of building types, and pedestrian-supportive public realm improvements.

1.1 STUDY AREA

The Keele Finch Plus (KFP) Study Area is centered around the intersection of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West, located north of Downsview Park, southeast of York University, between Black Creek Valley in the west and the CN rail line to the east. A new subway station is located at this intersection and is a transfer point between the proposed Finch West LRT and Line 1 subway. Another LRT stop is proposed to be located to the west at Finch Avenue West and Sentinel Road. Refer to Figure 1 on the following page.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the process, findings, methods, and recommendations with respect to building types, heights and public realm developed as part of the Keele Finch Plus Planning Study.

This study took place to inform the Keele Finch Plus Planning Study and was coordinated with several supporting background studies including: a Noise, Air Quality and Safety Assessment; a Community Services and Facilities Assessment; the Downsview Airport Operational Needs Assessment; and a Transportation Assessment.

The urban design concepts and recommendations included within this report were developed to inform a Secondary Plan, currently being developed by the City of Toronto.

1.3 THE STUDY AREA TODAY: EXISTING CONTEXT

Keele Street and Finch Avenue West are the main arterial streets within the Study Area. Most of the existing retail land uses are located along the east side of Keele Street near the intersection of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West. Until recently, minimal investment or redevelopment has occurred along these streets. Existing built form is dominated by single detached houses set back from the street, auto-oriented commercial buildings and industrial buildings. The pedestrian environments provide basic facilities and amenity.

As part of the Finch West LRT, Metrolinx has developed a plan for the construction of the LRT along this east-west corridor. In 2016 the DUKE Heights Business Improvement Area (BIA) completed a Public Realm Design Report that established a vision for streetscape design within their boundaries, which includes a portion of the Study Area.

Existing Open Spaces within the Study Area include: Fountainhead Park and the Finch Hydro Corridor, both highly valued by the community. These open spaces include community facilities such as playgrounds and allotment gardens. Black Creek Valley, part of the Natural Heritage System, forms the eastern edge of the Study Area. Both the hydro corridor and the valley lands contain multi-use trails and are important active transportation connections. There are opportunities to strengthen connections to local parks and open spaces surrounding the Study Area.

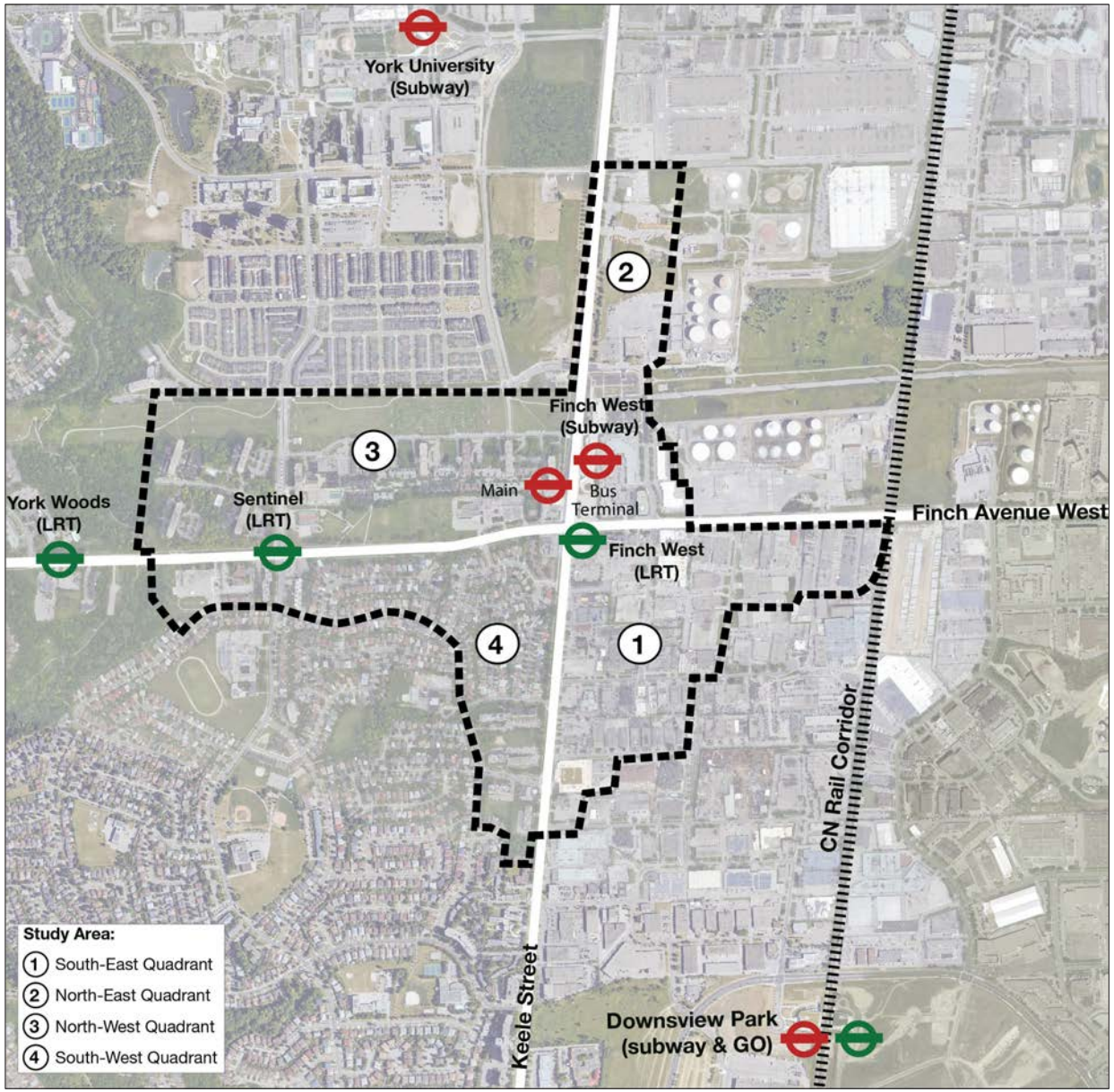


Figure 1 Study Area

1.4 FOUR QUADRANTS

Figure 1 on the proceeding page shows how the Study Area today is composed of four quadrants, each with their own character and identity.

The South-East Quadrant contains a mix of mid-rise commercial office buildings and low-rise warehouses between 1 and 3 storeys. The existing street and block pattern includes a limited network of public streets with large, irregularly-shaped blocks designed and scaled to auto-oriented uses. Existing commercial buildings fronting Keele Street are typically 2-3 storey commercial, restaurant and retail buildings set behind surface parking lots. Part of the DUKE Heights BIA is located within this quadrant.

A recently constructed office mid-rise building at 35 Tangiers Road is indicative of the type of development anticipated for the area that will provide employment within close proximity to rapid transit.

The North-East Quadrant contains a mix of commercial low and mid-rise buildings and 1-2 storey warehouse buildings around the Keele & Finch intersection. Industrial buildings on large properties, including fuel distribution facilities, are located to the east and north. Sensitive uses are anticipated to be located at a reasonable distance from these industrial uses, which are being assessed through the Noise, Air Quality and Safety Assessment being undertaken by the City.

Existing buildings within this quadrant are generally situated within or behind surface parking lots. Finch West Station, designed as a landmark pavilion along Keele Street, is located within this quadrant. The main subway station entrance is located on the west side of Keele Street, just north of Finch Avenue West. As part of the station construction, streetscape improvements have been made on Keele Street between Finch Avenue West and Murray Ross Parkway. These include a generous urban plaza, street tree planting, decorative paving, cycling infrastructure and wide pedestrian boulevards.

The North-West Quadrant contains 'Tower in the Park' neighbourhoods constructed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The spaces between these buildings are generally occupied by open landscape areas or surface parking. These neighbourhoods have few public streets and pedestrian access is primarily via landscaped pathways with limited grade-related frontages. James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic School and Fountainhead Park are located on the north side of Finch Avenue West. Townhouses, service areas and parking lots constitute the northern edge of the park and provide very little sense of animation or 'eyes on the park.'

An application to rezone the lands west of Sentinel Road was submitted in 2009. This application proposed eight condominium apartment buildings with heights ranging from 6 to 12 storeys. The application also included a new public road connecting the west end of Fountainhead Road to Finch Avenue, a new private indoor recreational centre a 66-space child care facility and 93 square metres of commercial space.

The South-West Quadrant contains lower density residential neighborhoods primarily comprised of single and semi-detached dwellings on large lots. Townhouses, walk-up apartments and apartment buildings are located at the edges of the quadrant, including along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West. The street network within the neighbourhood is discontinuous with few through-streets. Single detached dwellings on properties along Finch Avenue West and Keele Street are back-lotted with little to no address to these primary streets.

Both the North-West and South-West Quadrants abut the eastern edge of the Black Creek Valley, which contributes to the area's unique identity.

1.5 PROCESS

Figure 2 (to the right) right provides an overview of the project process, illustrating how the built form and visualization components fit within the overall Keele Finch Plus Planning Study. This Built Form Study was undertaken as part of the Plans & Analysis Stage.

1.6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

13 Guiding Principles were developed as part of the Keele Finch Plus Planning Study by the City of Toronto. The Guiding Principles were based on public consultation, planning policy and the background analysis conducted during Phase 1. The Guiding Principles informed the built form recommendations. The Guiding Principles are included in Appendix 2.

1.7 PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES

Analysis of the existing street network, parcel fabric, land-uses, open spaces and natural features influenced the built form direction at an early stage in the process.

Figure 3 on the opposite page identifies the public realm opportunities established at the beginning of this project. The introduction of a fine grain pattern of street and pathway connections would provide all users greater choice in moving through the area and provide a clear address for new development. Many of these links informed the location for new street, trails, pathways, or mid-block connections, which in-turn informed areas for intensification and the built form recommendations.

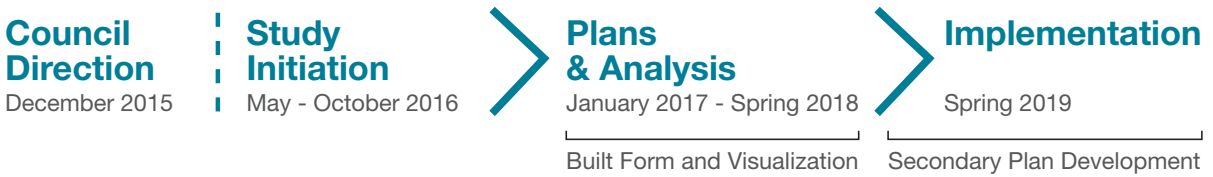


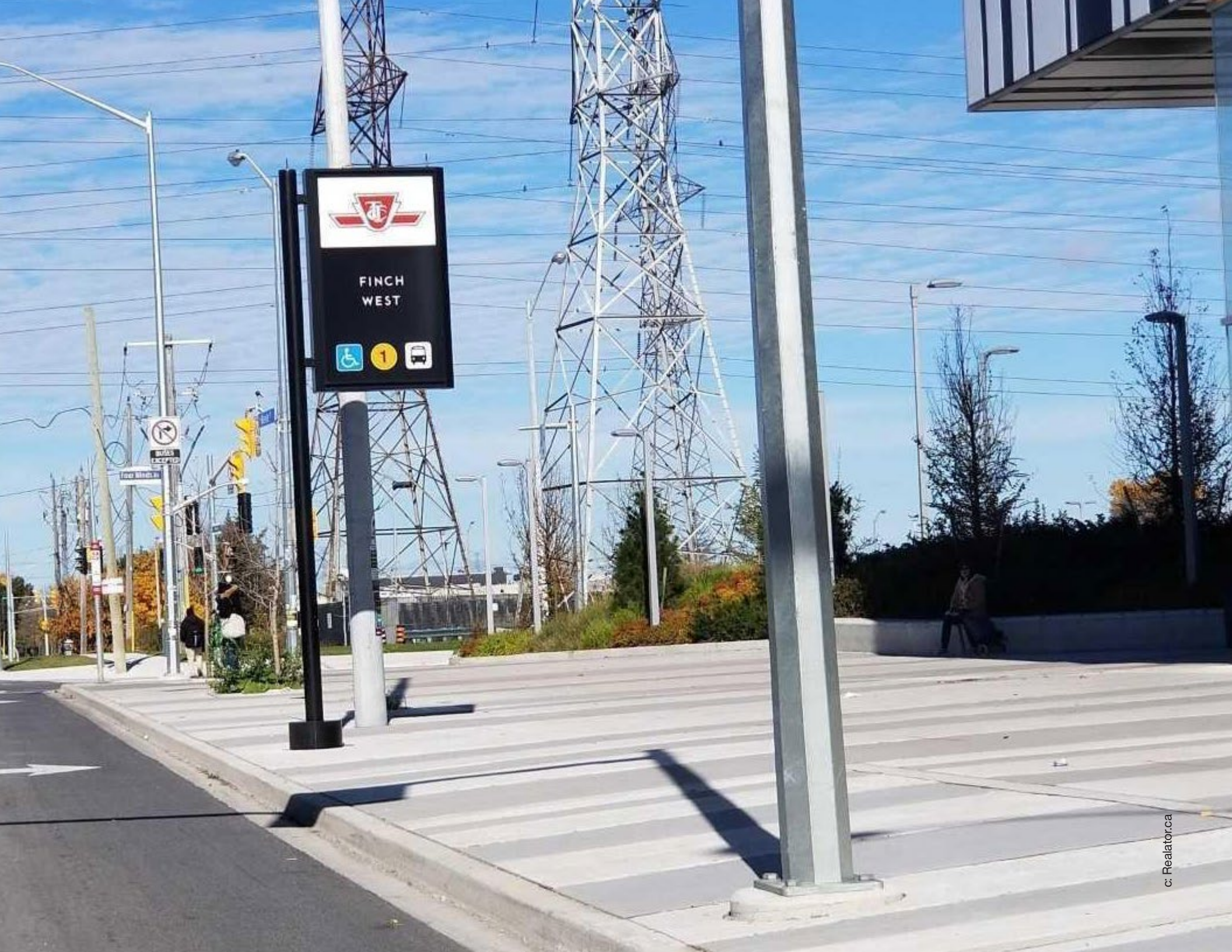
Figure 2 Study Process

These initial opportunities for connections were evaluated and refined throughout the design development process and some connections, including the location and type, were modified as the project progressed. Examples include: the Murray Ross-Niska connection, which became a street connection; the northeast corner of Keele-Finch, which was changed to incorporate mixed use residential buildings in proximity to Keele Street following the recommendations of the Noise, Air Quality and Safety Assessment; fewer streets near the rail corridor and the removal of the connection across the ravine at Fountainhead Road.

Below is a list of the key public realm opportunities, that influenced the built form direction:

- providing new physical links between neighbourhoods;
- providing direct, convenient and safe pedestrian connections to transit stops and stations along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West;
- providing connections to retail, services and other public destinations including York University; Black Creek Ravine, the Hydro Corridor and existing adjacent parks and open spaces;
- providing new parkland along the east side of Keele Street (identified as a need by the BIA and a parkland deficiency area by the City);
- breaking up the large blocks east of Keele Street with a fine grain of new streets, paths or mid-block connections to provide pedestrians with greater choice of routes to and from transit;
- changing the land-uses around the Keele and Finch junction to allow the introduction of mixed-use mid-rise buildings;
- establishing a new retail main street along Keele Street to provide as a focal point to the area, linking together the different quadrants;
- adding street tree planting to increase greening within the area;
- adding new buildings along the north side of Fountainhead Park and along the south side of Finch Avenue West to animate the public realm;
- adding new urban plazas and parks as part of new development; and
- creating and/or enhancing views and vistas to natural features and new or existing landmarks and gateways.

Figure 3 Public Realm Opportunities



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BUILT FORM OPTIONS

Three initial built form options were prepared and evaluated. The options were informed by the public realm opportunities diagram (Fig. 3), the draft preliminary local urban structure (developed by the City with public input in the first two phases of the Planning Study), what we heard through public engagement, the City's Urban Design Guidelines, and the height limits associated with the Downsview Airport, established by ARUP.

2.1 DEVELOPING THE OPTIONS

Each of the options were demonstrated in a 3 dimensional digital (3-d) model, 2-d plans and 3-d axonometric views. Street-level perspective illustrations were then developed at two locations: Fountainhead Park looking westwards towards Sentinel Road and on Keele Street looking north toward Finch Avenue West. These views illustrated the differences between the concepts and were primarily developed to assist with the public understanding of each. The built-form variations between the options are identified in the next pages.

Common to each of the options is a built form concept of mid-rise buildings near major intersections and along major streets and a transition down in scale from these mid-rise buildings to lower density and lower scale buildings. The variations between the options are different building heights and building types are distributed to different extents throughout the Study Area.

The options were developed to ensure that no building would impact the operational needs of Downsview Airport. No building in any of the options exceeds those identified in Appendix 1 Indicative Building Heights, By Block, prepared by ARUP as part of the Keele Finch Plus Downsview Airport Opertional Needs Assessment.

Initial options were presented to City Staff and the public for their review and comments. Based on feedback received, the Study Team considered and refined the options to better reflect the community informed vision. The inputs provided through this iterative process assisted in evaluating the options.

Option 1 / 'The Stations'

Option 1, 'The Stations,' focuses growth and change near the intersections of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West and Sentinel Road and Finch Avenue West (i.e. near to the rapid transit stations and stops).

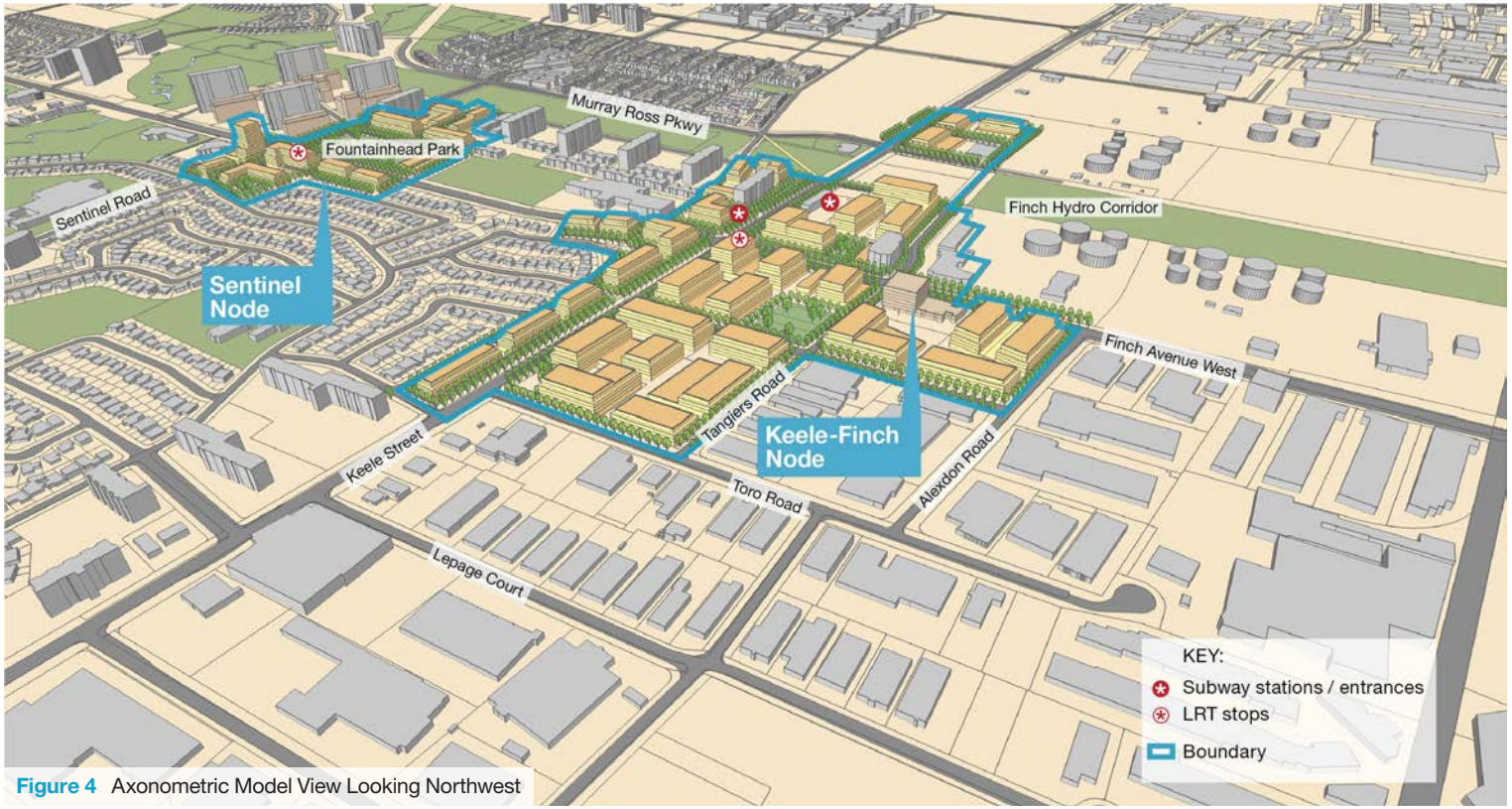

Figure 4 Axonometric Model View Looking Northwest

Location	Building Type	Character	Building Heights
Keele-Finch Node	Predominantly mid-rise buildings	West of Keele Street: mixed-use residential East of Keele Street: commercial-office & warehouse	6 storeys (21m residential/26m non-residential) to 9 storeys (30m residential/34m non-residential) at the intersection.
Sentinel Node	Predominantly mid-rise buildings and a tall building	Predominantly residential with retail at grade at the junction. Green character to create gateway to the natural heritage area	Mid-rise buildings: 4 storeys (15m residential) to 9 storeys (30m residential) at the intersection. Tall building at southwest corner of Finch Avenue West and Sentinel Road: 17 storeys (54m).

Option 2 / 'Nodes + Corridors'

Option 2, 'Nodes and Corridors,' builds on Option 1 and spreads development along the Keele Street and Finch Avenue West corridors. Option 2 reduces the development intensity near to the stations as compared with Option 1.

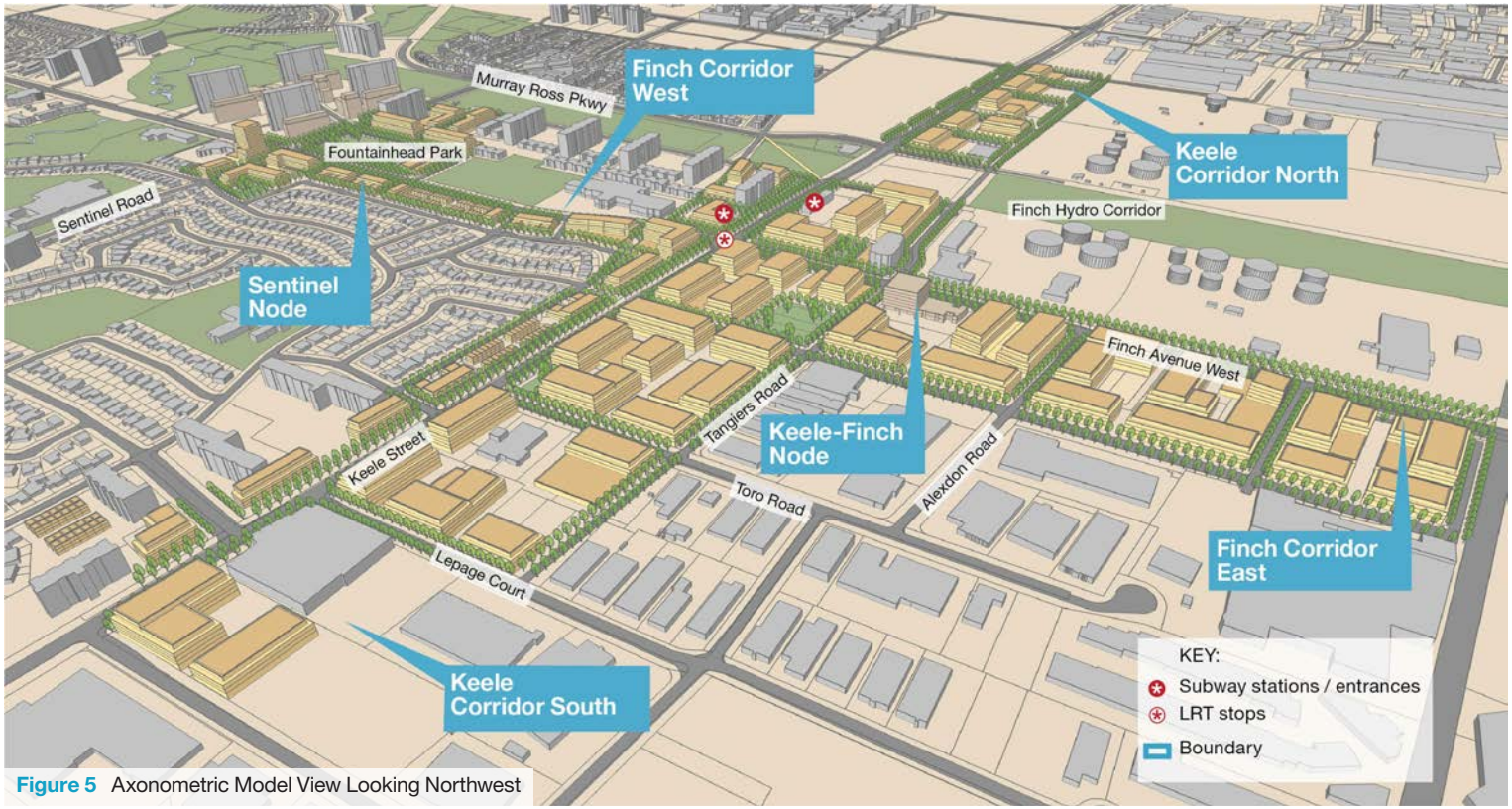

Figure 5 Axonometric Model View Looking Northwest

Location	Building Type	Character	Building Heights
Keele-Finch Node	Mix of mid-rise and low-rise buildings	West of Keele Street: mixed-use residential East of Keele Street: commercial-office & warehouse	3 storeys (9m residential) to 9 storeys (30m residential/34m non-residential) at the intersection.
Sentinel Node	Predominantly mid-rise buildings and a tall building	Predominantly residential with retail at grade at the junction. Green character to create gateway to the natural heritage area	Mid-rise buildings: 6 storeys (21m residential) Tall building at southwest corner of Finch Avenue West and Sentinel Road: 17 storeys (54m).
Finch Corridor	West of Keele Street:low-rise buildings and townhouses East of Keele Street: mid-rise buildings	Finch Corridor West: residential green character Finch Corridor East: commercial-office	Mid-rise buildings east of Keele Street: 6 storeys (26m non-residential) Low-rise buildings west of Keele Street: 3-4 storeys (9-12m)
Keele Corridor	Predominantly mid-rise buildings	Keele Corridor North: commercial-office & warehouse Keele Corridor South: mixed-use residential on west side of Keele Street and commercial-office and warehouse on east side of street.	Keele Corridor North: 4-6 storeys (18-26m non-residential) Keele Corridor South: 6 storeys (21m residential/26m non-residential)

Option 3 / 'Main Streets'

The 'Main Streets' option includes area-wide transformation with the goal of creating sufficient density to support more than one mixed-use main street. Option 3 includes the highest level of development intensity along the Corridors and within the Nodes and it is also the only option that includes redevelopment of the James Cardinal McGuigan School.

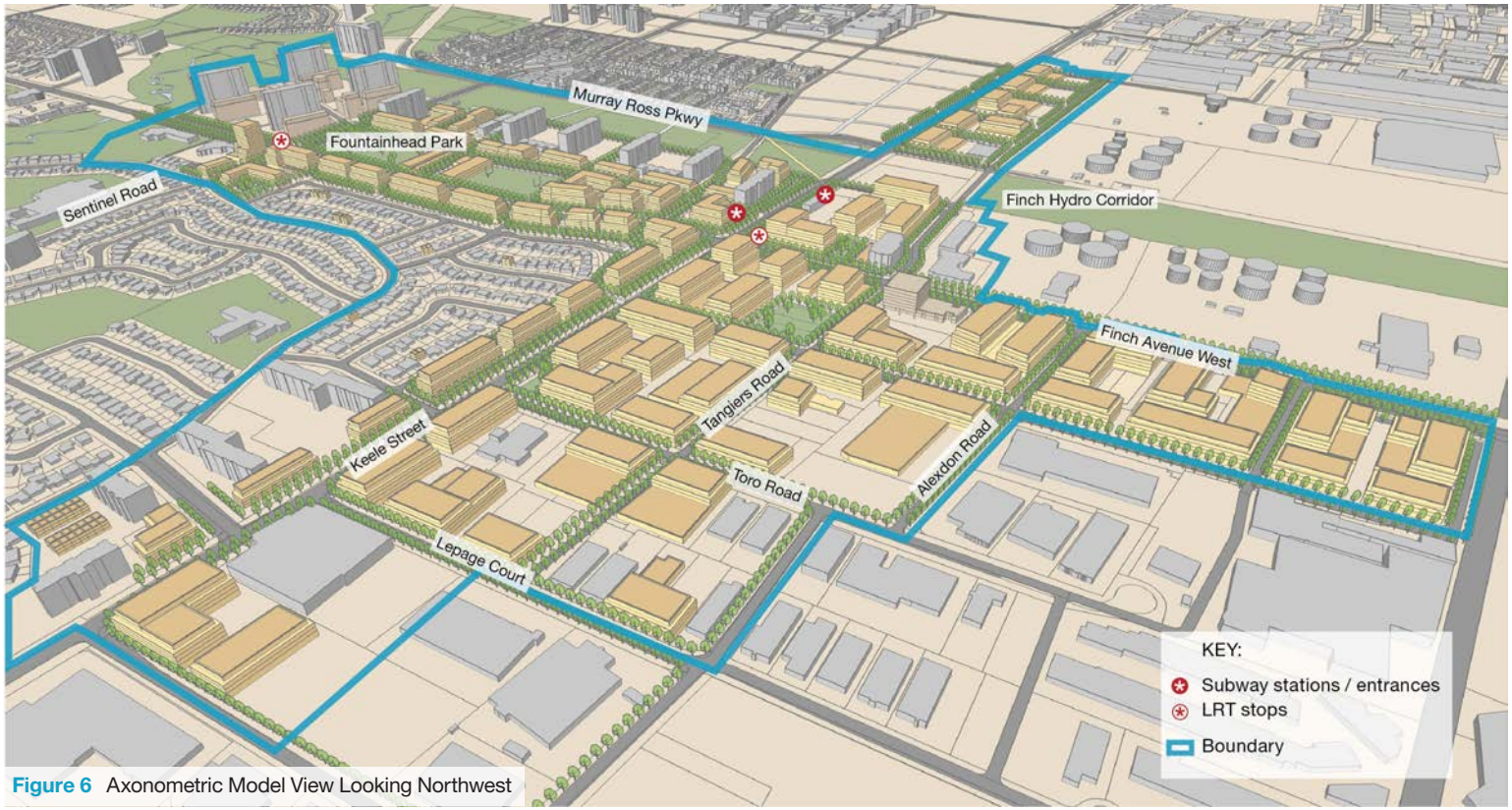

Figure 6 Axonometric Model View Looking Northwest

Location	Building Type	Character	Building Heights
Area-wide	Predominantly mid-rise buildings (at Sentinel and Finch Avenue West).	As per Option 2, Nodes and Corridors	Predominantly taller 34m height (approx. 9 storeys residential/8 storeys non-residential) throughout the Study Area. Tall building at southwest corner of Finch Avenue West and Sentinel Road: 17 storeys (54m).

2.2 FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING

The options were presented at an open house and public workshop in May 2017. Participants generally supported Options 2 (Nodes & Corridors) and 3 (Main Streets), but felt that the scale of development on the south side of Finch Avenue West (between the nodes) and in how development was depicted around Fountainhead Park was not preferred in Option 3. The key findings from the public engagement process that informed the direction for the Preferred Concept are listed to the right:

- Participants strongly expressed a desire to transform the area immediately around the subway station into a 'destination'.

- Creating a denser, connected, 'complete' community was of interest to the majority of participants.

- Participants wanted to improve integration between the neighbourhoods including York University.

- Participants wanted comfortable, pleasant streets and connections that are more walkable or cyclable and more direct. There was near-universal support for improving connectivity. There was consensus about improving public spaces and providing a sense of animation by framing public spaces with new buildings.

- Mid-rise buildings fronting onto Fountainhead Park need to be in keeping with the scale of the park.

- Many participants were concerned that the scale of the development on the south side of Finch Avenue West (between the nodes) in Option 3 was too high.

March 2017 public workshop

2.3 TRANSPORTATION FEEDBACK

Input from the City of Toronto's Transportation Planning consultants (LEA) was also used in the evaluation of the options. LEA recommended that the street and block connections from Option 3 (Main Streets) should be carried forward at the level of intensity of Option 2 (Nodes & Corridors) along with a reduction in employment gross floor area (GFA), in order to arrive at an option that can be supported by the transportation network.

2.4 STUDY TEAM EVALUATION

In addition to the feedback from the public engagement process and technical reviews, the options were evaluated against a set of built form criteria established for the study. The built form criteria are based on the Guiding Principles developed in Phase 1 and current best practices and include objectives for transit supportive development, connectivity, land use, place-making, context sensitive built form, density, and public realm and greening.

Criteria 1: Growth Plan Targets for Density
200 people and jobs per hectare around a subway station (i.e. Keele/Finch), and 160 people per hectare around LRT stations (i.e. Sentinel/Finch)

Evaluation: All options meet the criterion. Feedback from the public engagement process indicated that Option 3 is too dense/goes too far beyond the minimum density target.

Criteria 2: Transit supportive development at and around the new Subway and LRT Stations

Provides development blocks that maximize percentage of residents and employees within 8min. walking/cycling (approx. 500m) distance to transit services for all ages and abilities of people (using metric walking distance and not straight line distance).

Evaluation: Option 3 provides the most development blocks with the highest potential to maximize the number of residents and employees within a 10 minute walk of transit, performing best in meeting this criterion. Option 1 and 2 provides concentrated areas of development within a 10 minute walking distance to transit, meeting the criterion.

Criteria 3. Increased Connectivity
Provides increased street or pathway connections to transit, retail, parks and open spaces and a pedestrian network which includes smaller and more frequent blocks along primary streets; target 85m to 150m for attractive choice to and from transit.

Evaluation: Option 3 adds the most new street and pedestrian connections throughout the Study Area and performs best in meeting this criterion. New street and pedestrian connections provided in Option 1 are limited to the two focus areas (Keele and Finch and Sentinel and Keele.) Providing no new connections through the existing frontage blocks outside the nodes in Option 2 only partially meets the criterion.

Criteria 4: Land Use Mix

Buildings support a range of land uses and active frontages along public places (streets, parks, natural areas etc.)

Option 3 provides flexible built form throughout the study area with potential to accommodate a land use mix that animates the public realm. However, it also has greater impact to existing buildings and neighbourhoods. Option 1 results in very little improvement to existing back-lotted main street frontages or commercial auto-oriented developments and only partially meets the criterion. Option 2 transforms the existing back-lotted main street frontages and auto-oriented frontages and meets the criterion.

4. Building height and massing contributes to place-making and respects local context

Taller building forms are located to mark important locations in the urban fabric. Building massing provides a transition in height, scale and intensity from high (along arterials and at nodes) to lower forms and includes a variety of building types townhouses, mid-rise buildings and tall buildings.

Option 1 concentrates taller built form and massing at the two major junctions marking these important locations in the urban fabric. Option 2 provides a greater mix of building types, including townhouses, which the other options provide in only limited ways. This option also emphasizes the nodes, while transitioning best in scale to the existing neighbourhoods and not impact the school. Option 3 contributes to the formation of main streets, but has a more dramatic impact on and transition to existing neighbourhoods. Based on the City's Urban Design Guidelines and the Keele Finch Plus Downsview Airport Operational Needs Assessment, it was determined that an additional two floors is possible (up to a maximum 35m height) in the Node.

5. Opportunities for new parks, urban squares and increased greening

Creates greater opportunities for a range of parks and open spaces. Parks are of a usable size and easily accessed.

Option 3 adds the most new parks, plazas and opportunities for greening. However, this option also contemplates by far the most people and jobs, which will have an impact on open space utility. The limited geography of redevelopment in Option 1 limits the potential for additional new parks, plazas and greening through redevelopment compared to the other options. Option 2 contemplates almost as much parkland and open space as Option 3. However, Option 2 does this with less dramatic increase in development while leaving more privately owned green space on the James Cardinal McGuigan school lands.

6. Improved streetscape (i.e. more comfortable and pleasant)

Creates a more attractive pedestrian environment, provides increased greening and supports healthy street tree planting in accordance with the City's Street Tree Planting Solutions.

Option 3 includes the highest number of new street and pathway connections, adding the most opportunities for streetscape improvements. The limited geography of redevelopment in Option 1 limits the potential for streetscape improvements compared to the other options. Option 2 offers a middle ground.

2.5 ARRIVING AT A PREFERRED CONCEPT

Through the technical review process, Study Team evaluation and input from the public engagement, it was determined that the following combination of elements from each the three options would perform best as the Preferred Concept:

- The proposed street and pathway connections from Option 3 achieved the goals for connectivity.

- The structuring elements of 'nodes' and 'corridors' from Option 2 would provide a hierarchy of buildings and public spaces that would strengthen the area's identity and character

- The built form around the Node from Option 3 achieved the density required to support transit and create a 'destination' at the nodes. However, the continuity in mid-rise forms of a similar height through-out the entire Study Area did not sufficiently emphasize the importance of the two main junctions. As a result, the built form within the Nodes was changed to include buildings that are the maximum permitted height of 35m, thereby better emphasizing these two important locations in the urban structure. Tall buildings could also be considered in the Nodes, subject to meeting performance requirements to minimize and mitigate potential impacts on adjacent land uses and the public realm and they are supportable from an infrastructure perspective.


Finch Hydro Corridor
Fountainhead Park
Finch West Station
Finch Avenue West
Keele Street
Tangiers Road
Toro Road
Alexdon Road
KEY:
Subway stations / entrances
LRT stops

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THE PREFERRED CONCEPT: NODES AND CORRIDORS REFINED

Achieving the long-term vision for Keele Finch Plus will require an approach that strengthens the connection between the four distinct quadrants of the Study Area. Success will rely on integrating the best of what exists today with future opportunities for change to create a distinct, well-connected and cohesive neighbourhood. A tailored planning policy framework supported by urban design guidelines will assist with the delivery of this potential.

The preferred concept anticipates that future private and public investment should contribute to the facilities and amenities that will support an attractive, livable community with a mix of uses, walkable streets, context sensitive building design, new parks and open spaces, and an overall enhanced green character. These objectives were strongly articulated by the community and stakeholders during the public engagement process.

The built form recommendations in this report provide a clear framework for growth articulated through an overall urban structure plan and a series of frameworks for the public realm, streets and blocks and built form. The built form recommendations have been developed to support ongoing implementation, providing a broad perspective for incremental and transformative change.

The Study Team developed a digital 3-dimensional massing model, or 'demonstration' for the Preferred Concept to help visualize the intention of the recommendations. The demonstration illustrates one possible outcome if the principles and recommendations from this study are applied to a full build-out condition. The demonstration allows for flexibility and several different outcomes. It provides the basis for population and employment estimates as input to the assessments for servicing infrastructure, transportation, and community services and facilities.

The Study Team also developed two aerial views and two pedestrian level views of the Preferred Concept illustrating the potential built form and public realm character. The first pedestrian level view is centered on Keele Street just south of Catford Crescent facing northward. It shows a revitalized Keele Street. The second pedestrian level view is centered near the northeast corner of Fountainhead Park facing west-southwest. It shows new development and streetscape improvements animating the northern edge of the Park.

3.1 THE URBAN STRUCTURE PLAN

The Urban Structure Plan, shown in Figures 7 and 8, builds off the proposed land use direction for the area and identifies new streets and path connections, street-related buildings within a pedestrian supportive environment, place-making opportunities and a generous green character for the Study Area. As shown in Figure to the right, the Urban Structure Plan is organized around a series of nodes and corridors with Keele Street and Finch Avenue West providing the main armature to the public realm. The Urban Structure Plan's essential components and their roles are summarized below:

The Keele-Finch Node will become the area's primary community focus and transit interchange. The area is envisioned to be transformed into a destination for area residents and workers. It will provide employment and retail opportunities and the greatest intensity of development. Public realm enhancements and a concentration of taller mid-rise buildings mark this as an important location in the urban fabric.

The Sentinel Node will showcase the area's parks, open spaces and natural areas alongside residential intensification and enhanced community infrastructure. High-quality public realm design, taller mid-rise building and a tall building will mark the intersection and announce the gateway into the Black Creek Ravine.

The Finch West Corridor will have a generous green character and accommodate residential uses at a lower intensity than the Nodes and the other Corridors. Buildings within this area include low-rise buildings and townhouses to provide a transition in height and scale towards the adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods.

The Finch Corridor East will include heavier industrial uses and serve as a transition down in height from the Keele-Finch Node. Buildings within this area will be lower in height then the nodes.

The Keele Corridor North is envisioned as the area's warehouse and industrial district. It will include new employment uses compatible with nearby heavy industries and buildings situated to improve the streetscape along Keele Street.

The Keele Corridor South will evolve into a mixed-use main street that complements the Keele-Finch Node. The west side of the street will include residential mixed-use buildings with the east side an important employment corridor. Buildings within this area will be lower in height than the nodes.

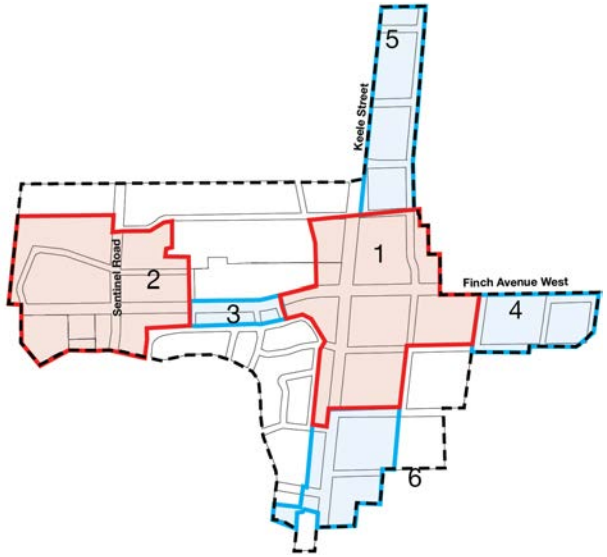


Figure 7 Nodes and Corridors Key Plan

Study Area Boundary

Node

1. Keele-Finch Node
2. Sentinel Node

Corridor

3. Finch West Corridor
4. Finch Corridor East
5. Keele Corridor North
6. Keele Corridor South

- Existing streets
- New public streets
- Future bridge connection
- Potential connections (Street/path/walkway/lanes)
- New public trails
- Existing trails
- Cycle connections
- Keele/Finch Streetscape
- Parks/open spaces
- Public square/POP's
- Green edge to fuels distribution facility
- Subway stations/entrances
- LRT stops
- LRT rail and portal (approx.)
- Bus lane
- Hydro One towers
- Study area
- Blocks
- York University Secondary Plan area
- Approved development applications

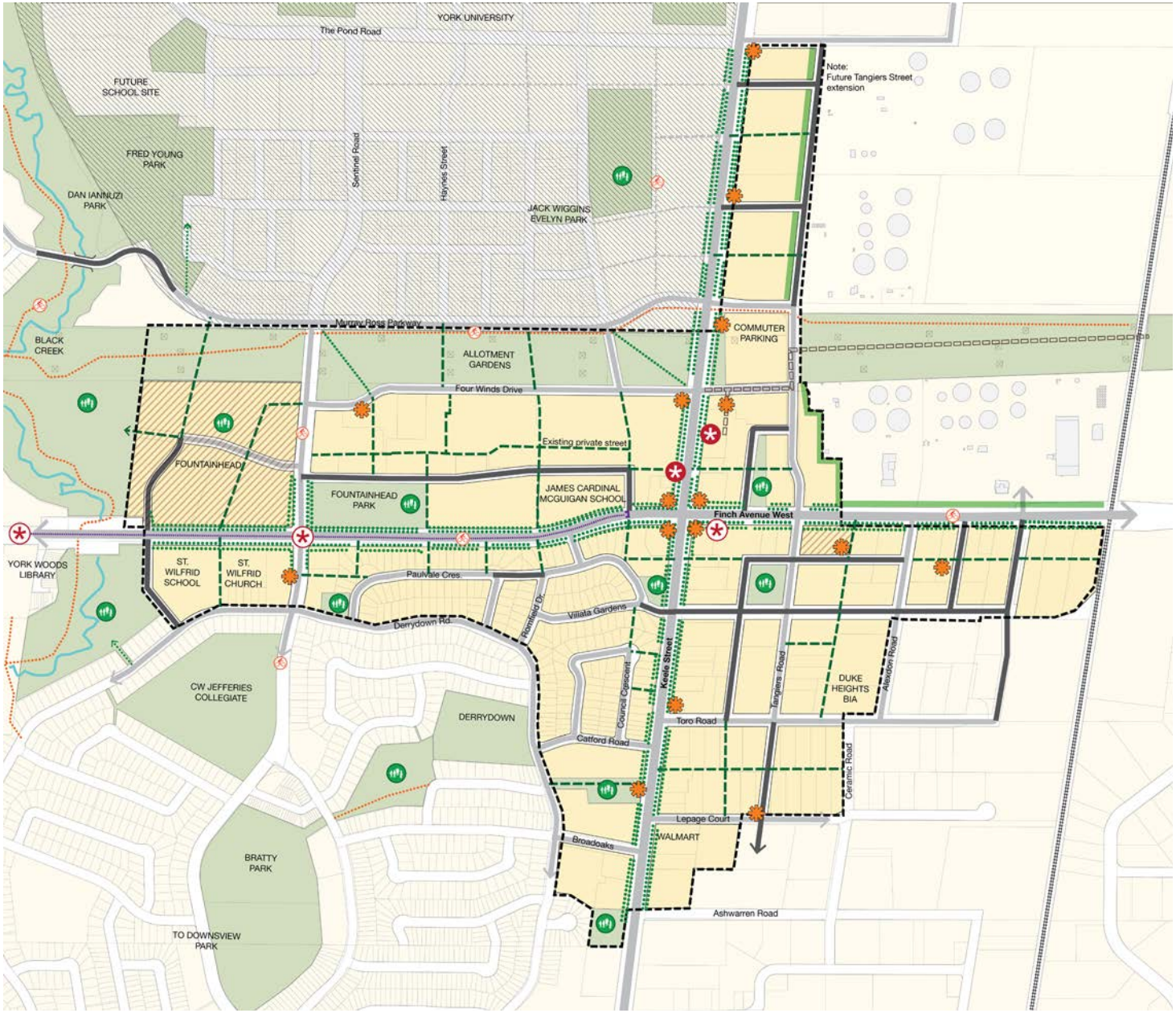


Figure 8 Urban Structure Plan

3.2 PUBLIC REALM

Redevelopment and intensification can contribute to the development of a network of high-quality and accessible parks, streetscapes and public spaces, create an improved setting for civic and community life, and enhance the identity and character of the Keele Finch Plus Study Area. Each part of the public realm network should contribute to the overall experience and identity of the Study Area, support programming should be consistent and blend seamlessly with the high quality and durable materials of other public realm components.

Figure 9, The Public Realm Framework (following page) includes the following components:

Keele/ Finch Streetscape. As the main streets for the Study Area, Keele Street and Finch Avenue West will contain generous public boulevards, pedestrian amenities, and street trees planted with enough un-compacted soil volume to grow to a large and useful size. Buildings along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West should include a generous setback for an additional row of trees and plantings within the private setbacks on both sides of the street.

Improved Parks. Fountainhead Park is the largest existing park in the Study Area, and an important landmark around which new development is focused. A new street along its northern boundary will serve as the primary address for infill development and present a character suitable for this important public space. This street should be designed to fit within this revitalized neighbourhood context and act as an extension of the park itself. Similar streets in Toronto, such as the Esplanade and Scott Street in the St. Lawrence Neighborhood, offer an asymmetrical design with buildings on one side and park on the other. This street should prioritize safety for pedestrians and cyclists with a lower target speed, include high quality materials, details, and amenities, and provide enough un-compacted soil volume to grow street trees to a healthy, large and useful size. Parks Forestry and Recreation will determine future park programming and required improvements to satisfy community needs and future demand.

New Parks. The Preferred Concept complements the existing large parks and natural heritage areas by adding a series of smaller unencumbered parks with all larger development projects. New parks are included in the following locations: in the Sentinel Node to provide a sense of transition to the existing neighbourhood; north of the Villata Gardens to better connect the Keele Street Streetscape with the Sentinel/Grandravine Neighbourhood and provide new public space adjacent to the extended Villata Gardens street; in the northwest quadrant of the Keele-Finch node to improve the connection between the Station and Finch Avenue West and provide amenity for area residents and workers; and in the south-west quadrant to create amenity for the employment district. New parks should incorporate places for active or passive recreation. All new parks in the Preferred Concept are located on the south side of development blocks to maximize solar access.

Natural Heritage System. A number of new and improved physical and visual connections between the ravine system, the hydro corridor, local parks and neighbourhood streets are included to better leverage and showcase the existing natural heritage system.

Pedestrian Connections. Additional paths and walkways are recommended wherever possible to supplement but not replace public streets in accommodating pedestrians and all modes of mobility. These additional connections will help to segment the large land parcels, provide greater choice, and support a comfortable and inviting pedestrian environment.

Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces (POPS). Privately owned publicly-accessible spaces (POPS) are a specific type of open space which the public are invited to use but remain privately owned and maintained. They augment and complement, but do not replace, the need for public parks within the public realm network. POPS, such as urban squares, courtyards and mid-block connections, are recommended within the Keele Finch Plus Study Area to contribute to the overall network of public spaces. Urban squares will occur at key locations where intense pedestrian and retail activity is anticipated.

Green Edge to Fuel Distribution Facilities. A substantial planted buffer is recommended between new development and the fuel distribution facilities to provide a visual buffer. Within the private development sites directly abutting the Tangiers extension, a minimum 15m planted setback is recommended. The setback should include a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubs. Additional setbacks might be required to achieve the necessary separation distance.

Within the south and south-eastern edges of fuel distribution facilities elsewhere, where redevelopment is not anticipated, a green landscape edge to buffer and mitigate visual impact of the industrial uses is recommended. This green buffer could include a mix of deciduous and coniferous tree planting, earth mounding and shrub planting. These can be constructed on private property in addition to any public boulevard.

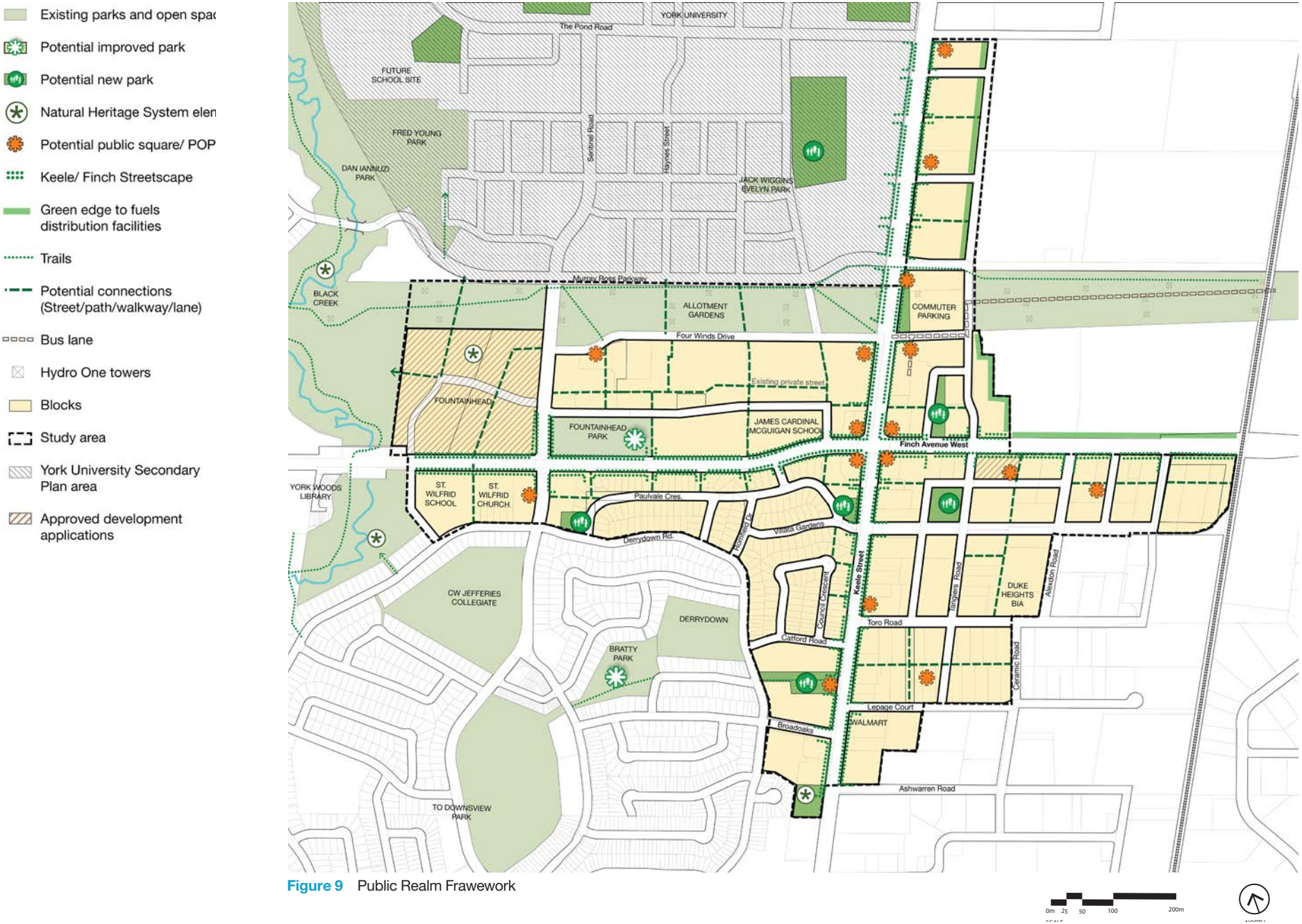


Figure 9 Public Realm Frawework

3.3 STREETS AND BLOCKS

The recommended Streets and Blocks Framework will help the Study Area evolve towards a more pedestrian-scaled and transit-supportive place. New development will front new public streets. Smaller and more urban-scaled blocks will provide tighter intersection spacing and frequent crossings. New cycling and pedestrian paths and mid-block connections will offer greater choice of routes.

Each new development should ensure the inclusion of new public streets and mid-block connections. Their dimension, alignment and design should adhere to City of Toronto guidelines and standards and apply best practices. Where a public street is not technically infeasible, it is recommended that publicly accessible routes are secured. These can include trails, lanes, atriums, or greenways, to name a few. Together, these connections will enhance safe and convenient movement throughout the Keele Finch Study Area, provide greater opportunities for walking and cycling, support public transit use, and help to mitigate traffic and congestion issues.

The Streets and Blocks Framework includes the following components:

The Keele-Finch Node

- A new north/south street connecting Tangiers Road and Finch Avenue West in the north-east quadrant.

- A grid of new streets and connections parallel to Keele Street and Finch Avenue West in the south-east quadrant.

The Sentinel Node

- Extension of Fountainhead Road eastward to the Keele-Finch Node connecting with the station.

- New pedestrian connections to the Finch Hydro Corridor, the Black Creek Ravine and Finch Avenue West.

- A new street connecting Derrydown Road with Finch Avenue West (to the west of St. Wilfred School and aligned with Fountainhead Road).

The Finch West Corridor

- Enhanced connections between Keele Street and the Sentinel/Grandravine neighbourhood. This could include a combination of new streets, mid-block connections and/or pathways.

The Finch Corridor East

- New north/south streets connecting Finch Avenue West with the new east/west street parallel to Finch Avenue West along the south. This could include a combination of new streets, mid-block connections and/or pathways.

The Keele Corridor North

- A new north/south street parallel to Keele Street connecting the commuter parking lot to Pond Road. Secure and implement new east/west streets or mid-block connections with Keele Street.

The Keele Corridor South

- New east/west mid-block connections between Tangiers Road and Keele Street implemented through redevelopment.

Additional connections outside of the Nodes and Corridors include: a new valley land crossing to connect Murray Ross Parkway to Niska Road; enhanced connectivity to the library across the valley; and new north/south pedestrian paths through Four Winds and the hydro corridor connecting with the York University street and pathway network.

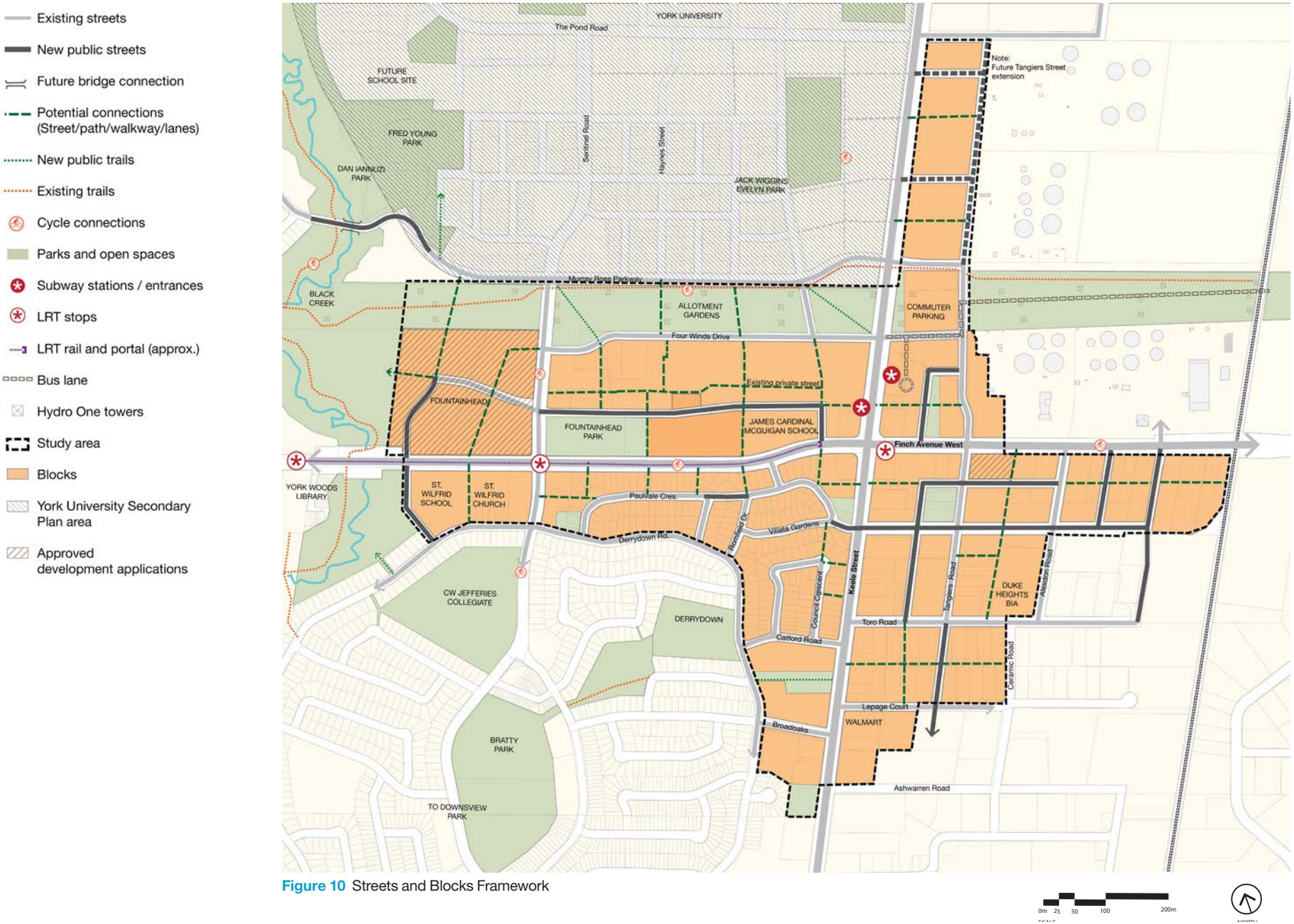


Figure 10 Streets and Blocks Framework

3.4 BUILT FORM

Good urban places are composed of many buildings, varied in type and size. New buildings within Keele Finch Plus Area should play a role in shaping the pedestrian realm, respect existing and planned land uses and incorporate the most recent advances in sustainable building and complete community development principles.

The Built Form Strategy shows a mix of building types that frame, define and animate public spaces. Grade-related uses, including retail where appropriate, will animate the pedestrian environment and provide connections between public and private spaces. This varies depending on the location of a building and its street address.

Built form testing conducted through this study concluded that the policy context, guiding principles, and direction received from the public engagement activities can be satisfied if mid-rise development is the primary form of intensification at the nodes with a transition down in height and scale to adjacent neighbourhoods. Mid-rise buildings provide transit-supportive density while being of a height that does not impact the operational needs of Downsview Airport. Mid-rise building forms with good street proportion and attention to massing (e.g. stepbacks above certain heights) also ensure good sunlight on the public realm and sky view. Built form should transition down in height and scale to adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods.

The overall building height and their streetwall heights are proposed to be greater in the nodes to emphasize their importance in the overall urban structure. The maximum height of buildings noted below is inclusive of mechanical penthouses or other rooftop accessory elements and are informed by the flight path mapping prepared for this undertaking.

The range of building types and building heights included in the Preferred Contract are shown in Figure 11 (to the right) and described below:

Tall buildings are only identified in the Sentinel Node west of Sentinel Road to punctuate the intersection and where the current operational needs of Downsview Airport combined with lower topography makes taller buildings possible. The base of tall buildings should be between 5 storeys (approximately 16.5m) and 7 storeys (approximately 22.5m) in height, in keeping with the prevailing mid-rise streetwall height proposed within the node.

Through the course of this study, we learned that the future of the Downsview Airport is in question. If the flight plane envelope changes or is no longer relevant, tall buildings may be acceptable within the nodes (but not the corridors), subject to meeting performance requirements to minimize and mitigate potential impacts on adjacent land uses and the public realm.

Mid-rise buildings are recommended as the predominant built-form within the Study Area. While Keele Street and Finch Avenue West are not identified as 'Avenues' within the City's Urban Structure, the Mid-rise Performance Standards have been followed in the Preferred Concept. Table 3.1 (page 25) identifies the areas where the City's Mid-rise Performance Standards have been customized to articulate a unique adaptation to the Keele Finch urban structure of Nodes and Corridors.

Mid-rise buildings within the Nodes transition in height from 6 storeys (21m residential and 26m non residential) to 8 storeys (27m residential and 34m non-residential) towards the intersection of Keele and Finch Avenue West or Sentinel Road and Finch Avenue West.

The tallest mid-rise buildings are 34m (approx. 11 storeys residential and 9 storeys non-residential) located at the junction of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West to emphasize this as a prominent location within the urban structure.

The corridors contain lower 6 storey height mid-rise buildings (21m residential buildings and 26m non-residential) or low-rise buildings.

Low-rise buildings are recommended in the Finch West Corridor and north of Fountainhead Park. In these areas, townhouses are encouraged to create a finer building scale within the larger blocks and as a transition from the taller, more intense building types. All low-rise retail buildings should not exceed four storeys in height and be no less than three storeys (10.5 metres).

- Low-rise building 4 storeys max. (12m)
- Mid-rise building
- Mid-rise Infill
- 12-35 Building height (metres)
- Tall building (17 storeys)
- Building frontage
- Additions/ renovations/ extensions
- Potential Connections
- Parks/ open spaces
- Subway stations/entrances
- LRT stops
- LRT rail and portal (approx.)
- Bus lane
- Hydro One towers
- Study area
- York University Secondary Plan area
- Approved development applications

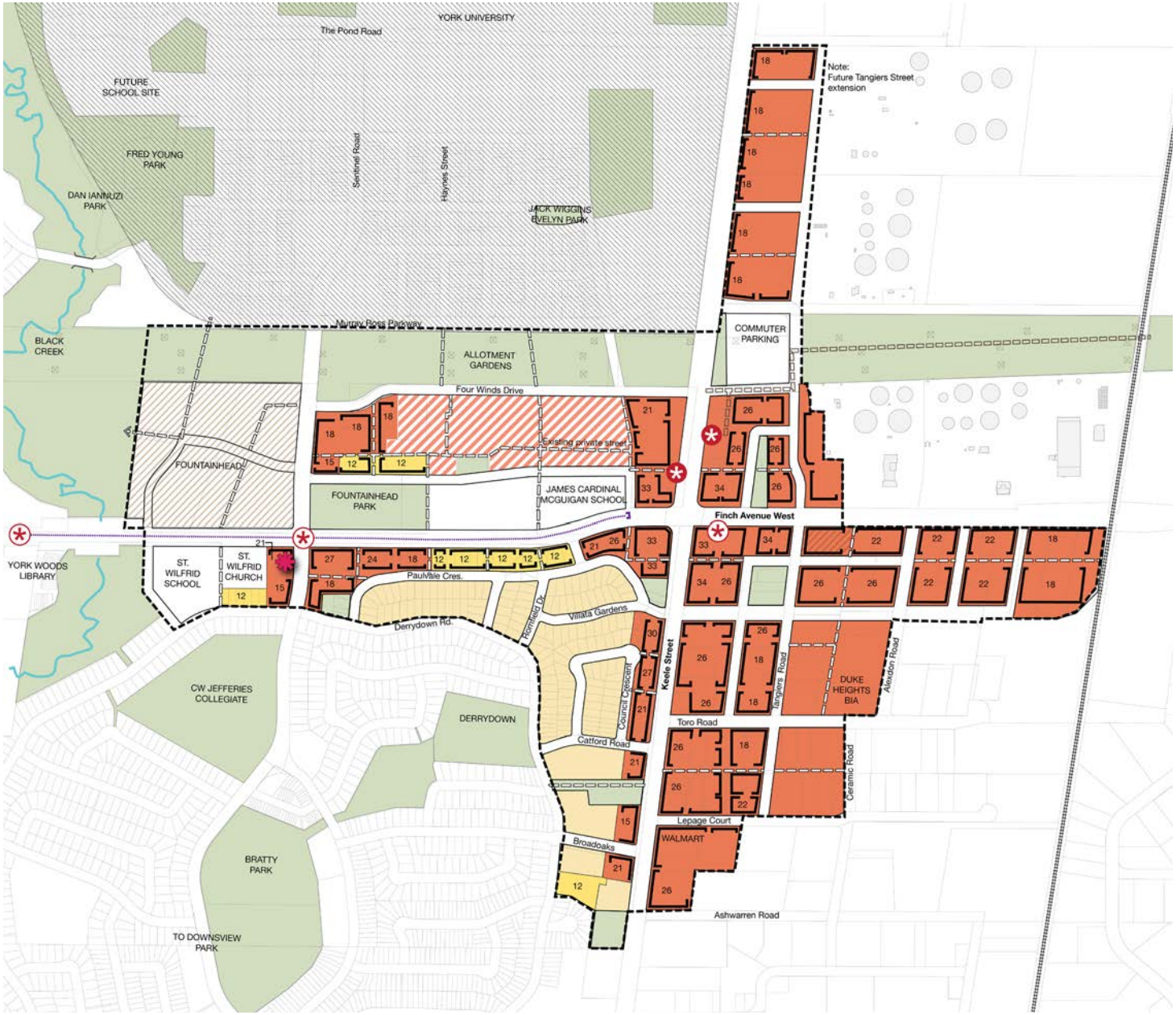


Figure 11 Built Form Strategy

Streetwalls

The building streetwall (the part of a building closest to the sidewalk before stepping back to the upper floors) defines the frontages for all blocks. On Keele Street, buildings should collectively provide a contiguous street edge with a strong architectural presence. Continuity in the built-up street wall edge will strengthen a sense of place and vitality for the pedestrian boulevards and support a viable commercial environment. The Nodes are marked by taller 6 storey street walls at the intersections, which transition down to 4 storeys along the corridors.

Setbacks

Setbacks assist in improving the civic and pedestrian experience. As such, setbacks will reinforce the vision of the Study Area, enhance retail uses, add greening and encourage pedestrian activities. Setbacks also provide transition between public and private realms where residential uses are at grade. Setbacks can enhance the public realm experience or buffer ground level uses from the street or adjacent properties. The use of consistent setbacks visually increases the perceived public realm and, when well-designed, reinforces area character. New buildings should be set back relative to the type of street frontage to allow for engagement with the public realm.

Given the available boulevard space, and the direction to improve the pedestrian environment along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West, there is an opportunity to transition these corridors over time into streets with a strong green character that support the transformation of the Study Area. The Preferred Concept includes broad setbacks on both sides of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West to achieve an additional row of trees, landscape elements and frontage and marketing zones to further green the street. Setbacks are to be located within the private development along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West to accommodate a landscape frontage. This setback area should be unencumbered with no below grade structures so that trees and other planting can grow to a mature size. A 2.0 metre projection zone from the principal building face is permitted for balconies, canopies, porches, bays and stoops to encourage high quality design with individual building expression and articulation. Balconies below the third storey are to be inset as per the Mid-Rise Guidelines.

A 6.0m private setback is recommended along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West. Its design and character vary based on location and adjacent land uses.

Within the Nodes and along Keele Street and Finch Avenue West, where retail uses are encouraged at grade, the 6.0m setback is recommended for greening, street furniture, outdoor cafes and seating to animate the streetscape. The 6m setback includes a 1.9m marketing zone, a 2.1m clearway and a 2m planting and furnishing zone.

Along Finch Avenue West where grade-related residential land-uses are anticipated, the 6.0m setbacks should accommodate a landscape frontage. The 6.0m setback should be predominantly soft landscape space and include tree planting to contrast with the more ‘urban’ character in the Nodes. Exact setback dimensions for Finch Avenue West need to be reviewed alongside the Finch Avenue West LRT Streetscape improvements to ensure viable development parcel depth.

It is recommended that buildings located on local streets east of Keele Street are closer to the property line to avoid the inclusion of surface parking between the building and street and create a more urban look and feel.

The existing mature trees within the landscape setback of the Fountainhead (northwest quadrant of the Sentinel Road and Finch Avenue West) marks the entrance to the Black Creek Ravine and as such should be maintained.

The built form shown in the Preferred Concept will assist in establishing a distinct character for each area. Table 3.1 highlights the key metrics and site specific built form recommendations included within the Preferred Concept.

3.5 VISUALIZATIONS

Pages 26 to 33 includes two aerial views and two pedestrian level views of the Preferred Concept illustrating the potential built form and public realm character.

Table 3.1 Preferred Concept Built Form Summary

Location	Character	Building Types	Maximum Building Height*	Maximum Streetwall Height	Setback	Site-Specific Conditions
The Keele-Finch Node	Community landmark and transit interchange	Mid-rise buildings	Residential: 27m (approx 8 storeys) Non-residential: 26m (approx 6 storeys) Intersection of Keele and Finch Ave. W.: residential and non-residential: 34m (approx 11 storeys residential and 9 storeys non-residential.	4 storeys (15m residential/18m non-residential) 6 storeys at the Intersection of Keele and Finch Avenue (21m residential/26m non-residential)	Keele Street and Finch Avenue West: 6m Local Streets: 3m Local Streets east of Keele Street close to lot line or applicable setback	Incorporate weather protection elements such as canopies, awnings, overhangs into the building design to provide weather protection along pedestrian connections to transit
The Sentinel Node	Green gateway to the Black Creek Ravine	Mid-rise buildings, Tall building & Townhouses	27m (approx 8 storey buildings) Tall building: 54m (Approx. 17 storeys)	4 storeys (15m) 6 storeys at the Intersection Finch Avenue and Sentinel Road (21m residential)	Finch Avenue West: 6m Sentinel Road (South of Finch Avenue West) & Local Streets: 3m	Heights, step backs, and siting should be done strategically in order to provide visual and physical access to natural features and existing mature trees.
The Finch West Corridor	Residential green street	Low-rise apartments & Townhouses	12m (approx 4 storeys)	N/A	Finch Avenue West: 6m Local Streets 3m or applicable setback	Landscape frontages
The Finch Corridor East	Transition from industrial character to the Keele-Finch Node	Mid-rise commercial buildings	Non-residential: 22m (approx 5 storeys)	4 storeys	Finch Avenue West: 6m Local Streets: 3m	Prominent entrances and visibility into the ground floor to support a safe and comfortable pedestrian-oriented streetscape.
The Keele Corridor North	Warehouse district	Low to mid-rise warehouse, office or light-industrial buildings	Non-residential: 18m (approx 4 storeys)	4 storeys	Keele Street: 6m Local Streets: close to lot line or applicable setback	As above
The Keele Corridor South	Mixed-use main street	Mid-rise buildings	(21m) (approx 6 storeys)	4 storeys	As per Keele-Finch Node	

* Subject to parcel depth and appropriate transition in scale

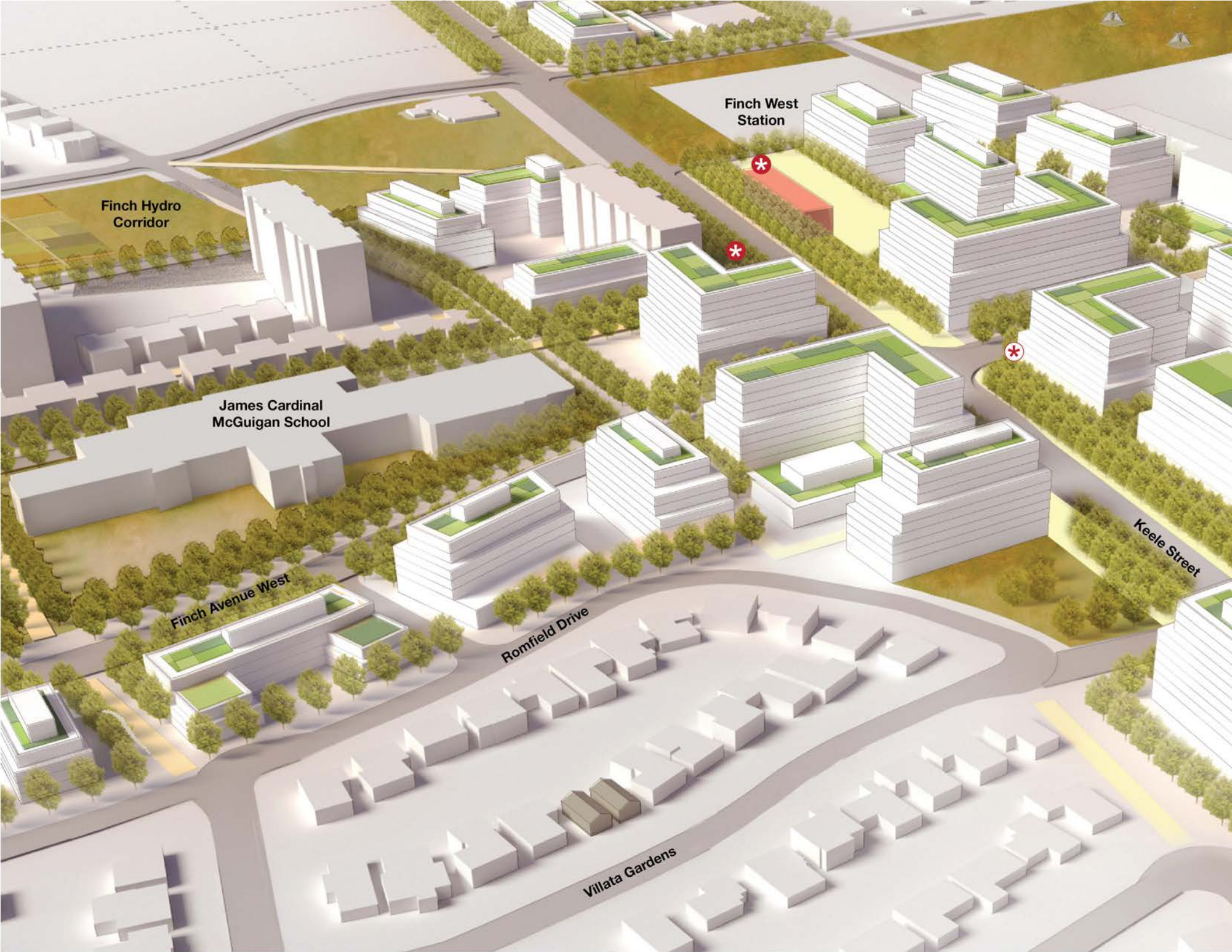

Fountainhead Park
Finch West Station
Sentinel Road
Derrydown Public School
Catford Road
Tangiers Road
Broadoaks Drive
Keele Street
Toro Road
Alexdon Road
Lepage Court
Ashwarren Road

Bird's Eye View Looking North West

The bird's eye view looking north-west shows the Keele-Finch node in the foreground with the Sentinel Node, a revitalized Fountainhead Park, the Finch West Hydro Corridor and Black Creek Ravine in the background. Urban boulevards with street tree planting and supportive building frontages line Keele Street and Finch Avenue West, providing a broad range of neighbourhood activities and sense of pedestrian scale and continuity to the public realm.

Figure 12 The Keele Finch Plus Study Area: Today

← **Figure 13** The Keele-Finch Plus Study Area: Future


Finch West
Station
Finch Hydro
Corridor
James Cardinal
McGuigan School
Finch Avenue West
Romfield Drive
Villata Gardens
Keele Street

The Keele-Finch Node

Special public realm enhancements and a concentration of higher-density mid-rise buildings will mark the Keele-Finch Node as the focal point of the precinct. New streets and pedestrian routes provide a high level of permeability and improved connections to the Finch West LRT and Finch West Subway Station. Each of the four quadrants within the node is marked by its own unique public realm open spaces: the Villata Gardens extension Park in the southwest quadrant; the Finch-Subway park connection in the northeast quadrant; the Duke Heights Park in the south-east quadrant and urban plazas within each of the four corners of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West.

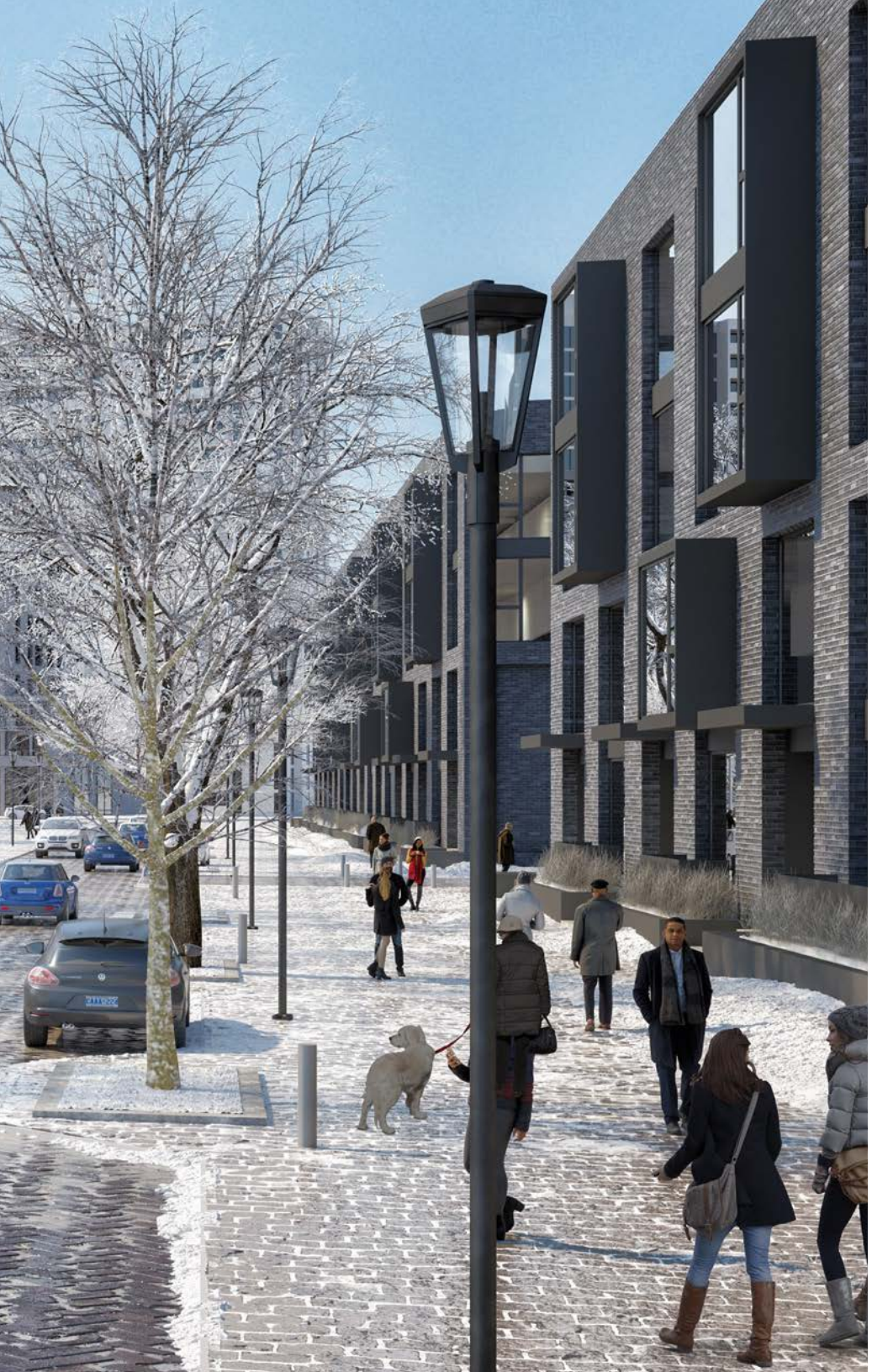
Figure 14 The Keele-Finch Node Today

← **Figure 15** The Keele-Finch Node: Future


MARKETPLACE

Keele Street

The conceptual rendering of the future potential for Keele Street includes generous pedestrian boulevards, grade separated cycle tracks, 3.0m pedestrian clearways, and broad open planters that provide the opportunity to grow large street trees with shrub plantings. Setback allows for an additional row of street trees and planting, as well as generous space for displays, seating and other activities to animate the street.



Fountainhead Park

A conceptual rendering of the northern edge of the park illustrates a new shared street with grade-related building frontages. Enhanced park programming and improved facilities will assist in better animating the park and provide improved utility for area residents, students and workers.


Finch Ave W

4.0
CONCLUSIONS

The Keele Finch Plus area has significant potential for transformative and positive change. Efforts to revitalize and grow this part of the city should leverage the investment in higher order transit. A clear and coordinated approach to direct private and public investment will ensure that everyone makes the most of this tremendous opportunity.

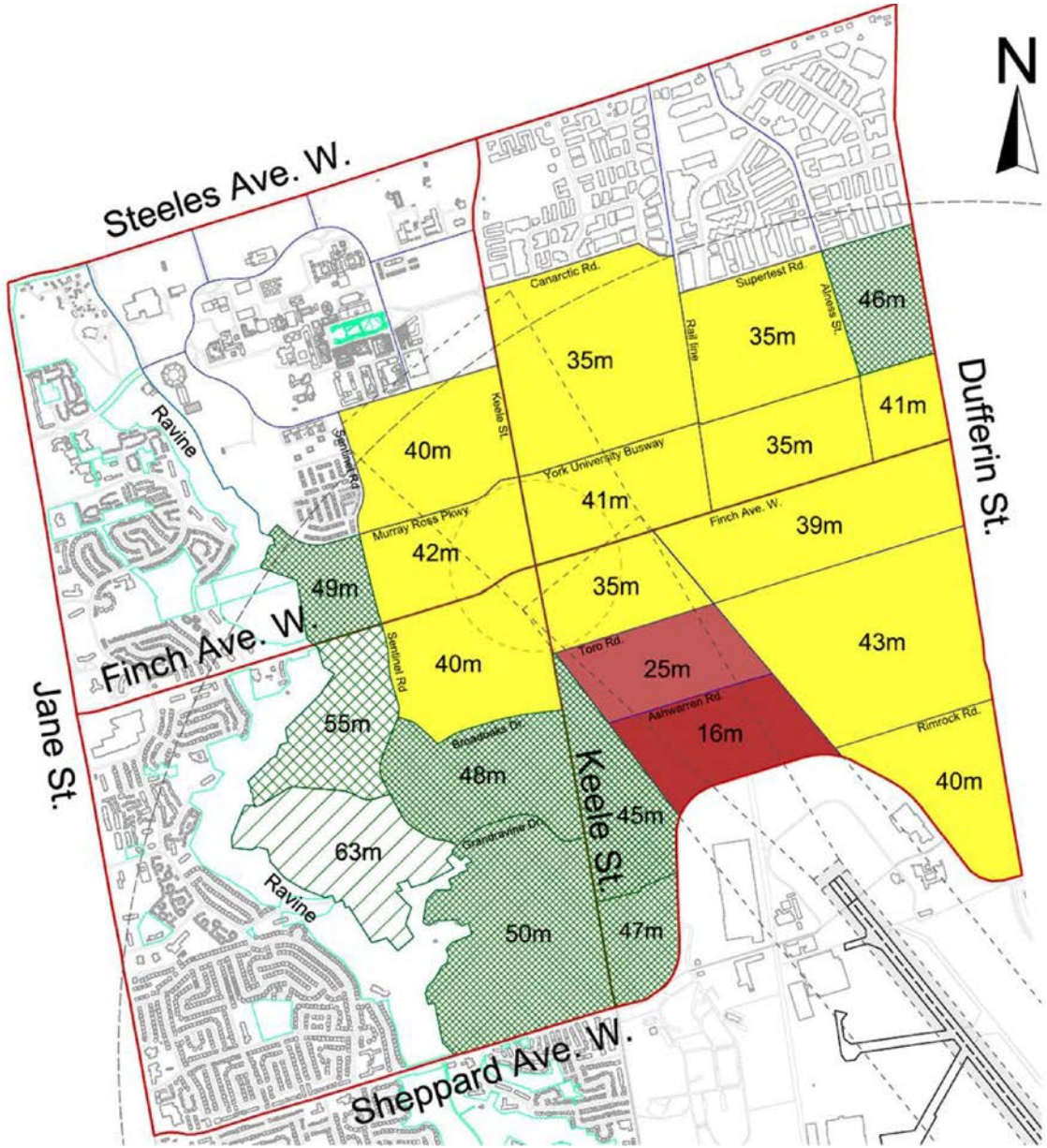
4.1 ACHIEVING THE VISION

The vision for Keele Finch Plus builds upon a thorough understanding of the existing character, offers a path for positive change within the nodes and corridors, and improves the quality of the pedestrian realm for the two main corridors so that they may serve as the primary focus for public life and placemaking.

The Preferred Concept aims to ensure that future development provides: qualities and amenities to further strengthen an attractive, liveable community with a mix of uses, walkable streets, context sensitive building design, distinctive neighbourhoods, new parks and open spaces, and an overall enhanced green character. These objectives were strongly articulated by the community and stakeholders during the public engagement process. Achieving these objectives will require that urban design guidelines and a planning policy framework be developed to guide and respond to this evolution.

5.0
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Indicative Buildable Heights, By Block, prepared by Arup as part of Keele Finch Plus Downsview Airport Operational Needs Assessment.



Appendix 2: Guiding Principles

Keele Finch Plus
Encouraging growth + community building

PHASE 2 PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE HEARD

Guiding Principles

'Emerging Principles' were reported to Council in 2016. These were based on a combination of research, technical assessment and public input obtained through Phase 1 of the Study. In March 2017, we asked participants to complete a survey on the the emerging principles. Results are shown below for each principle.

Involve the community in transforming the area into a transit supportive place over the medium to long term. *76% Strongly Support 24% Support*

Ensure the complexity of the area is well understood and expressed. Investment and change in policy should reflect the differences in the area. *67% Strongly Support 24% Support*

Encourage compact development that frames public streets and the public realm of parks and open spaces at good proportion, and both supports and leverages the investment in transit. *71% Strongly Support 14% Support*

Encourage development that contributes to the vitality and vibrancy of the area, and provides amenities and services. *90% Strongly Support 10% Support*

Ensure that the future uses and built form support and complement the existing employment uses in the area, including nearby industry and Downsview Airport. *57% Strongly Support 19% Support*

Support a high quality of life for current and future residents and workers. *90% Strongly Support 4% Support*

Support and encourage a more comfortable, walkable, cycle friendly and more beautiful public realm. *86% Strongly Support 10% Support*

Investment is needed in the public realm to make it more functional and connected, and to enhance the identity and liveability of the area. *76% Strongly Support 24% Support*

Encourage a vital employment area that supports a range of business activities. *62% Strongly Support 33% Support*

Improve the transportation network by making new connections, supporting goods movement, reducing block sizes and encouraging walkability. This supports active transportation options such as walking/cycling. *81% Strongly Support 10% Support*

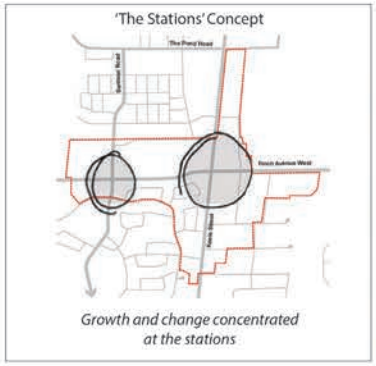
Additional guiding principles based on March 2017 feedback:

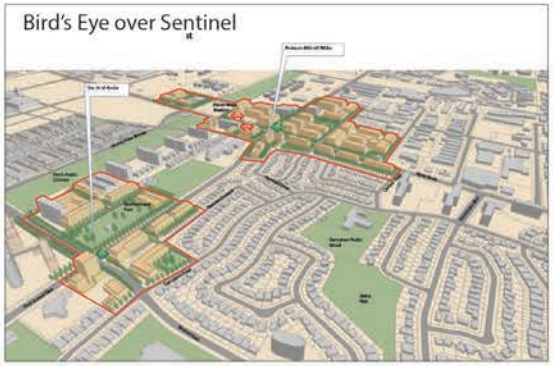
Make better use of existing green spaces, including parks, the ravine and hydro corridor.

Leverage the transit to support new employment opportunities.

Encourage flexible design of buildings and public spaces that can adapt as the area evolves.

Appendix 3: Built Form Options: Public Information Centre Panels

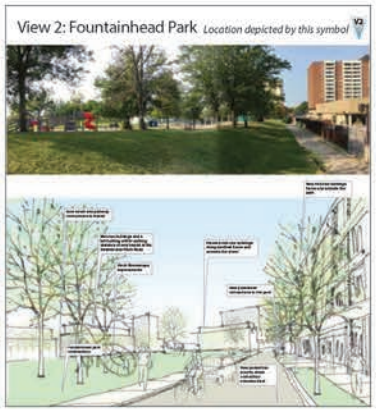


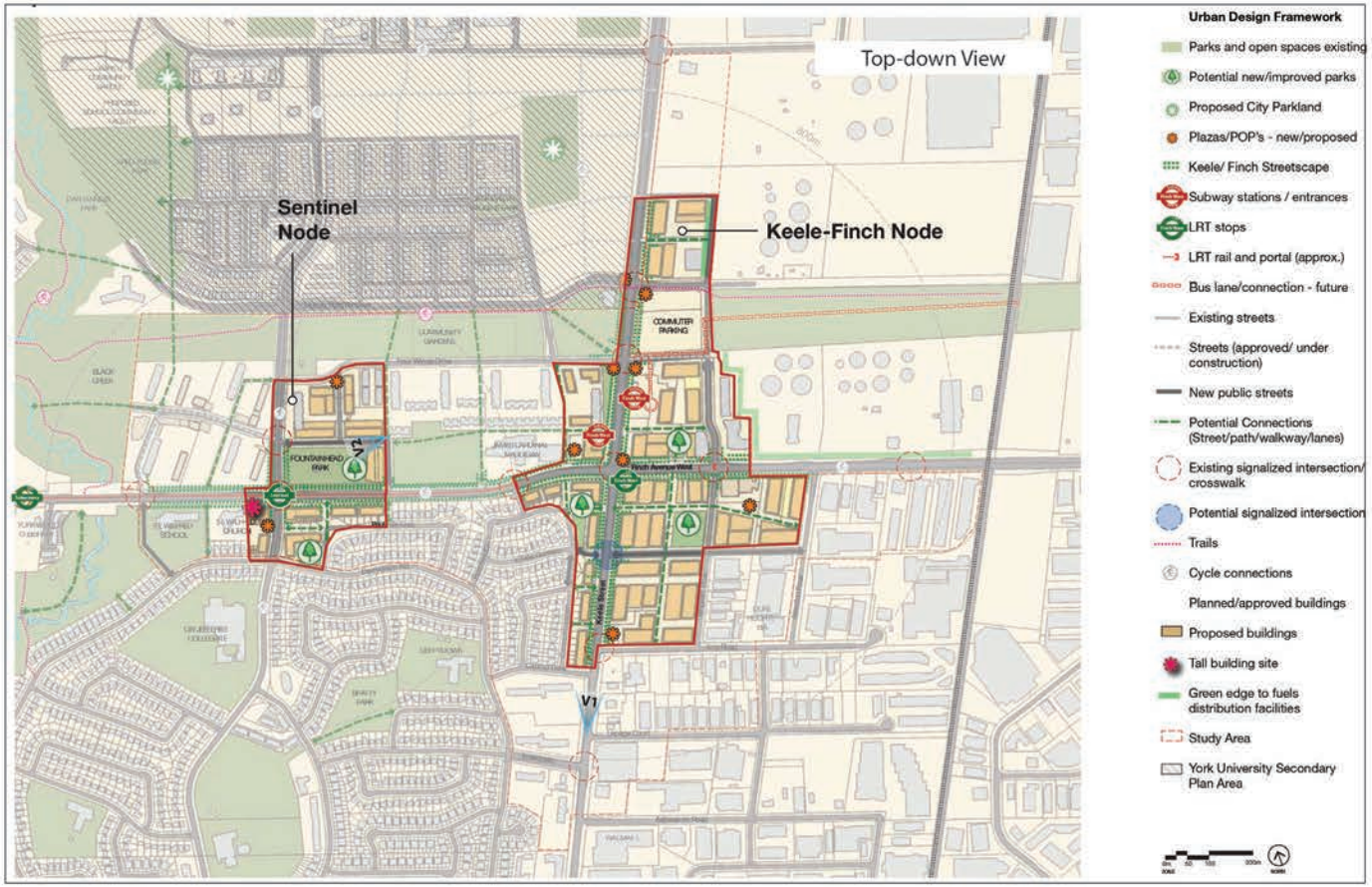


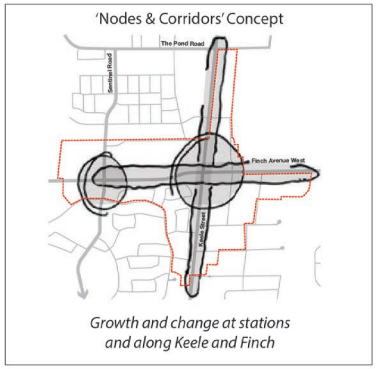
Keele Finch Plus
Reimagining growth + community building

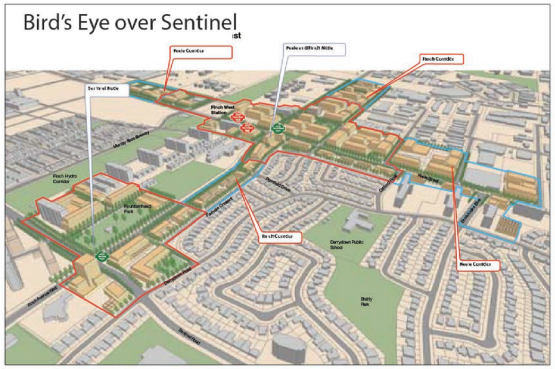
OPTION 1:
'THE STATIONS'

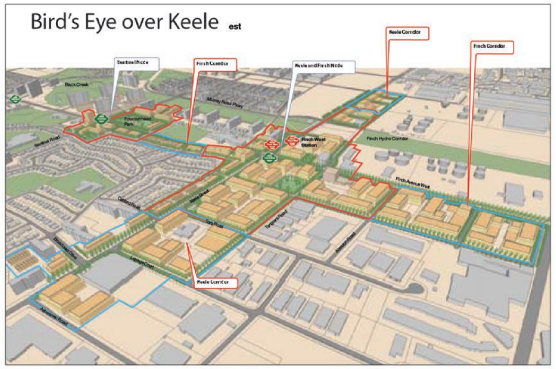
TORONTO











Keele Finch Plus
Encouraging growth + community building

Option 2: 'Nodes & Corridors'

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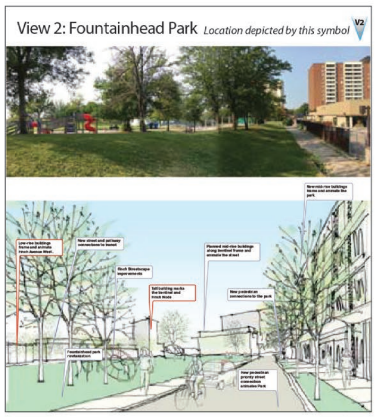

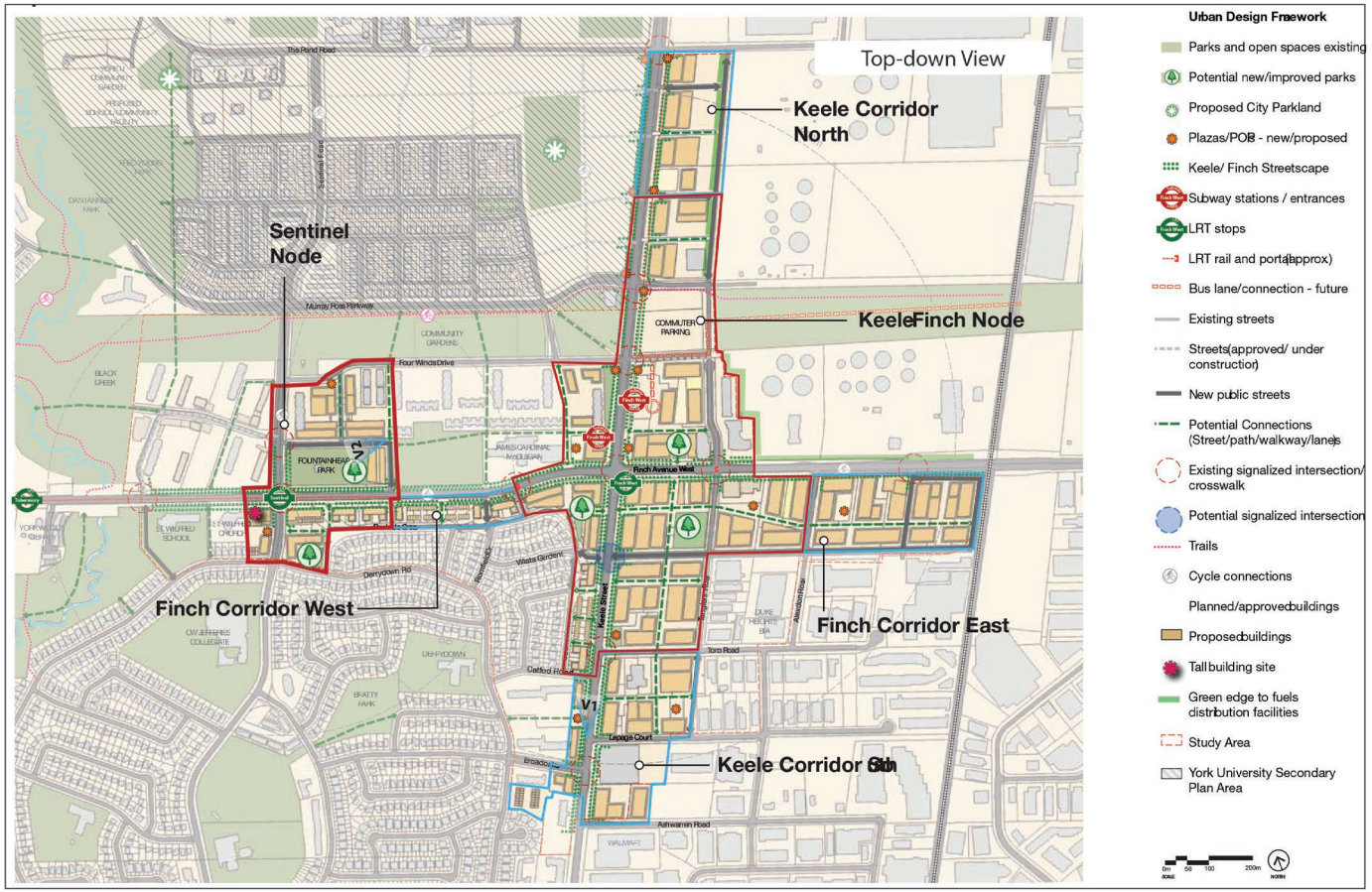

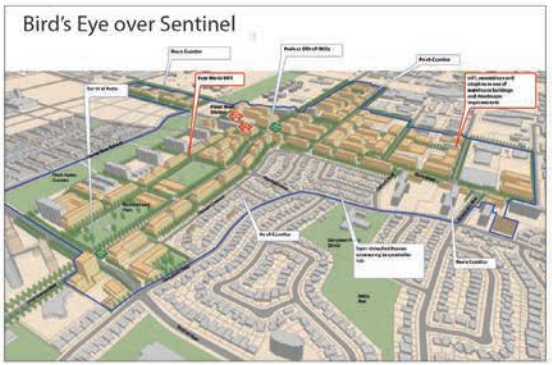

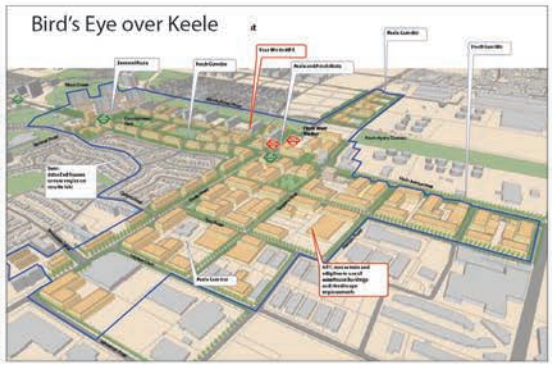

Keele Finch Plus
Encouraging growth + community building

Option 3: 'Main Streets'

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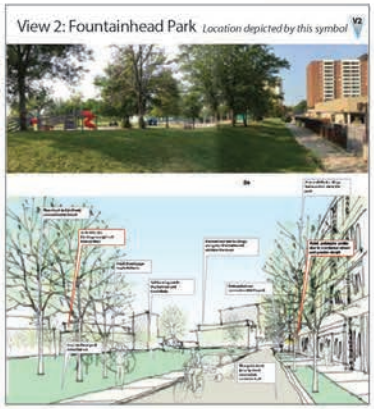

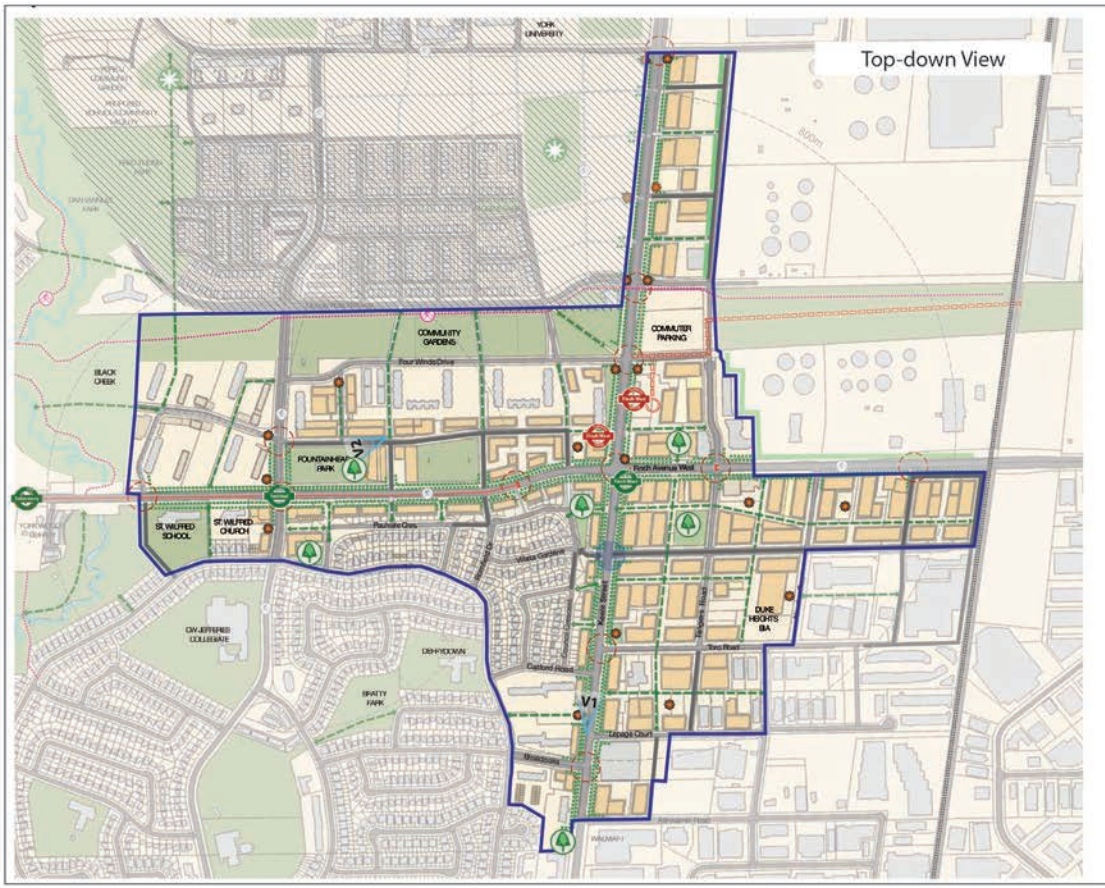

Urban Design Framework

- Parks and open spaces existing
- Potential new/improved parks
- Proposed City Parkland
- Plazas/POPS - new/proposed
- Keele/ Finch Streetscape
- Subway stations / entrances
- LRT stops
- LRT rail and portals (approx)
- Bus lane/connection - future
- Existing streets
- Streets (approved/ under construction)
- New public streets
- Potential Connections (Street/path/walkway/lanes)
- Existing signalized intersection/ crosswalk
- Potential signalized intersection
- Trails
- Cycle connections
- Planned/approved buildings
- Proposed buildings
- Tall building site
- Green edge to fuels distribution facilities
- Study Area
- York University Secondary Plan Area

dtah