



WYNFORD- CONCORDE FOCUSED AREA PLANNING STUDY

COMMUNITY MAPPING WORKSHOP

REPORT ON FINDINGS

FEBRUARY 2025

ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH

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Introduction

About the Project

The goal of the study is to develop a planning framework, with a focus on an enhanced public realm and streetscape for the area that integrates with a multi-modal transportation network to serve the existing and anticipated residential and employment populations of the area.

A main portion of the study is a series of public engagements including the Community Mapping Workshop and report-back meetings, as well as supplementary, asynchronous engagement methods to reach those who may wish to participate but are unable to attend in-person meetings.

The focus of the study is to uncover:

- Opportunities to improve the public realm, streetscape and mobility of the area;
- Strategies for a multi-modal transportation network for the area;
- Opportunities for coordinated and ongoing improvements.

This report summarizes findings from the in-person Community Mapping Workshop held on February 6th, 2025.

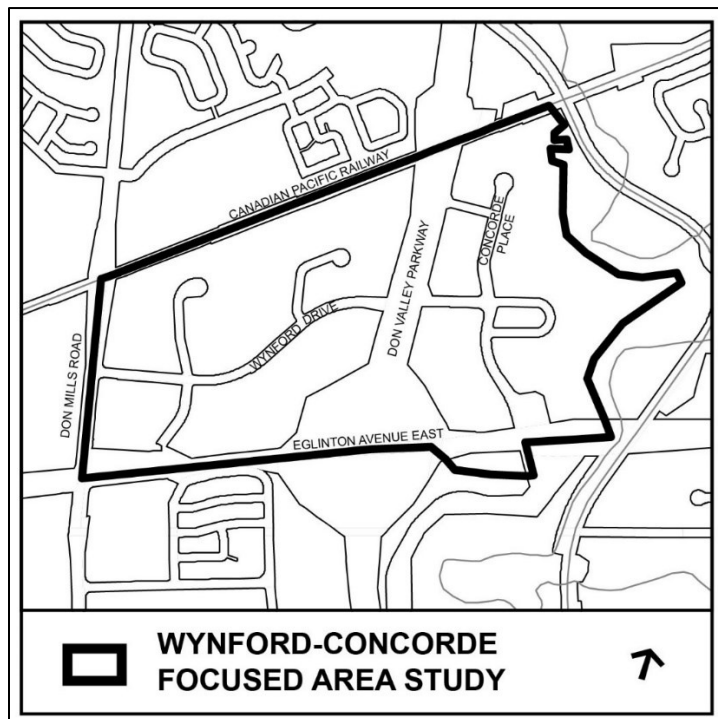


Figure 1: Focused Area Study Boundary

Conducting the Community Mapping Workshop

The community mapping workshop was an in-person event held on February 6th, 2025 at the Japanese-Canadian Cultural Centre.

A team of Environics Research and City of Toronto staff guided participants through a series of five facilitated group activities. Activities were designed to generate conversation and gather feedback about how mobility, streetscape, and public realm in Wynford-Concorde can be improved to make it an even better place to live. The study consisted of:

- Seven Discussion Tables
- 60 Community Member Participants
- Five facilitator-led group activities

Key Insights

Vision & Guiding Principles: Participants identified key priorities for the Wynford-Concorde area, emphasizing connectivity, green spaces, community spaces, and safety. They envisioned a neighbourhood with reduced congestion, better pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, more parks, vibrant gathering spaces, and improved accessibility for all. Mobility and accessibility emerged as dominant themes, with calls for improved transit connections, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and accessible sidewalks and bus shelters.

Parkland & Connections: Participants mapped out desired parkland locations and proposed new pedestrian and cycling connections to improve accessibility and safety. Key recommendations included expanding pedestrian pathways, enhancing the Don Valley Parkway bridge for safer crossings, and addressing safety concerns related to staircases and trail grade variations. A fully connected network of parks and pathways was envisioned, reinforcing the importance of green spaces and safe, accessible routes throughout the neighbourhood.

Streetscape & Public Realm: The Wynford-Concorde area is widely seen as a "car-first" neighbourhood, which has residents prioritizing improvements to pedestrian safety and accessibility. Suggestions included added seating areas, enhanced lighting – especially along Wynford Drive – and increased greenery for both aesthetic and environmental benefits. Many also advocated for dedicated bike lanes and traffic calming measures to create a safer, more welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Mobility: Significant safety concerns were raised about intersections, particularly the bridge over the Don Valley Parkway, along Eglinton Avenue, and the off-ramp at Wynford Drive. Designated trails were seen as the safest routes. Recommended improvements focused on enhancing pedestrian and cyclist safety through better lighting, safer stairs, wider sidewalks, adjusted speed limits, improved bus stops, and longer traffic light durations.

Activity One: Guiding Principles

Developing Guiding Principles

A guiding principle is a fundamental idea or core belief that directs decisions, actions and behaviours. To generate creative thinking and collaborative discussion, participants were asked to work with their groups to generate their own guiding principles for the Wynford-Concorde focused area study.

This exercise aimed to inspire participants to envision a positive goal or set of core values to guide the development of their community. While some participants took the opportunity to share their concerns about the current state of their neighbourhood, the discussion led to valuable insights. We were able to uncover a rich set of underlying values and powerful words that can guide future planning for the Wynford-Concorde area.

Connectivity – Lack of congestion, multi-modal transportation routes throughout, pedestrian walkways and bike lanes.

“Make Wynford-Concorde a vibrant, uncongested community.” – Sample Guiding Principle

“Traffic management – noise, pollution of cars/road.” – Sample Guiding Principle

“Using all forms of transportation.” – Sample Guiding Principle

Green spaces – Environmental protection, usable park space, more green areas.

“Environmental impacts. Protect the environment.”

“Livability – Green space, leisure, sports.”

Community spaces and activities – Programming, playgrounds, leisure, sports, activities & places to walk to & sit (picnic tables, benches, cafes), vibrant community.

“Feeling safe.”

“Open, Accessible, Programming.”

“Community activities – live in a neighbourhood with destinations to walk to, beyond just playgrounds.”

Safety/Accessibility – Greater mobility for seniors, wider sidewalks, safe areas for children, safe roads and bike lanes, accessible transit options, accommodating a variety of demographics and ages.

“Safety – road/bike lane/transit/sidewalks.”

“Accommodating variety of demographics and ages.”

Activity Two: Vision Statements

A vision is an aspirational statement that defines what an individual or organization aims to become in the future. The vision activity was split into two main portions:

- 1) Each participant was asked to provide one word or phrase for their vision as it pertains to each of the study's three focus areas: Streetscape, mobility, and public realm.

The following themes emerged across participant responses:

Public Realm

- *Pedestrian safety (wide sidewalks & setbacks)*
- *Accessibility (especially for seniors)*
- *Quiet, shady places to rest & gather*
- *Beauty through trees, plants & public art*
- *Protect/preserve nature, trees & sunlight*
- *Park benches*
- *Activity-based spaces (e.g. playgrounds, basketball courts, cafes)*
- *Safe intersections*

Streetscape

- *Pedestrian safety (wide sidewalks & setbacks)*
- *Accessibility (especially for seniors)*
- *Quiet, shady places to rest & gather*
- *Beauty through trees, plants & public art*
- *Protect/preserve nature, trees & sunlight*
- *Bike lanes*
- *Ease congestion, reduce through-traffic*
- *Safe intersections*

Mobility

- *Pedestrian safety (wide sidewalks & setbacks)*
- *Accessibility (especially for seniors)*

- *Convenience & connection*
 - *Safe evacuation routes*
 - *Improved transit services*
 - *Bike lanes*
 - *Ease congestion, reduce through-traffic*
 - *Safe intersections*
- 2) Groups were asked to come together and use the words or phrases they had generated to write their own draft vision statement for the Focused Area study.

The vision statements reflected the priorities identified in part one of the activity. A significant theme was mobility and accessibility, which appeared in group vision statements in various forms. Many emphasized the need for improved transit connections, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and accessible sidewalks and bus shelters, especially given the high proportion of seniors in the neighbourhood. Other common themes focused on public spaces and community areas, with many expressing a desire for more gathering spaces, green areas, and pedestrian-friendly environments. A third major theme in the group vision statements was safety and traffic management, with residents calling for reduced congestion, less through-traffic, increased pedestrian safety, and concerns of late-night street racing.

In addition to these three major themes, other minor themes emerged. Many expressed a desire for better streetscape planning, improved public infrastructure, and the maintenance of existing services. Environmental sustainability, though less prominent, also surfaced as a theme, with groups highlighting the importance of green spaces and environmental cleanliness.

Pedestrian safety is top-of mind for residents and should be a top priority. Wider and more accessible sidewalks, less traffic, and more trees will go a long way to improve perceptions of the community. Secondary priorities may be green public gathering spaces and enhanced transit connections.

“Envision [the neighbourhood] as a people-oriented community which is environmentally clean & comfortable, accessible, sustainable & flood-free, transit-friendly, safe with activities such as cafes and restaurants in the neighbourhood.” – Sample Vision Statement

“Wynford-Concorde is envisioned as a safe, connected and multi-modal community characterized by accessible/active parkland and wider sidewalks/setbacks under existing tree cover that create a vibrant public realm.” – Sample Vision Statement

“Streetscape which is safe, connected, green, functional, accessible, walkable and enhances mobility & community safety. Public realm which is useable, accessible, convenient and accommodates essential services. More connected mobility to

transit by accessible sidewalk network and local bus service.” – Sample Vision Statement

Activity Three: Parklands & Connections

Using a map of the area, participants placed green dots on locations where they wanted new parkland and drew lines to indicate desired pedestrian connections, cycling routes, and connections to open spaces.

To improve safety, several key enhancements were suggested, including expanding pedestrian connections to create more accessible and user-friendly pathways, and making improvements to the bridge over the Don Valley Parkway to enhance its safety for all users. Additionally, the existing staircase was noted as unsafe, particularly for seniors, as was the variations in trail grades. Lastly, ensuring that all paths are fully accessible will make the area more inclusive for everyone.

Park areas were proposed throughout the entire focus area, spanning both sides of the Don Valley Parkway. Pathways were proposed to link these parklands, creating a fully connected network across the neighbourhood. A map containing all dots and connections is presented below. Green dots represent proposed park areas and red lines represent proposed connections.

Parks and greenspace are a key component to making the neighbourhood feel welcoming. Pedestrian safety to connect these open spaces remains a top concern.

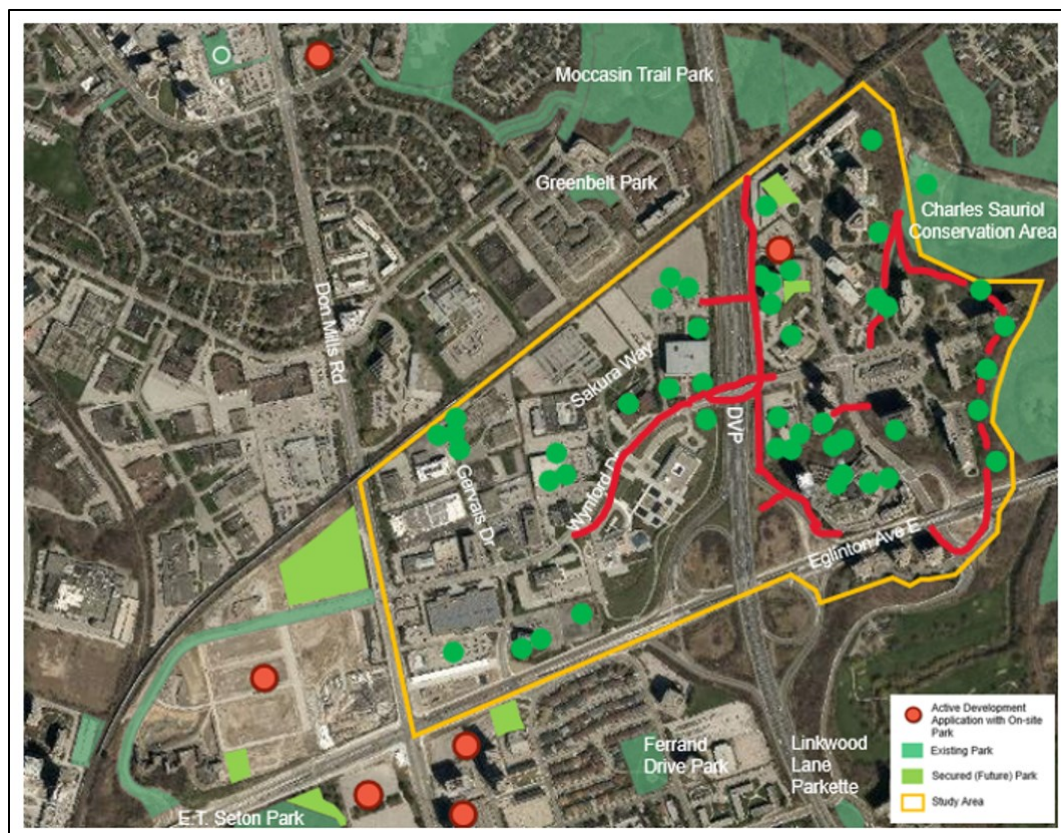


Figure 2: Parklands & Connections Map

Activity Four: Streetscape & Public Realm

In this activity, groups were asked to identify areas where they believe the streetscape and public realm could be improved. Using red dots, participants marked specific locations on a map and provided brief explanations of the changes they would like to see implemented.

A significant number of participants expressed a desire for more seating areas, particularly in high foot-traffic zones, as well as improved lighting – especially along Wynford Drive – to enhance safety and visibility. Many residents also emphasized the need for more greenery, including trees and flowers, to contribute to the area's aesthetic appeal and environmental sustainability. The addition of dedicated bike lanes was another recurring recommendation, with participants citing benefits such as improved mobility options, greater connectivity, and a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

Wynford-Concorde is seen as a 'car-first' neighbourhood by its residents. Concerns about traffic issues and pedestrian safety dominate conversations, and the most common resident comments are concerned with how the area could be made more beautiful, safer & hospitable to pedestrians and cyclists.

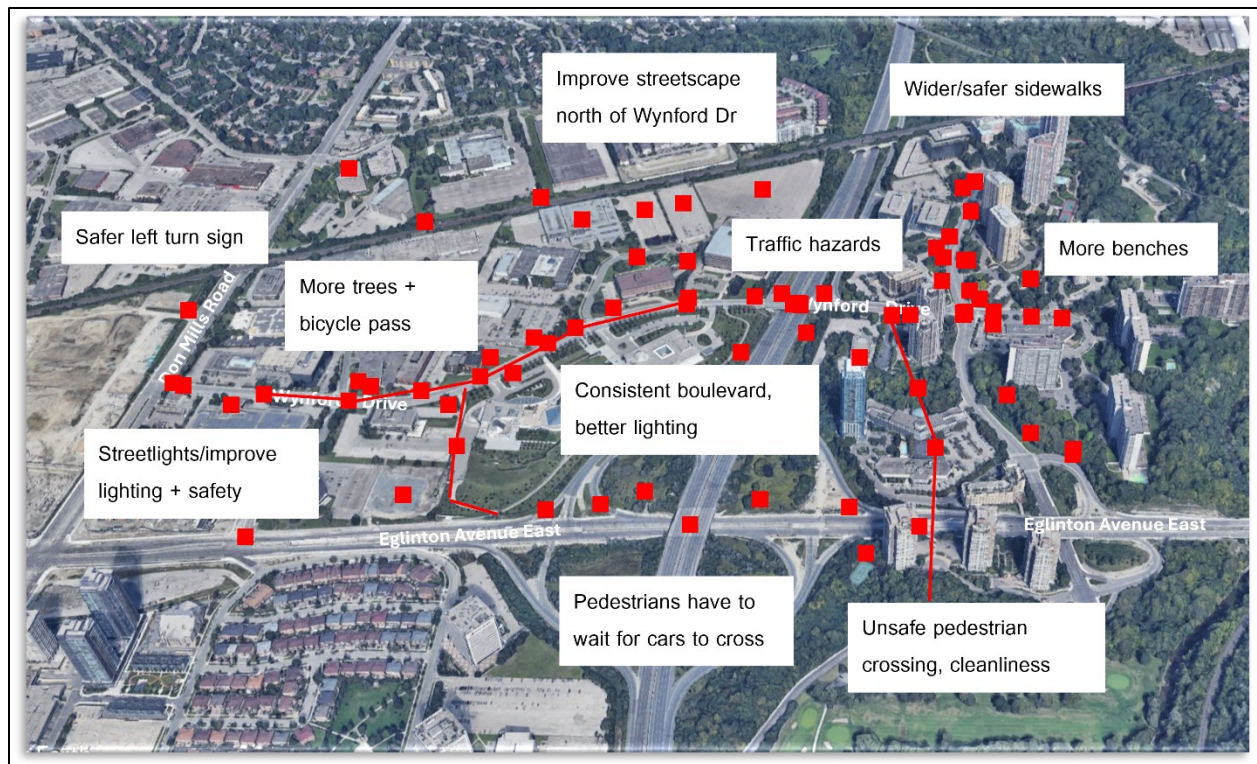


Figure 3: Streetscape & Public Realm Consolidated Map

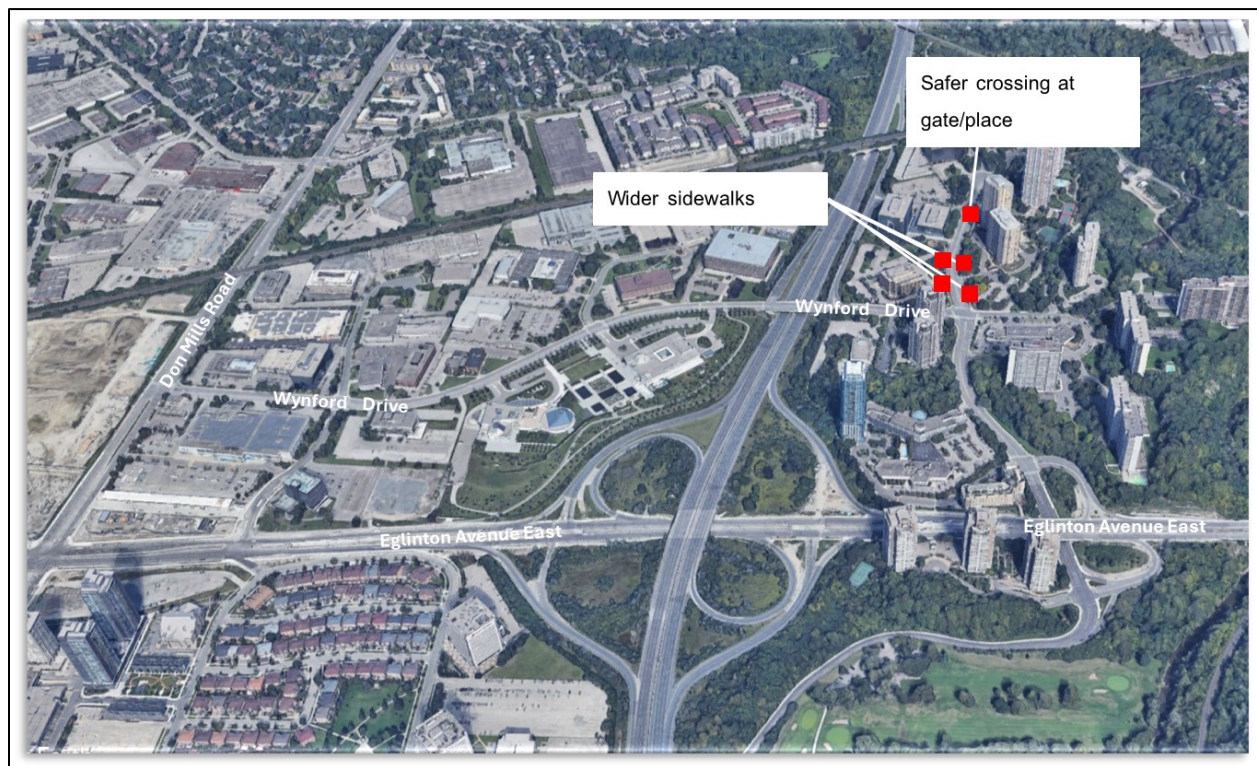


Figure 4: Activity Four (Table 3)

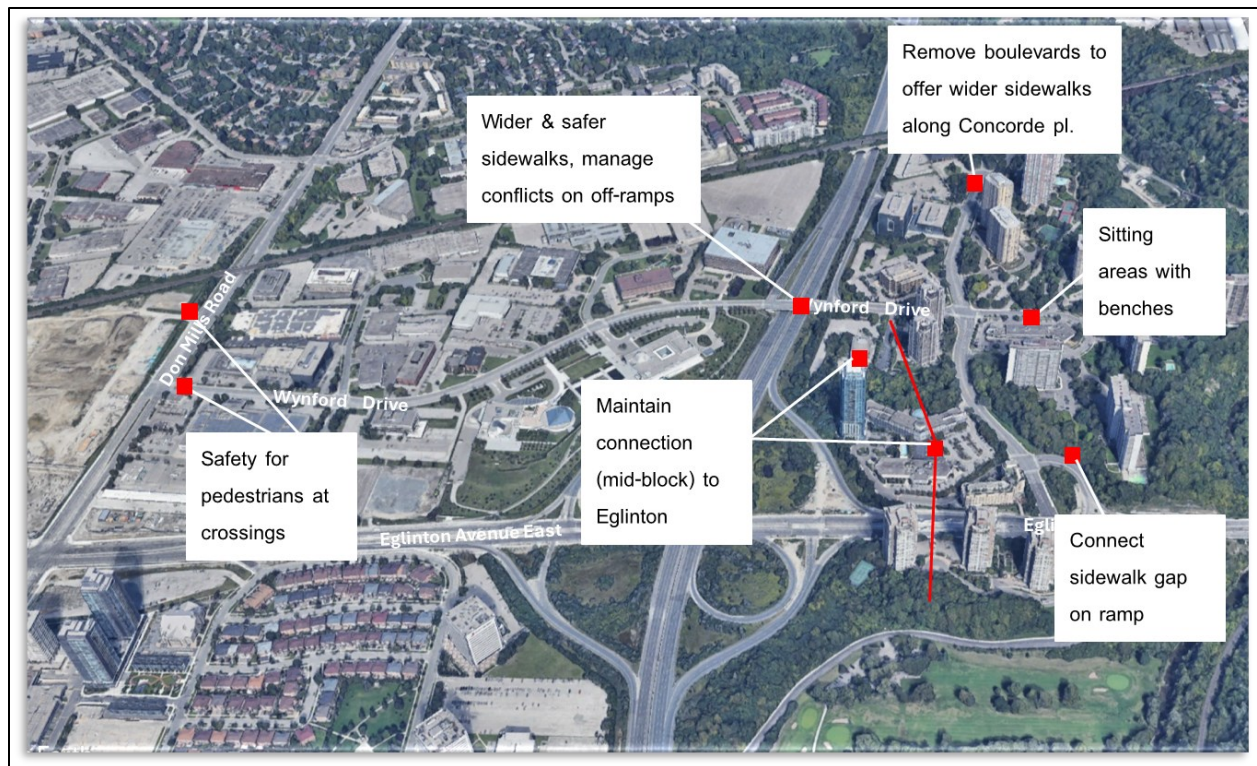


Figure 5: Activity Four (Table 5)

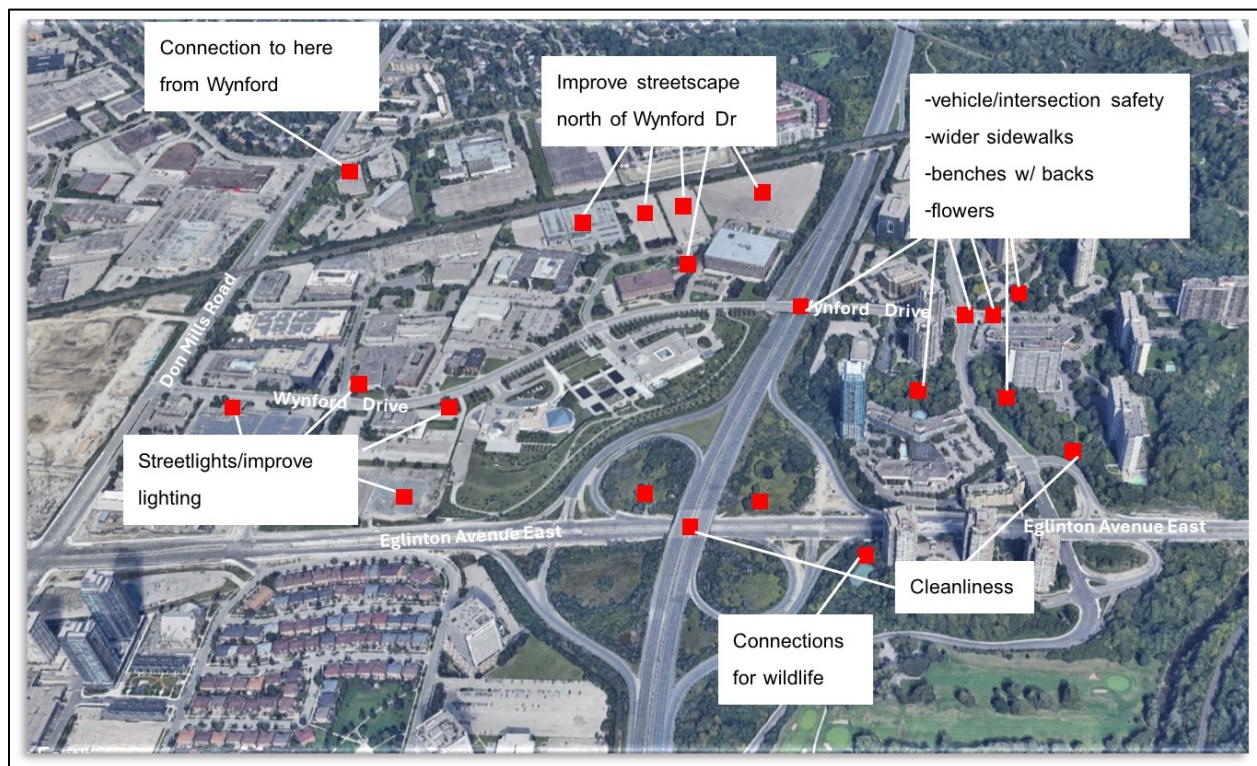


Figure 6: Activity Four (Table 6)

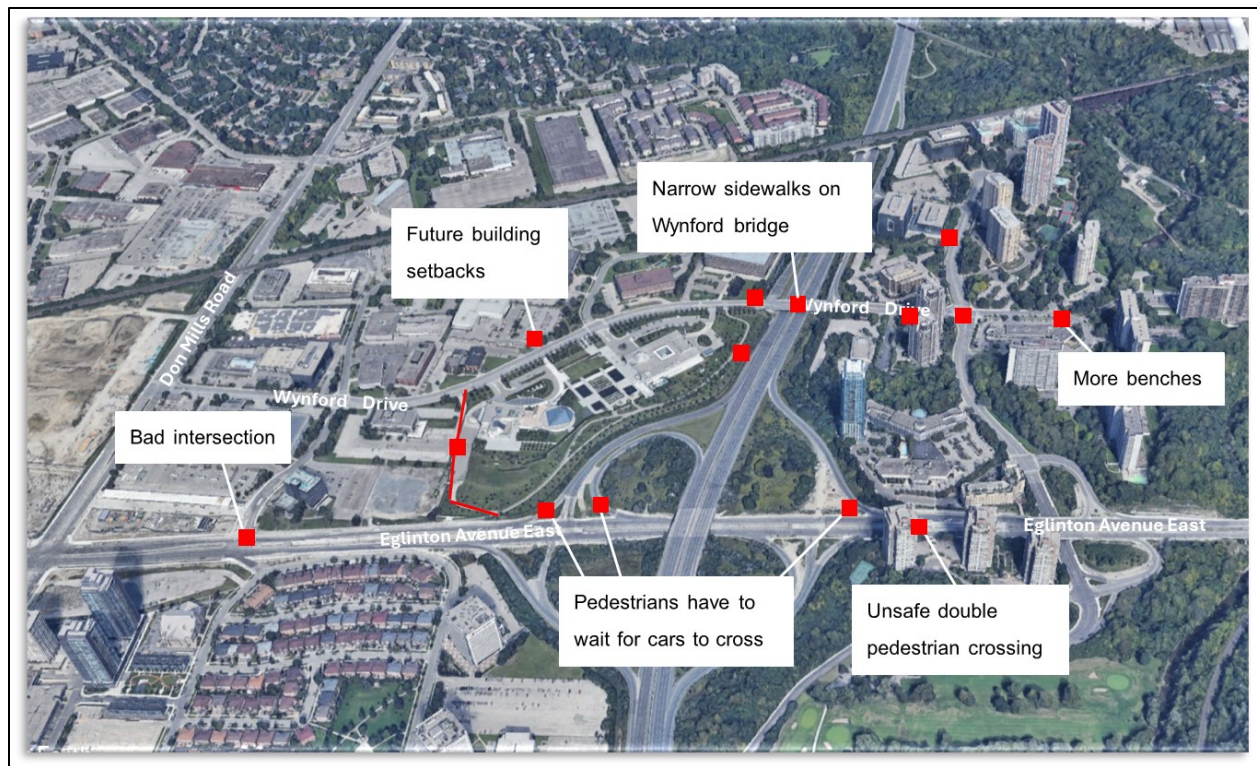


Figure 7: Activity Four (Table 8)

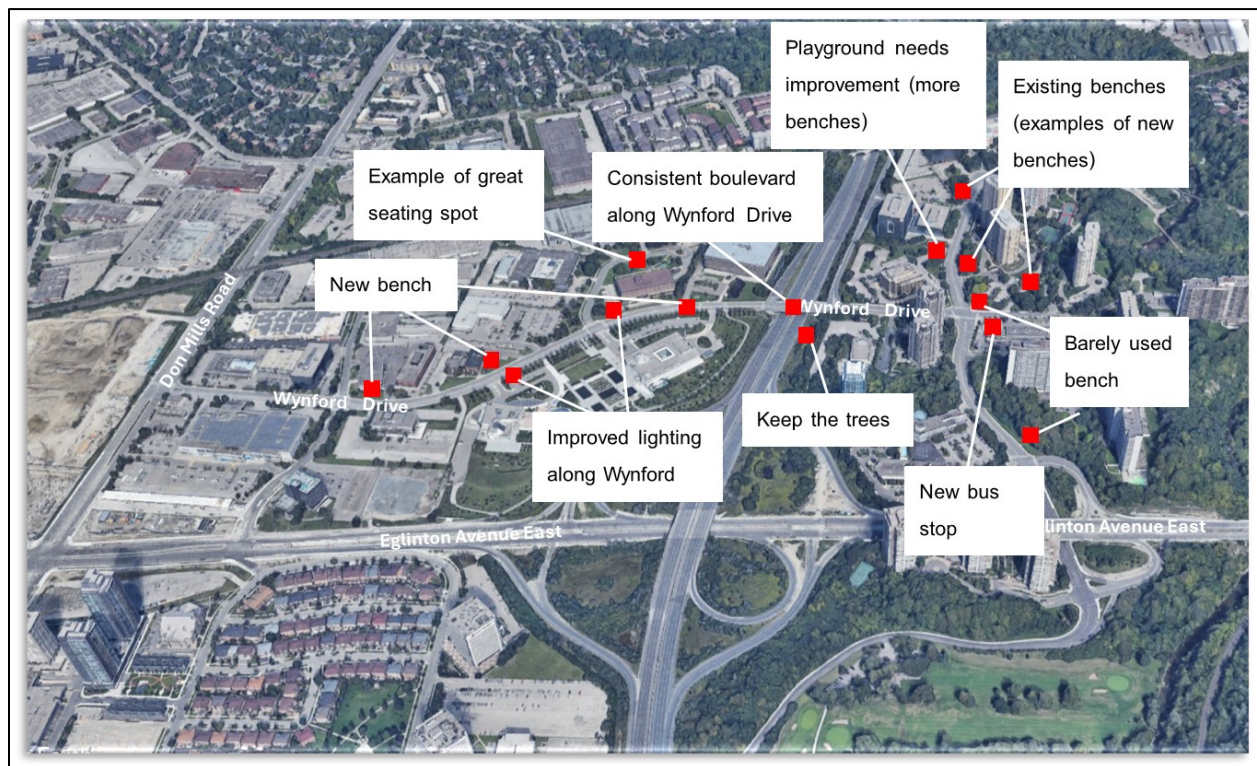


Figure 8: Activity Four (Table 11)

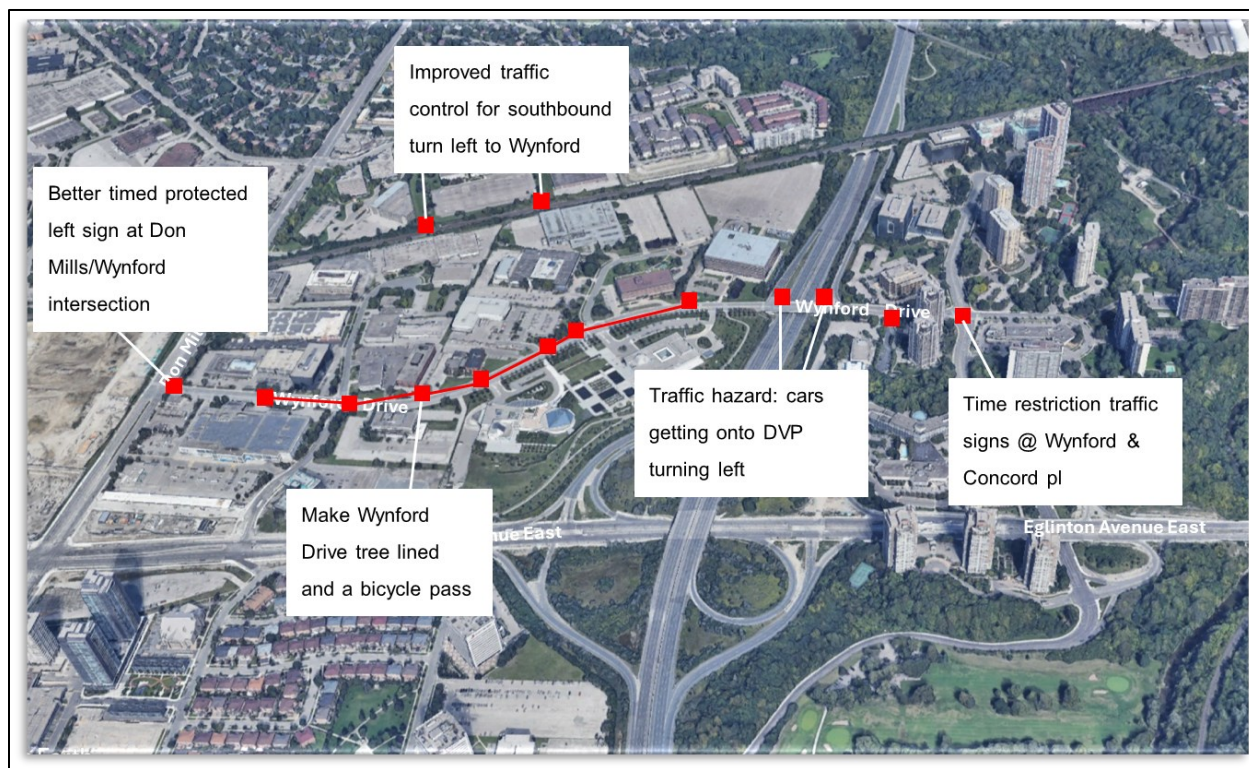


Figure 9: Activity Four (Table 13)

Activity Five: Mobility

Using various coloured dots, participants identified locations in their neighbourhood where they feel the safest and least safe when walking or cycling, along with suggested improvements. They also highlighted preferred locations for new Bike Share Toronto stations.

Pedestrians reported feeling least safe at major intersections, particularly on the bridge over the Don Valley Parkway, along Eglinton Avenue, and at the off-ramp where Eglinton Avenue merges onto Wynford Drive. In contrast, designated trails throughout the neighbourhood were identified as the safest areas for walking and cycling.

Suggested improvements included: better street lighting, safer stairs, wider sidewalks, reviewed speed limits, improved/safer bus stops, and increased duration of traffic lights to make pedestrians feel safer.

Residents identified key areas and intersections where they feel unsafe, particularly as pedestrians, and provided recommendations for traffic management and infrastructure improvements to enhance accessibility and safety.

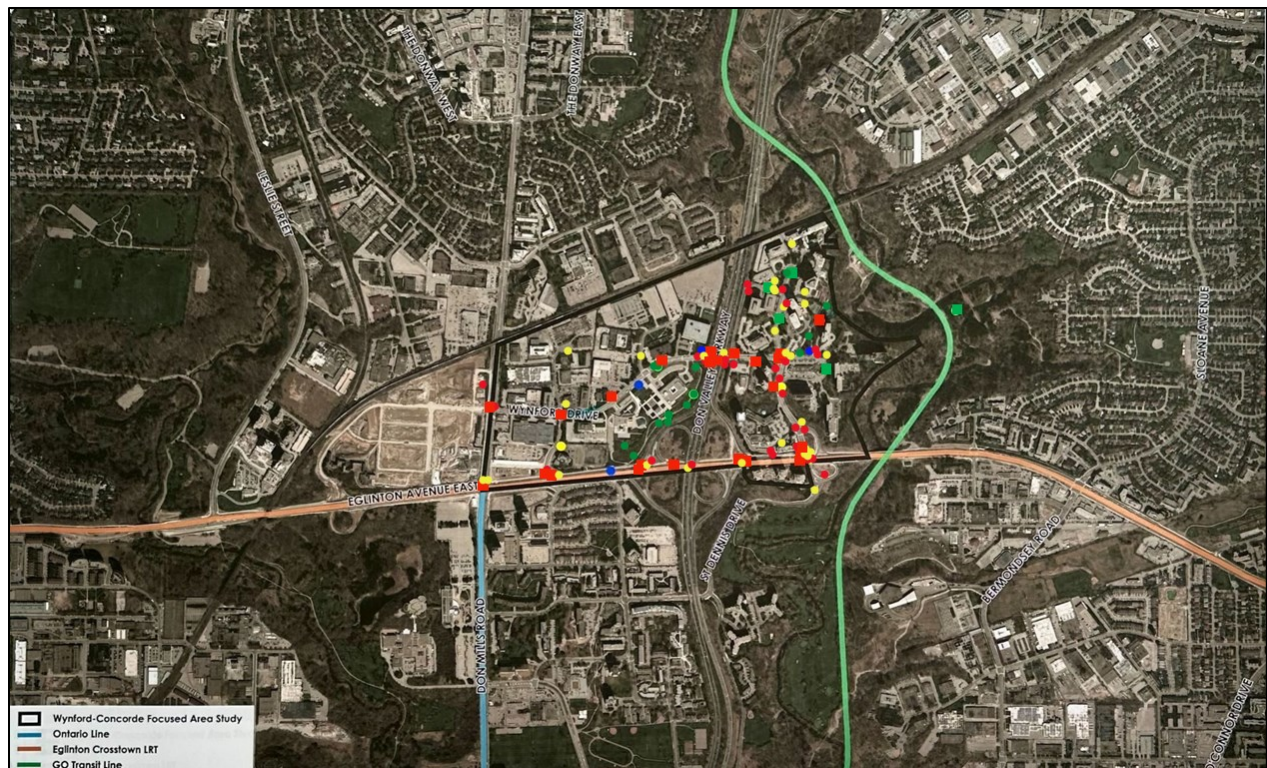


Figure 10: Consolidated Mobility Map

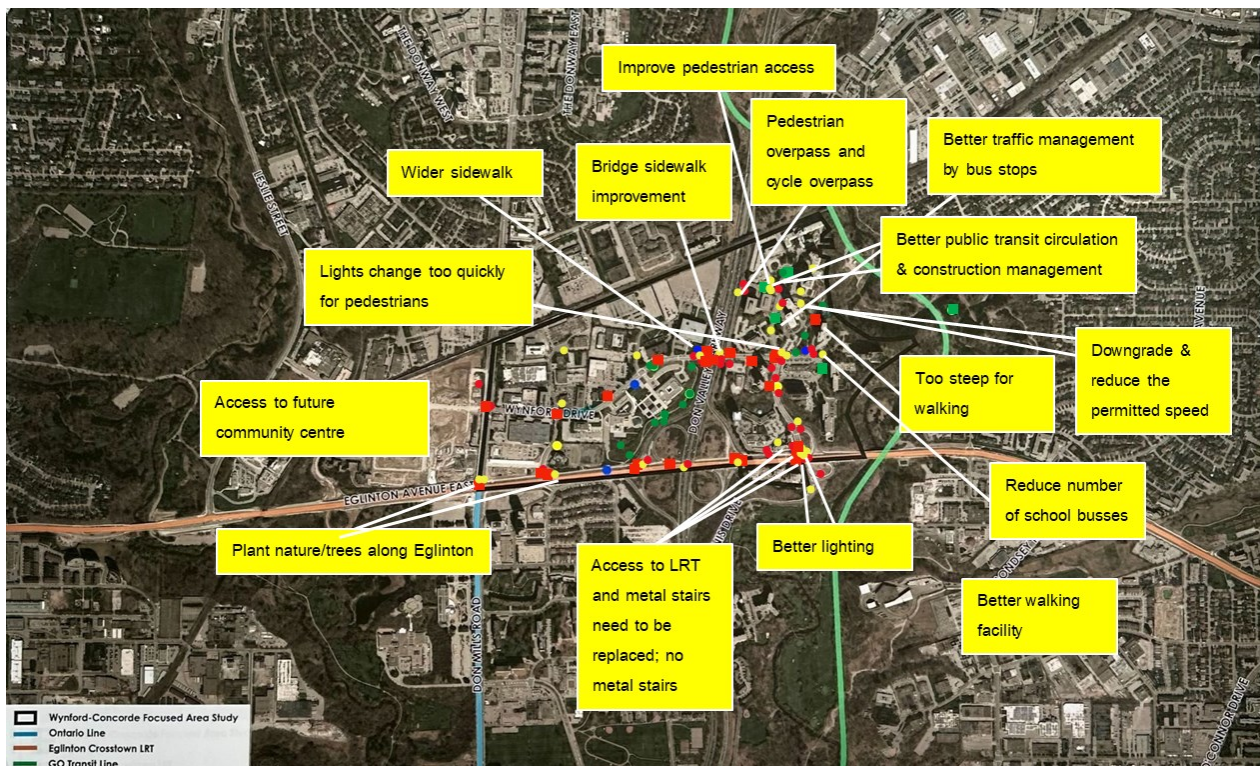


Figure 11: Mobility Improvements

Activity Five: SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- *Existing transit systems.*
- *Quick access to downtown by car.*
- *Wynford Heights.*
- *Concorde place is well lit.*
- *Aga Khan park is a nice retreat, but far for some.*

Weaknesses:

- *Driver behaviour, conflict among road users*
- *Lack of grocery stores, gas stations in close proximity*
- *Wynford east of Don Mills driveways feels unsafe*
- *Need accessibility to LRT*
- *Wider sidewalks, pedestrian safety needed*
- *Projected growth without connections*
- *Wynford bridge pedestrian walkway is narrow and dangerous, access to East Don Trail challenging.*

Opportunities:

- *Shuttle buses to Eglinton, local mobility, express bus to downtown, local connection to LRT*
- *More bus shelters, fix mobility issues, more lighting*
- *Community-based events, street fair market*
- *Underground connections, overpass for pedestrians, downgrade Wynford to multi-modal, local traffic only*
- *Improve safety for pedestrians in construction zone*

Threats:

- *Density increase can ruin community, traffic congestion, plan for more bikes, mobility for elderly*
- *Lack of lighting in valley, less safe at night due to wild animals*
- *Right turn only, signage needs better placement, too many cars, increased Uber trips due to limited parking*

- *Wynford/Don Mills pedestrian crosswalk unsafe, hazardous condo evacuation exits*

Additional Comments

Participants were given the opportunity to provide additional comments at the back of their workbooks. Some also provided the facilitators with their own prepared materials to share their thoughts on the Wynford-Concorde area. A summary of additional comments within each of the study's three main topic areas is presented below.

Streetscape:

- *Narrow sidewalks and their close proximity to the road create unsafe pedestrian conditions*
- *Poor winter sidewalk maintenance exacerbates safety concerns for pedestrians*
- *There is a general lack of streetscape improvements, such as tree coverage, benches or pedestrian-friendly design elements*
- *More green trees and more lighting*

Public Realm:

- *Lots of trails in the area, access them by car currently*
- *Biking doesn't seem safe, too much traffic*
- *The area suffers from a lack of community services and amenities within a walkable radius of the LRT or main intersection.*

Mobility:

- *Wynford Drive, the only road in and out of the area, is a minor arterial road with inadequate capacity for future and current traffic demands*
- *There are accessibility challenges, especially for those relying on public transportation, due to the lack of safe pedestrian pathways and crossings*
- *The area is poorly connected to major transit routes, making it difficult for residents to reach key services efficiently.*