





Project Goal: Community Within Reach

The City of Toronto is proposing zoning changes in Residential zones across the city, to make it easier to open small-scale retail, service and office uses to service the needs of existing and future residents.

Retail



Services



Office

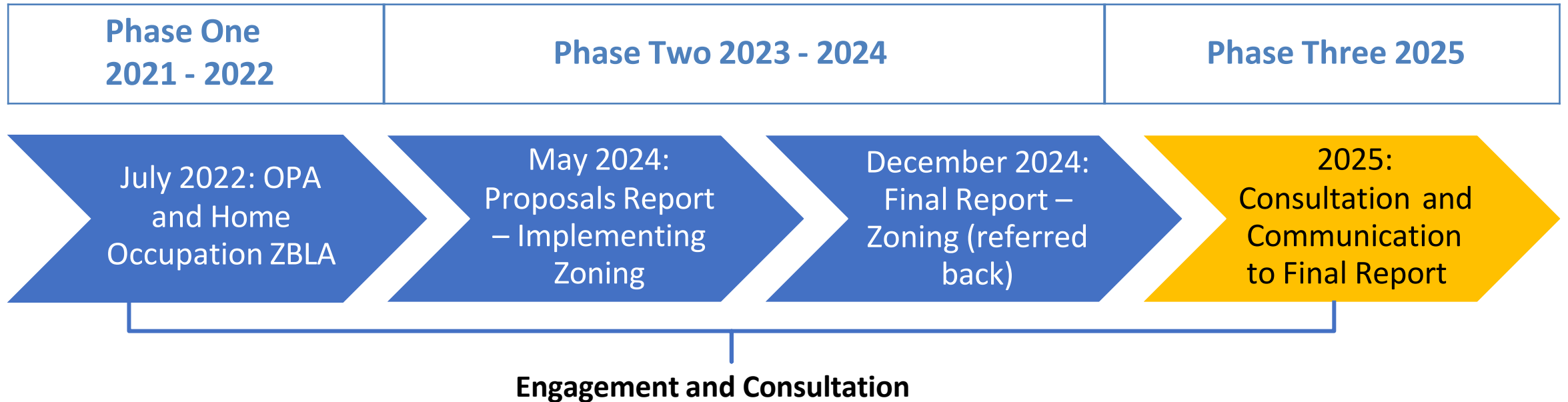


Home Occupations





Project Phases and Process



December 2024:

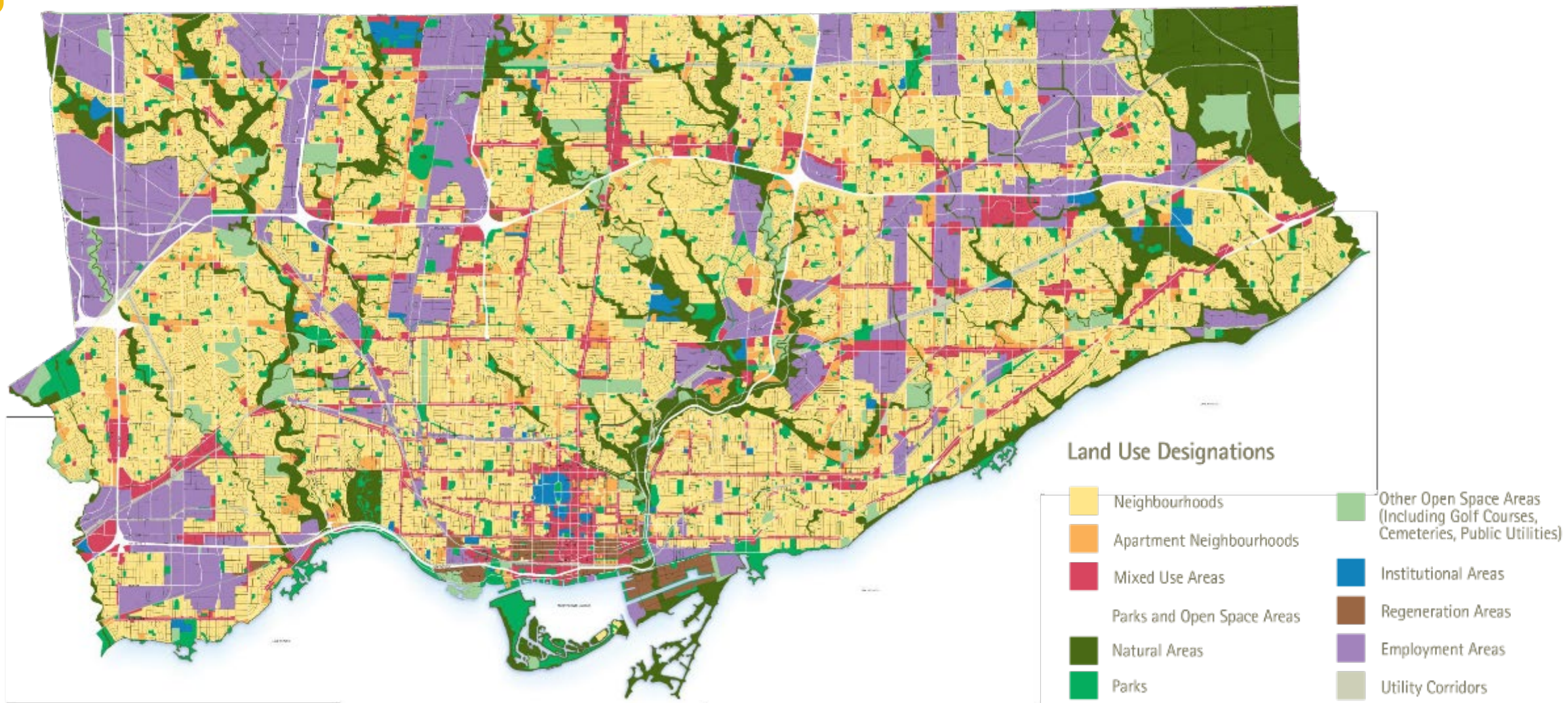
City Council refer the item back to the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning for consultation with the public and residents' associations accompanied with a professional communications campaign through mainstream media channels to explain the proposal and gather their opinion.



Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Background

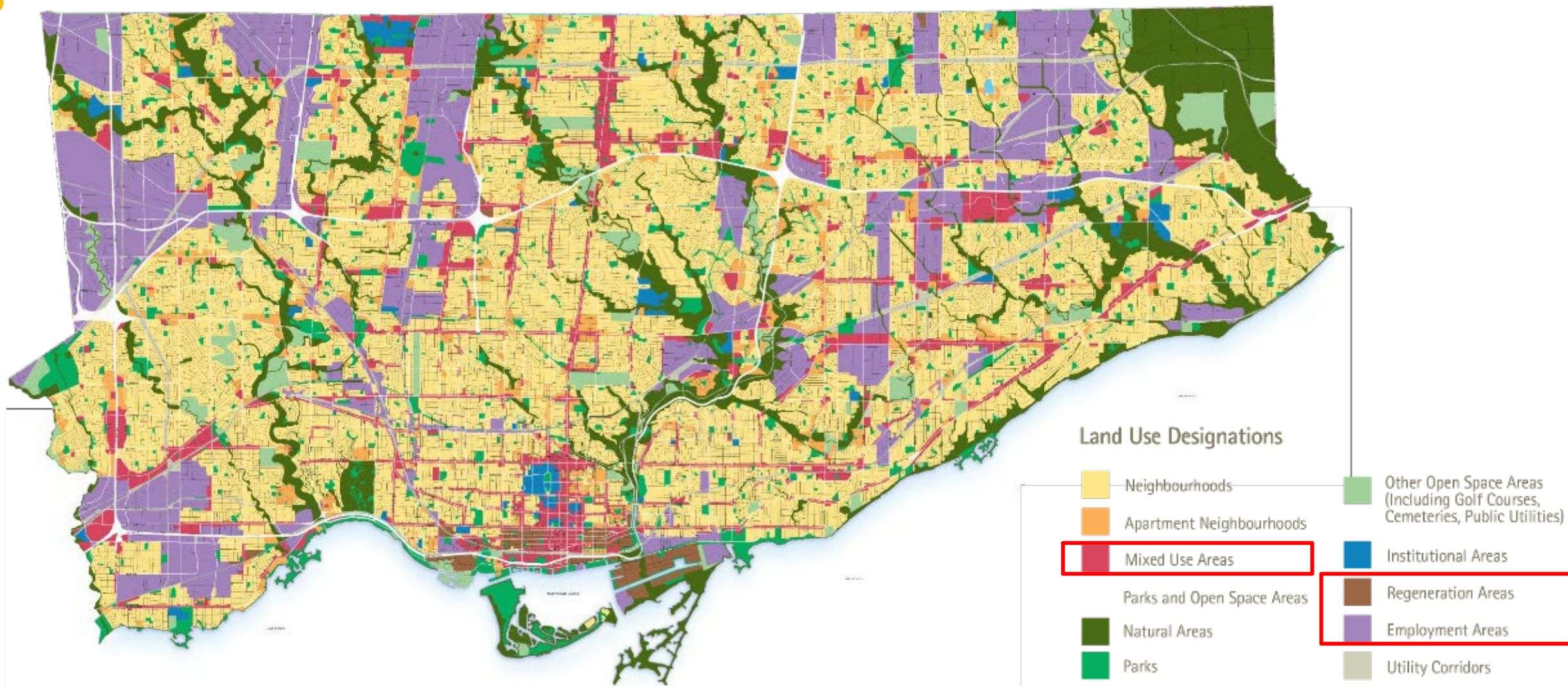


Official Plan: Land Use



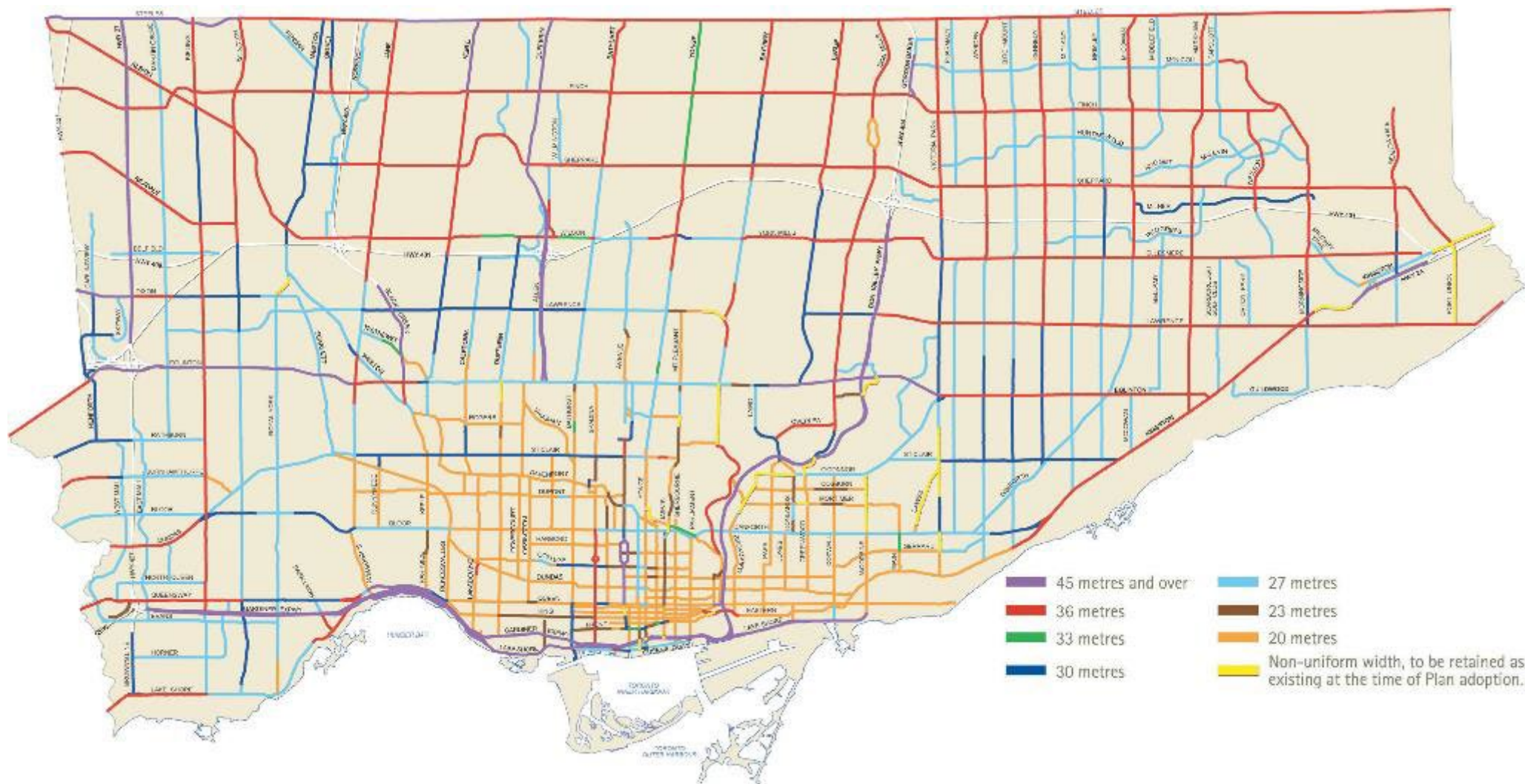


Where Is Business Permitted Today?



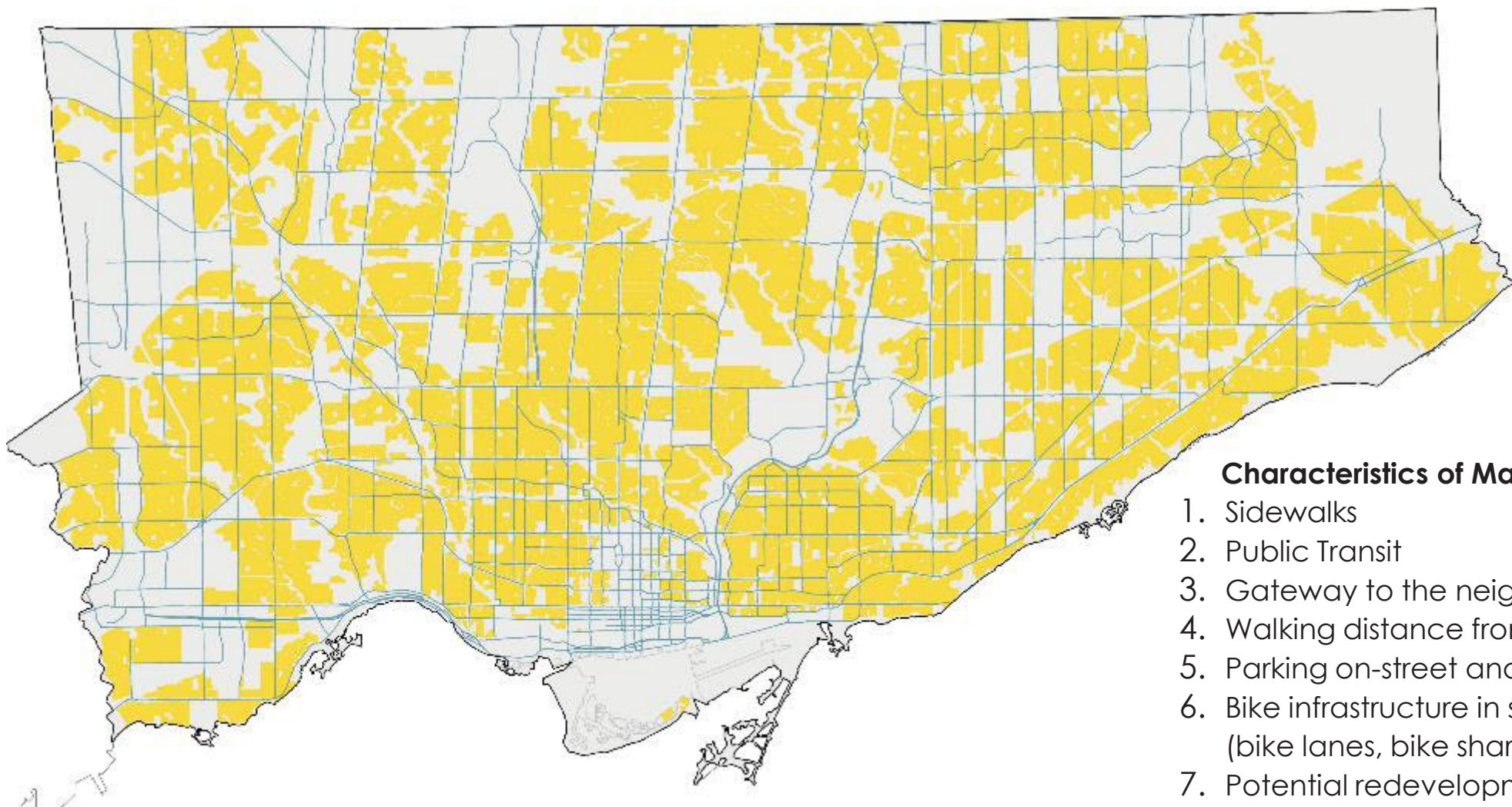


Official Plan: Major Streets





Official Plan: Neighbourhoods and Major Streets



Characteristics of Major Streets

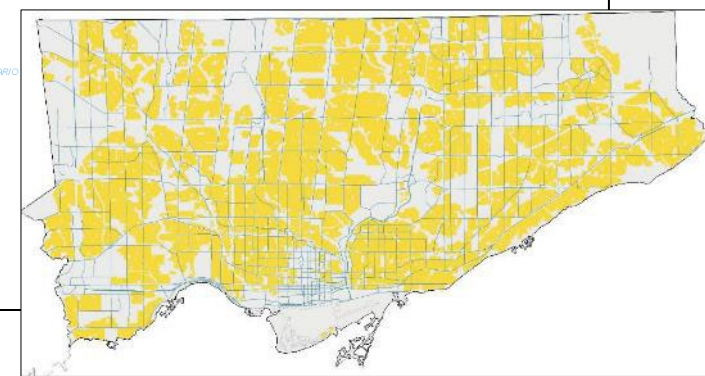
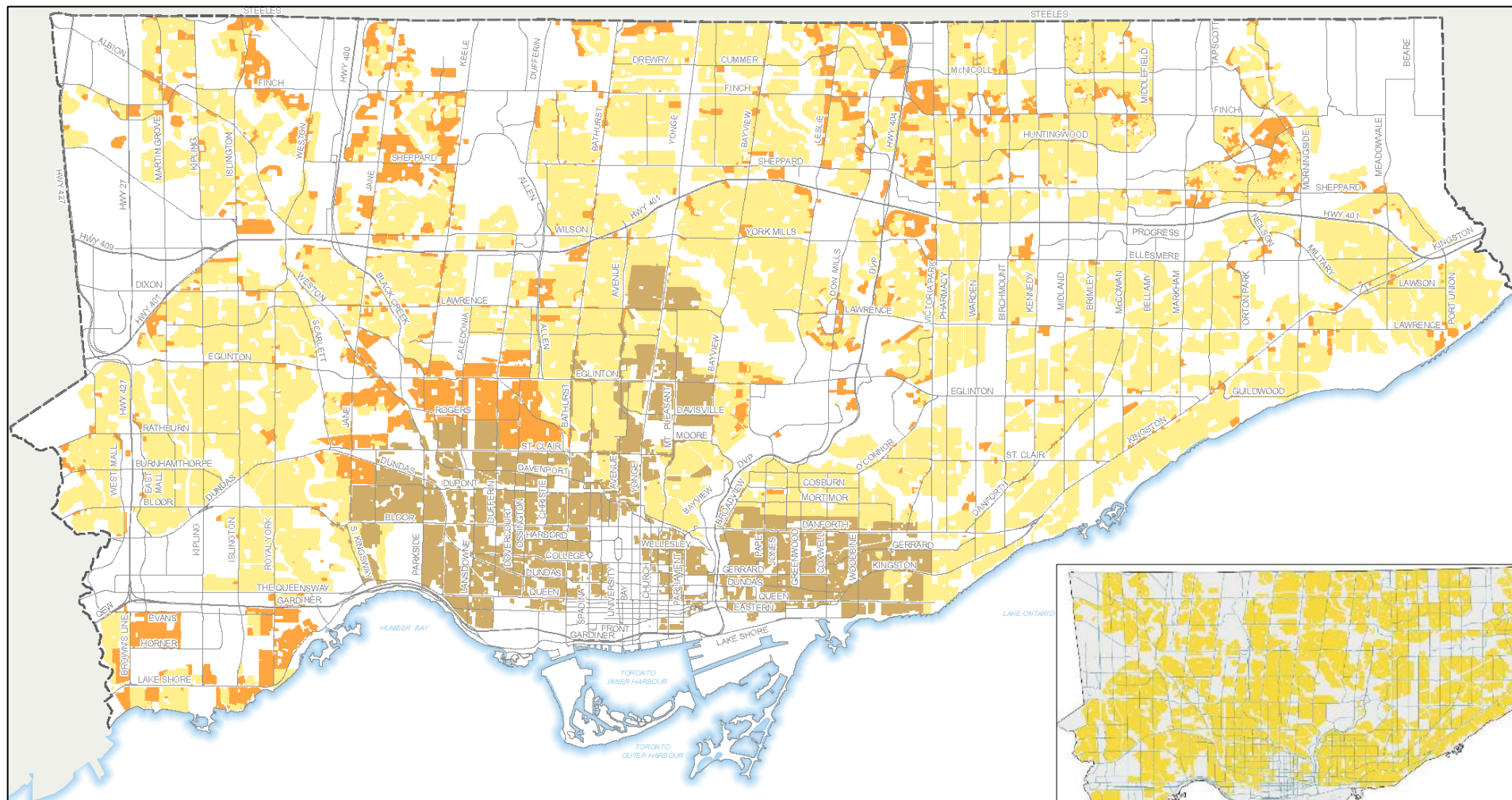
1. Sidewalks
2. Public Transit
3. Gateway to the neighbourhood
4. Walking distance from many homes
5. Parking on-street and in lots in some areas
6. Bike infrastructure in some areas
(bike lanes, bike share, locking posts)
7. Potential redevelopment sites



- RD - Residential Detached
- RS - Residential Semi-detached
- RT - Residential Townhouse
- RM - Residential Multiple
- R - Residential

Residential Zones and Major Streets

The Zoning By-law sets the rules for what you are allowed to do on a site, including **use**.

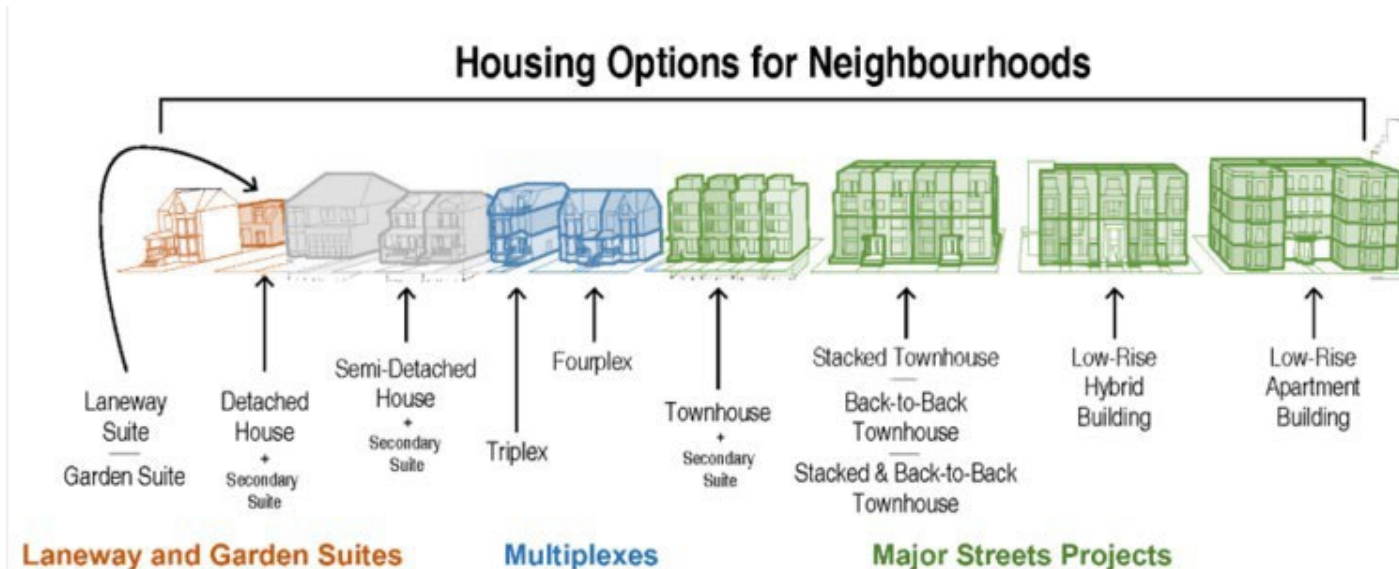




Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON)

- Laneway Housing Approved in 2019, Amendments in 2021
- Garden Suites Approved in 2023
- Multiplex Approved in 2023
- Major Streets Approved in 2024
- Pilot Project Approved in 2024
- Neighbourhood Retail and Services OPA Approved in 2022, ZBA Proposal in 2024, 2025

Supports incremental change over time, adjustments made in response to monitoring.





EHON Initiatives and Neighbourhood Change

New Neighbourhood retail, service and office uses complement and support new housing

Neighbourhood Intensification Bulletin (June 2025)

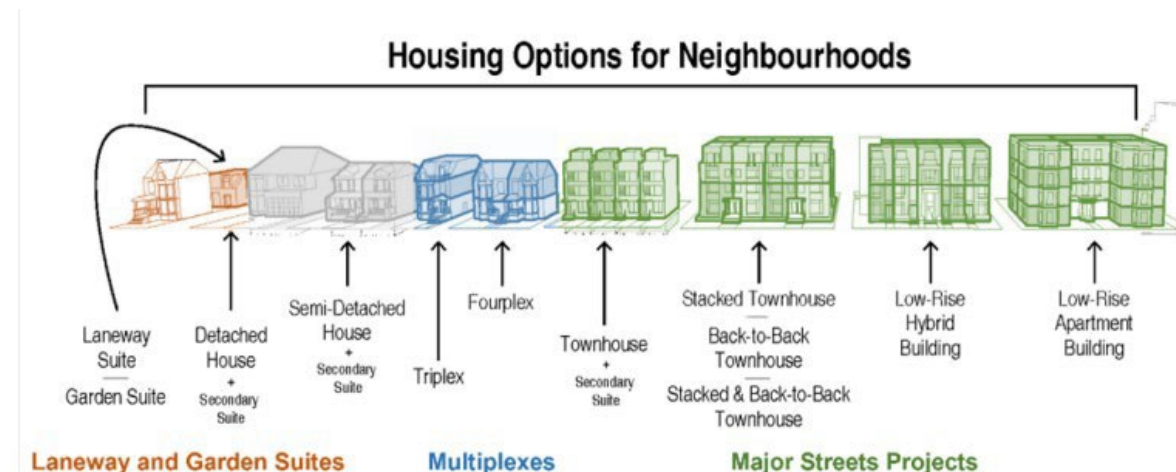
- Neighbourhoods are key to meeting future housing demand - they house 50% of Toronto's population, span one-third of the city's land, and hold 80% of its residential area.
- Could deliver up to 163,785 new homes by 2051, including 54,600 by 2031

Multiplex Monitoring (June 2025)

- New multiplexes differ based on location (e.g. parking provided, correlated to transit)
- Family-sized units and multiple bedrooms

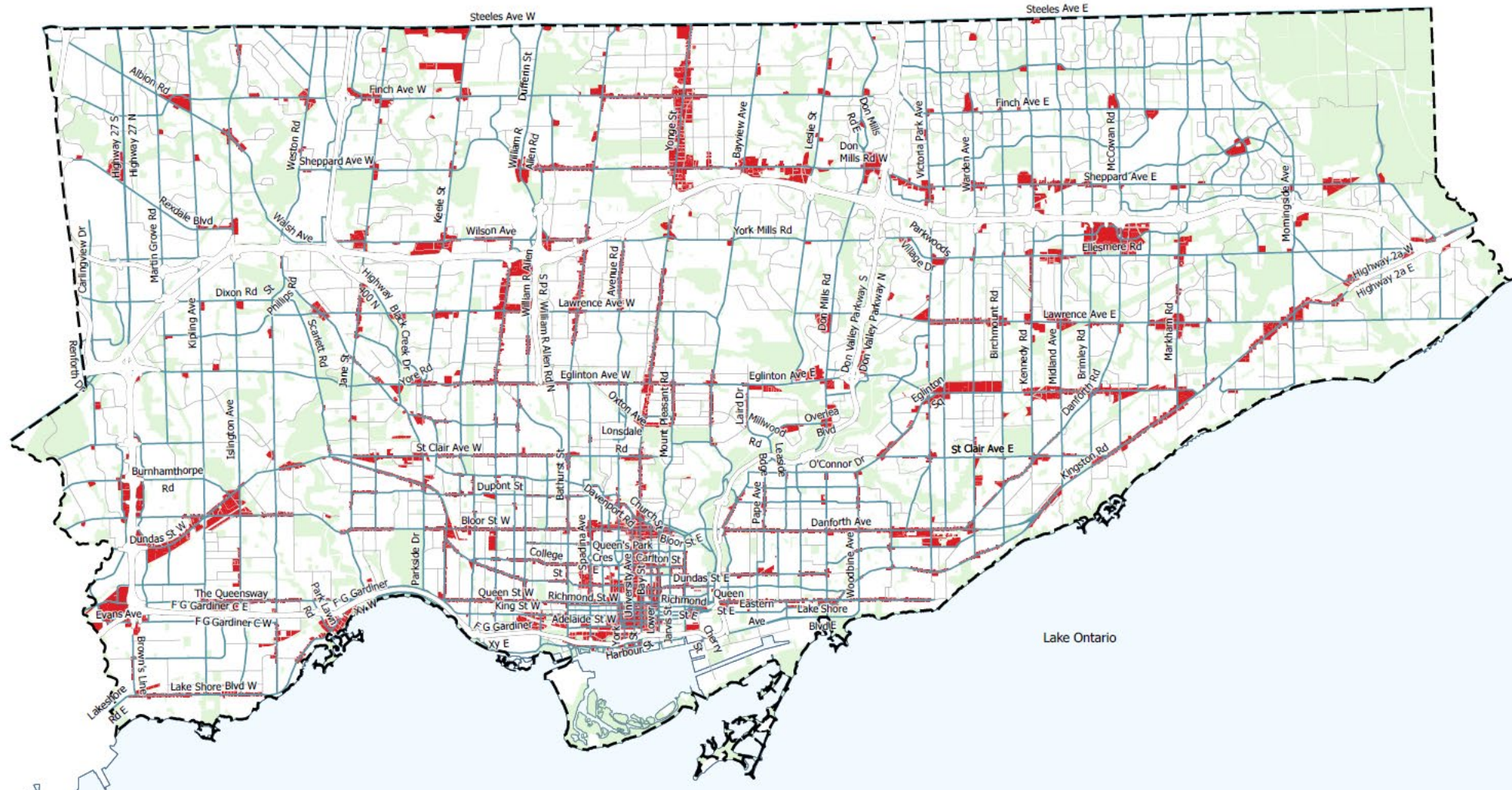
Estimated Uptake to 2051

EHON Initiative	Units	Annual Units
Laneway Suites	9,180	308
Garden Suites	26,388	880
Multiplexes	87,134	2,904
Major Streets	41,083	1,369
Combined Total	163,785	5,460





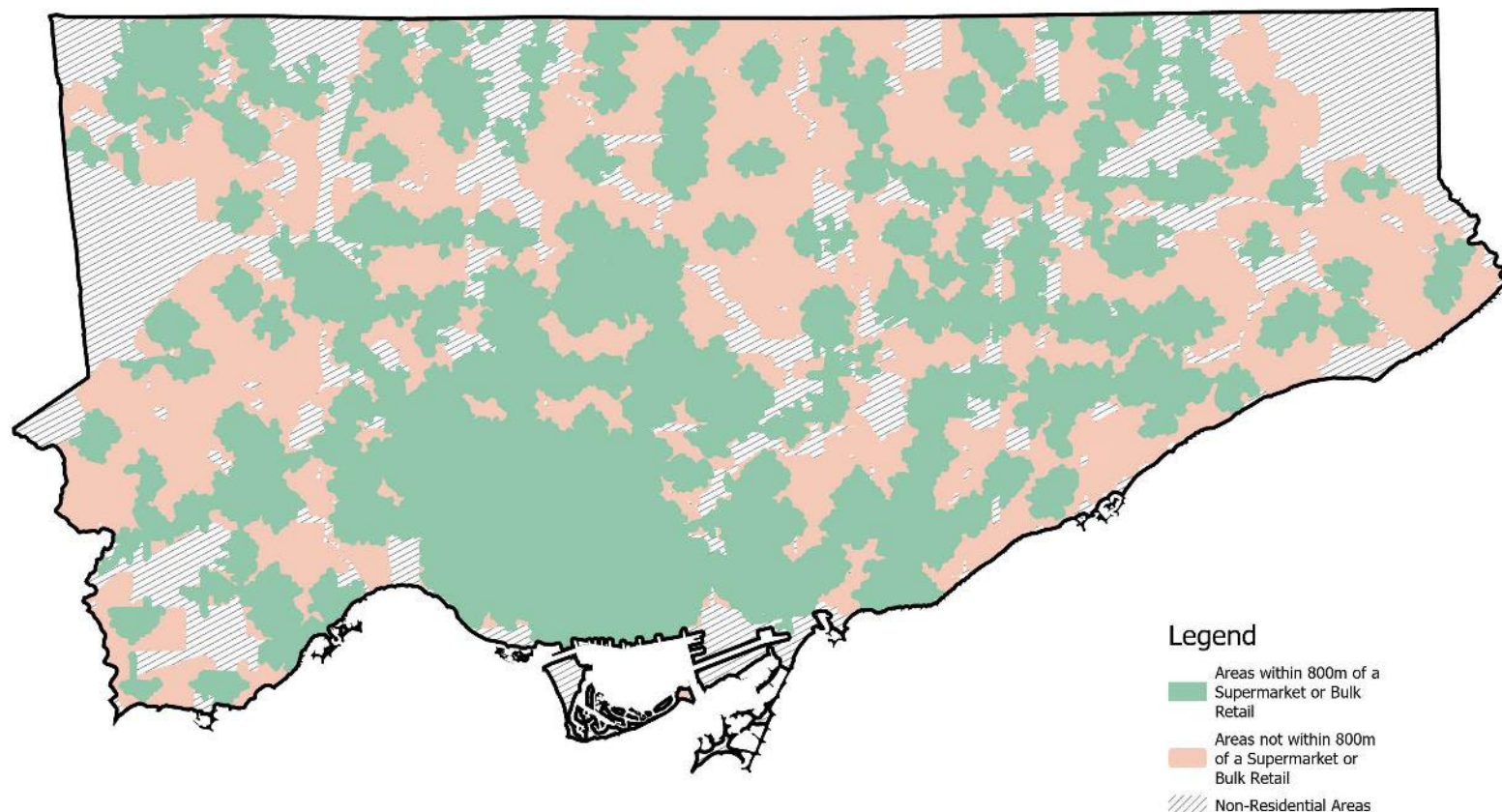
Mixed Use Areas





Food Access: Walkable Access to Supermarkets and Bulk Food Retail

(Shaping Food Access Study)





Plaza Point of View (POV): Strip Plaza Study Observations

- Many plazas have been replaced with residential and mixed use buildings with a net loss of retail, service and office space
- This is anticipated to continue across the city
- Lack of affordable, appropriately sized replacement spaces for small business in new developments or in the neighbourhood
- Support, enhance, mitigate



Strip Plaza on the northeast side of Warden Ave and Lawrence Ave East



Official Plan Policy

Small-scale retail, service and office uses support daily life in Neighbourhoods and encourage complete, connected communities, contributing to amenity, sustainability, equity, diversity and vitality.

Small-scale retail, service and office uses are permitted on properties in Neighbourhoods that legally contained such uses prior to the approval date of this Official Plan.

New small-scale retail, service and office uses may be permitted in Neighbourhoods provided that they:

- a) have **minimal adverse impacts** on adjacent or nearby residences, such as those from noise, parking, delivery and loading, and other impacts from activities associated with the small-scale retail, service and/or office use;
- b) are of a **physical scale and in a location that is compatible** with and integrated into the Neighbourhood; and
- c) serve the needs of residents in an effort to reduce local automobile trips.



Goal: Community Within Reach

- Reducing Car Dependence and Environmental Sustainability: Walking and cycling access
- Flexibility and Diversity: New businesses to meet changing neighbourhood needs, serving new and old residents
- Resilience: Pandemic proved the value of local
- Strengthening the Local Economy: Small Business innovation & incubation
- Complement mixed-use main streets and shopping centres

Toronto:

Neighbourhood residents thank elderly Toronto grocery owners for staying open during COVID-19 pandemic



"Here are some gems in the neighbourhood," says resident of Tina and Kostas Bottis

Desmond Brown - CBC News - Posted: May 04, 2020 5:00 AM ET | Last Updated: May 4, 2020



Kostas and Tina Bottis have kept their small store open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. (Mark Bochsen/CBC)





Neighbourhood Retail Today - Legal Non-Conforming Corner Stores and Cafes



Bodega Henriette – 1801 Gerrard Street East



Willowdale Convenience –
Willowdale and Parkview



Emily Rose Café-
Palmerston Avenue



Rooster Coffee,
Broadview Avenue



Neighbourhood Retail Today – Plazas

(Plaza POV Study)

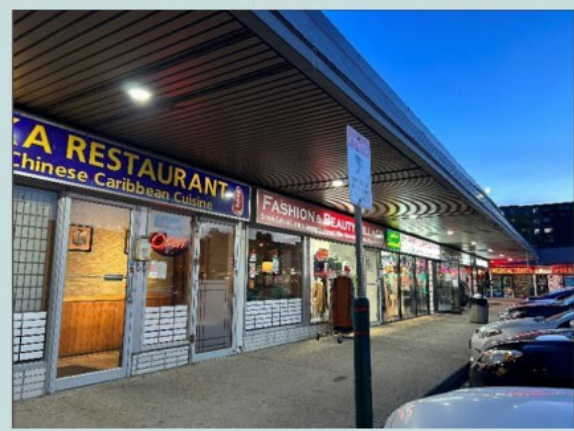
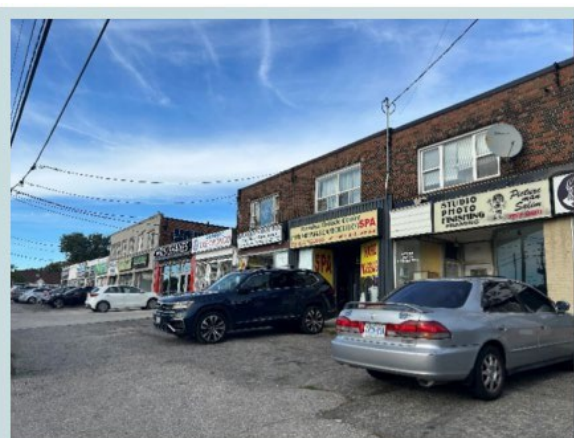


Figure 10 - Typical Strip Plaza Forms on Victoria Park Avenue (top) and Lawrence Avenue East (bottom)



Figure 3.6: Strip Plaza with Variety of Small Business Establishments



Neighbourhood Retail Today - Legal Non-Conforming Retail Strips



L'Amour Café, Attitudes Salon, Broadway Cleaners –
Retail Strip - Mount Pleasant, North of Eglinton



Retail Strip – Millwood and Rumsey, Leaside



Neighbourhood Retail Today

Major Streets – Old Bylaws



South Side of Finch, East of Bathurst



South side of Sheppard, Yonge to Senlac



Rustic Road, York-South Weston



Proposals



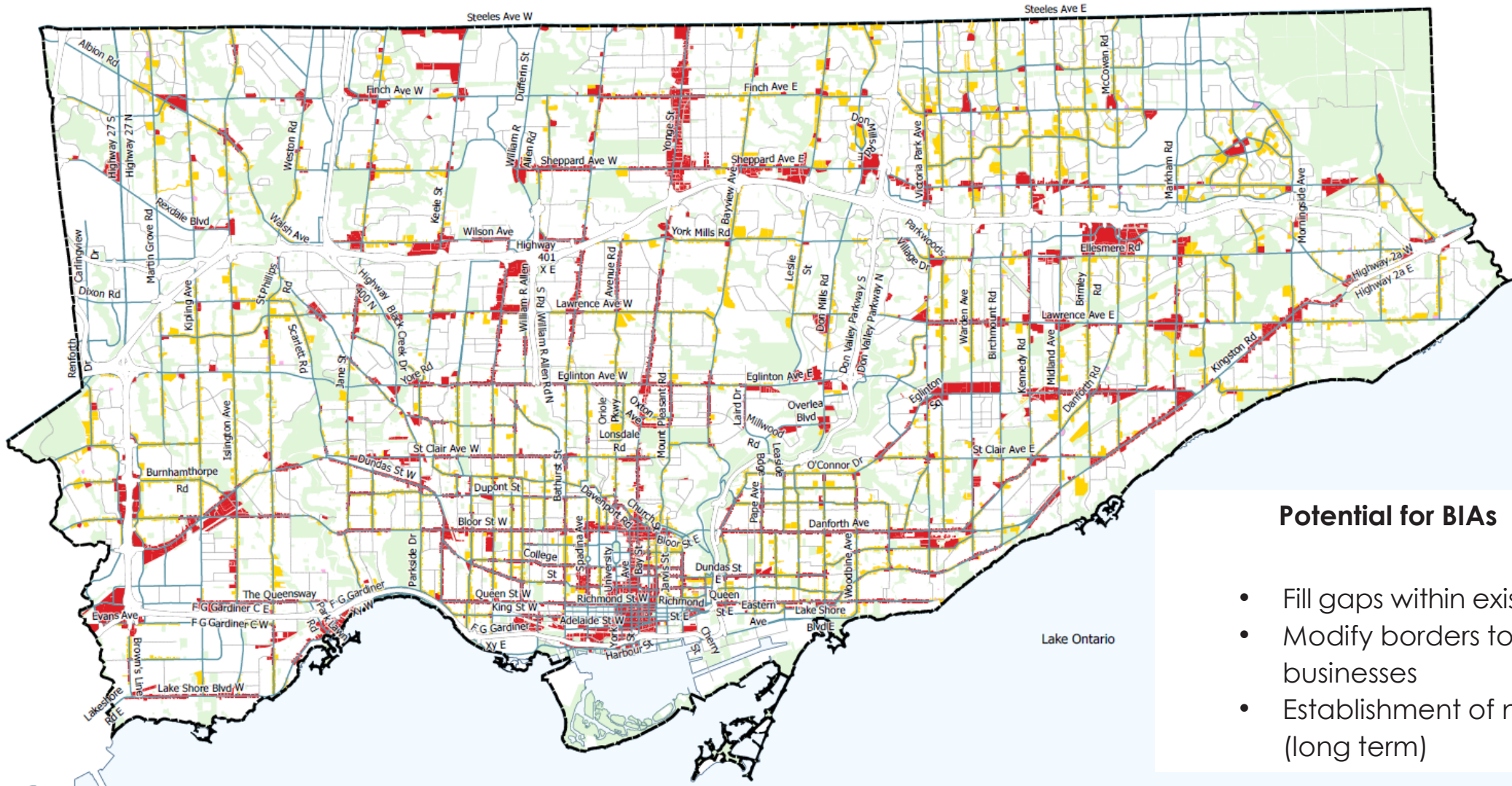
Compatible Locations

- A broad range of uses permitted on Major Streets;
- More limited, neighbourhood focused uses permitted on interior streets;
 - Corner sites
 - Beside existing gathering place (parks, schools, commercial sites); and;
- More flexibility for Home Occupations, including allowing them to operate in ancillary buildings.





Mixed Use Areas and Major Streets Residential Zones



Potential for BIAs

- Fill gaps within existing borders
- Modify borders to include new businesses
- Establishment of new BIAs (long term)



What is Small Scale?

- Buildings should be similar in size and shape to others in the neighborhood
- Size of unit typically resembling the ground floor of a house or a small local store.
- Retail spaces in neighbourhood interiors must be smaller than those typically found on major streets.
- Apartment buildings may accommodate approximately three to four small-scale businesses.
- The maximum size for home-based businesses remains consistent with the current by-law.
- Where allowed, outdoor patios should be limited to a size that accommodates no more than two to three tables.



Fig 4. Potential Massing Model with a retail at the corner of a Major Street





What is Small Scale? – Maximum Size of Commercial Units (No Minimum Size)

Location	Max Floor Area (m2)	Max Floor Area (SF) (Approx)
Patio / Outdoor Display of Goods (Where Permitted)	10 m2	110 SF
Home Occupation	100 m2 or 25% of Total GFA	1080 SF
Neighbourhood Interior Retail Store	110 m2	1200 SF
Major Streets	150 m2	1600 SF
Major Streets – Total Building (Apartment Building)	400 m2	4300 SF



Compatible Uses – Major Streets

- **Groceries and Home Essentials**
(e.g. Grocery Store, Convenience Store, Pharmacy)
- **Other Retail Stores** (e.g. Clothing, Books, Electronics)
- **Dining** (e.g. Coffee Shop, Restaurant or Take-Out)
- **Health Services** (e.g. Doctor, Dentist, Massage, Wellness Clinic)
- **Community and Cultural Space** (e.g. Tutoring, After-school programs, Gym, Art gallery, Music classes)
- **Personal and Pet Services:** (e.g. Cleaners, Barber, Pet grooming but not Veterinarian)
- **Professional Offices** (e.g. Lawyer, Accountant, Therapist, Software Developer, Architect)





Compatible Uses – Interior

- Retail store
- Take-Out Eating Establishment within the store
- Food must be prepared off-site
- *Sit-down Eating Establishment within store
- *Patio



Tiny's – Barton Avenue



Compatible Uses – Home Occupations

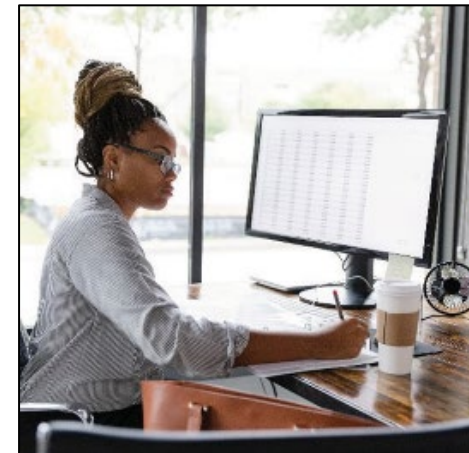
The range of uses permitted to take place in a home would be unchanged.

Proposed changes would create **new permissions** on employees and customers:

- Employees: Permit up to two (plus resident)
- Customers: Allow certain business to see customers and clients:
 - office
 - artist studio
 - service shop
 - custom workshop

Existing permissions allow customers for:

- Education Use
- Health Services
- Specified Personal Services (barber; hairdresser; beautician; dressmaker; seamstress; and tailor)





How to minimize adverse impacts?

- Restrict on-site food preparation on interior streets (Food must be prepared off-site)
- Neighbourhood Interior: Retail Stores Limited to buildings on single lot
- No Music on Patios, Require Privacy Fence
(Neighbourhood Interior: Patios only in Front and Side Yard)
- Ensure proper storage of waste and recyclable materials.
(Added detailed requirements for Ancillary Buildings)
- No minimum parking or loading requirements to avoid attracting cars,
though owners may choose to provide.
- Avoid impactful uses (e.g. vehicle repair, animal shelter, payday loan, warehouse)
- Focus most non-residential uses on the ground floor
- Bylaw enforcement (Property Standards, Noise, Waste)





Additional Concerns Raised

- Potential for disruption from Eating Establishments (e.g. from alcohol service indoors and on patio)
- Potential for Retail Store to be used for Cannabis sales
- Potential for Retail Store to be used as warehouse
- Too Many Potential Locations in Interiors

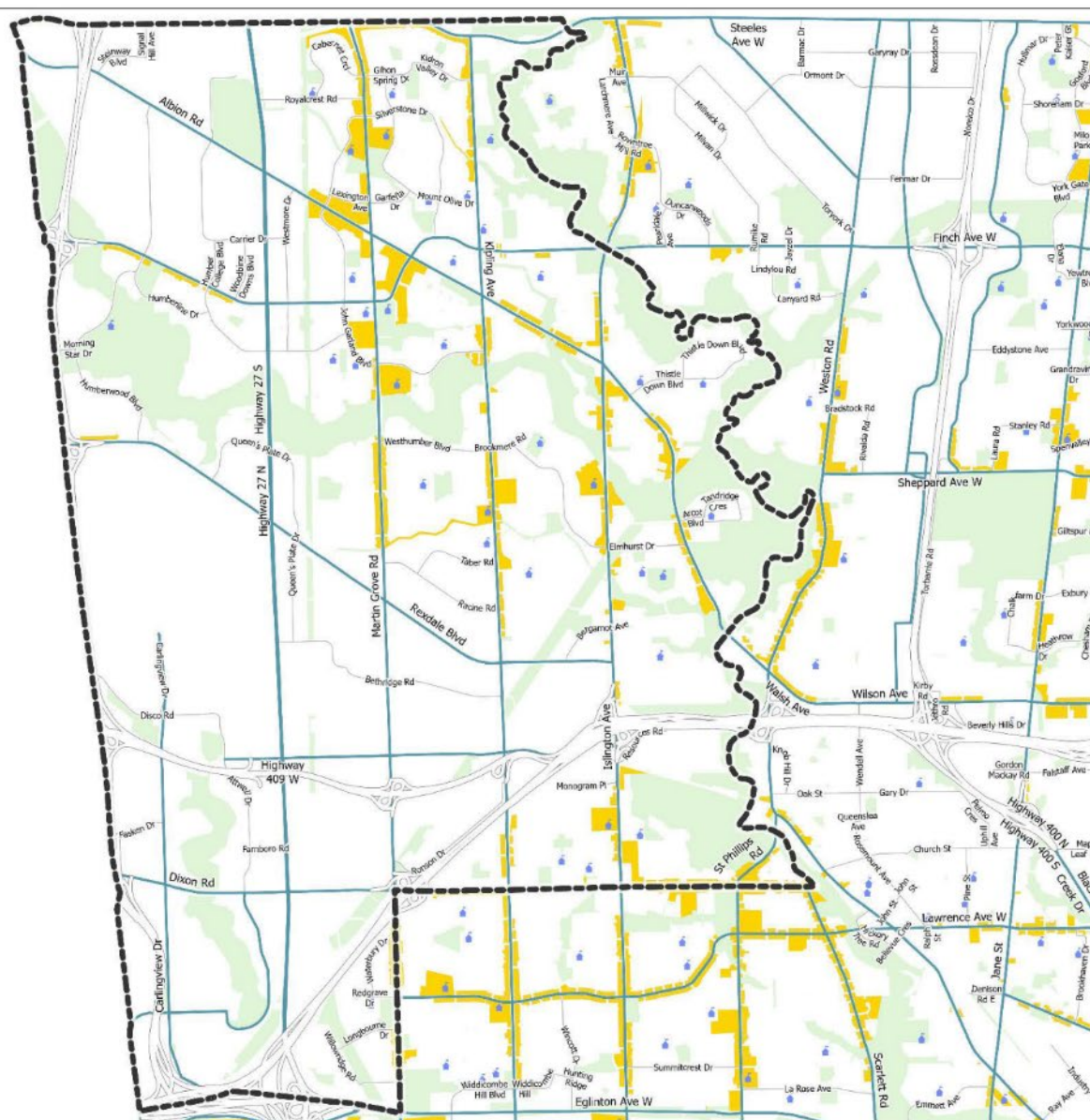


Potential Changes For Consideration

- Neighbourhood Interiors:
 - Limit to Take-out Café and No Patio to avoid alcohol service
 - Geographical limitations on corner sites
(Potentially only on busier interior streets)
- Warehouse: Additional provisions to clarify not permitted
- Collaboration with other City Staff and Province on enforcement, potential for longer-term rule changes



Interior Opportunities - Corners, Parks and Schools – Ward 1



EHON Neighbourhood Retail And Services

Ward: 01 Etobicoke North



- Ward Boundary
- Expressways
- Major Streets
- Primary Interior Streets
- School
- Residentially-Zoned Properties on Major Streets
- Parks
- Lake Ontario

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 KM





Implementation

- Two-year monitoring program
- Ongoing collaboration with City Divisions: MLS, Toronto Building, City Clerk's Office, Finance & Treasury Services and Public Health to inform ongoing work related to the implications of these ZBLAs.
- Support for small business from EDC, including through Small Business Enterprise Centres

The screenshot shows the City of Toronto website's 'New Businesses & Startups' page. The header includes the City of Toronto logo, a search bar, and navigation links for Services & Payments, Community & People, Business & Economy, Explore & Enjoy, and City Government. The main content area features a large image of people working in a modern office space with a 'DMZ' sign. To the right of the image is a 'Contact Information' section for the Toronto Small Business Enterprise Centre, providing a telephone number (416-392-6646), email address (smallbusiness@toronto.ca), and French language service contact (etoronto@toronto.ca). Below this are social media links for BusinessTO on Facebook, X, YouTube, and Instagram. At the bottom, there is a 'Related Information' section and a footer note about getting guidance in person from a small business advisor at one of the Small Business Enterprise Centres.



Project Web Site: www.Toronto.ca/localretail

Neighbourhood Retail & Services

Share Print Translate



We want to hear from you! The City of Toronto is proposing zoning changes to make it easier to open small, local businesses in and around residential neighbourhoods.

[Take the Survey *](#)

Contact Information

Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods
City Hall, East Tower
100 Queen St. W, 12th Floor
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Email: EHON@toronto.ca

Related Information

[Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods](#)

[Major Streets Study](#)

[Official Plan Maps](#)

Learn what's proposed and provide your feedback on **building connected, vibrant communities**.

- **Major Streets:** On [major streets](#), the proposed changes would allow a wide range of options, including small stores, cafes, medical offices, after-school programs, cleaners, barbers and professional offices.
- **Neighbourhood Interior:** In the interior of neighbourhoods, off the major streets, permissions would be limited to a small retail store with the option for a cafe within the store. These would be permitted on corner lots or next to schools, parks or commercial sites.
- **Home-Based Businesses:** Updated permissions would allow home-based businesses (called "home occupations" in the Zoning By-law) to hire up to two employees, operate from detached garages or laneway buildings and, depending on the business, to see clients on-site. This would help more residents start or grow a business from home.
- **Minimizing Adverse Impacts:** The zoning updates are designed to minimize impacts on neighbours by setting clear size limits, requiring garbage to be stored indoors and limiting most businesses to the ground floor.
- **Other By-Laws:** Impact on neighbours is also controlled through various existing city by-laws dealing with things like noise, waste, property standards and patios.
- **Growing Demand:** These changes respond to growing demand for nearby shops and services – particularly as more people work from home and new housing is added to low-rise areas through the City's housing initiatives.
- **Monitoring:** The City will monitor how these changes are used over the next two years and report back with any recommended refinements to support implementation. Multiple divisions will coordinate on this.

Expand All +

Collapse All --



Thank You!

Questions/Comments?

EHON@toronto.ca