



Corporate Report

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DATE: March 12, 2013

TO: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee
Meeting Date: April 2, 2013

FROM: Edward R. Sajecki
Commissioner of Planning and Building

SUBJECT: **East Bloor Corridor Review–Backgrounder and Interim Strategy-
Opportunities for Neighbourhood Revitalization
Ward 3**

RECOMMENDATION: That the report titled “East Bloor Corridor Review–Backgrounder and Interim Strategy-Opportunities for Neighbourhood Revitalization” dated March 12, 2013, from the Commissioner of Planning and Building be received for information and that the findings be used in the review of development applications in the study area.

**REPORT
HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The East Bloor Corridor is an important area for affordable rental housing and is a gateway community for new Canadians;
- There is some opportunity to accommodate infill development as permitted in the Official Plan, which could positively contribute to the revitalization of the area and provide a more cohesive built form;
- Urban Design Guidelines (Interim) have been prepared to assist in the review of development applications and to ensure development contributes positively to the character of the area;

- To promote and ensure reinvestment in the existing buildings and revitalization of the neighbourhood, infill development applications should include a Property Standards Building Audit. Further, the City should investigate potential incentives to encourage property owners to undertake upgrades including securing community benefits under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*; and
- Further investigation is recommended to address issues related to the following: transportation requirements; cultural and social infrastructure; streetscape; and possible community improvement initiatives.

BACKGROUND:

The East Bloor Corridor, generally located between Dixie Road and the Etobicoke Creek, is an important neighbourhood in the City that provides significant affordable housing choices. This, along with the surrounding services and amenities, has led to part of the area becoming a gateway community for new Canadians.

The predominant land use in the corridor is mid-rise and tower apartments along with some townhouse complexes, that were generally developed approximately 40 years ago. The apartment buildings were inspired by the then popular “towers in the park” design, where buildings were situated well beyond sidewalks, leaving generous amounts of room on the property. It was assumed that adults living in these apartments would all have cars which resulted in a significant amount of land dedicated to surface parking. The buildings were intended to appeal to young professionals and young families looking for a more suburban experience. Over time the neighbourhood became increasingly attractive to new immigrants and people looking for affordable housing choices.

As areas like the East Bloor Corridor age and change, concerns are often raised regarding the condition of the buildings and neighbourhood. Due to the age of the development in the East Bloor Corridor, as well as the focus now on intensification as the City continues to urbanize, it is timely to investigate opportunities for reinvesting and revitalizing the neighbourhood.

Attached under separate cover is the *East Bloor Corridor Review - Backgrounder and Interim Strategy, March 2013*, that examines the opportunity for infill development, and the potential for reinvestment and revitalization of the area. This report outlines the key sections and findings from the review.

COMMENTS:**Study Area**

The East Bloor Corridor study area extends for approximately 1.8 km (1.1 miles) along Bloor Street, from west of Dixie Road to the municipal boundary of Etobicoke Creek (see Map 1 in the study, under separate cover). The area encompasses more than 60 land parcels with an average size of approximately 1 hectare (2.5 acres) for a total land area of 84 hectares (208 acres).

Character and Context

The general character of the Corridor is as follows:

- approximately 13,300 people live in the study area;
- much of the area is considered a gateway for new Canadians, with 43% of the residents having immigrated between 2001 and 2006;
- residents have access to a wide range of retail, personal service and community infrastructure located within, or in proximity, to the study area;
- there is a significant concentration of apartment buildings with approximately 63% of properties containing buildings that are 5 storeys or more in height; and
- most of the properties are rental buildings with an overall vacancy rate of 1.2%, which is below the City average and also below what is often considered a balanced market of 3.0%.

Key Findings

Key findings include the following:

- a preliminary assessment suggests that many sites have constraints that would limit the extent to which additional development can occur. There are properties along the corridor that have some potential for infill, depending on the specific proposal. The remaining residential sites have either limited infill potential or are significantly constrained;
- in addition to infill on apartment sites, the Official Plan permits residential development on the two commercial plazas and there are four detached houses on Dixie Road designated for medium density development;
- although the Official Plan limits infill on apartment sites to medium density uses (e.g. townhouses), there may be opportunities to allow for additional apartment development which could positively contribute to the area. Given the different characteristics of each property, a site specific review as part of an Official Plan Amendment is the recommended approach;
- the Official Plan contains policies that require infill development to address a range of issues (e.g. transition, respecting scale and character, etc.) to be reviewed when considering infill applications. In addition, as a condition of development on sites that have existing apartment buildings, the site in its entirety must meet, amongst other matters, current site plan and landscaping requirements and property standards;
- from an urban design perspective, the elements that define the study area are:
 - the type of buildings such as midrise, towers and townhouses;
 - no discernible pattern to the siting, location and placement of buildings on apartment sites;

- the location and character of landscaped open space that wraps frontages and side yards of apartment buildings;
 - the type and mix of landscape materials and species generally consisting of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubbery on many apartment sites; and
 - the siting and location of midrise, tall towers and lower apartment buildings in proximity to Bloor Street, with some lower forms transitioning out towards the surrounding low-rise residential areas.
- recognizing that infill opportunities exist in the area, Urban Design Guidelines (Interim) are necessary to ensure the character defining features are protected and elements such as compatibility, transition and enhancement are considered;
- due to the age of the apartment stock, infill development on existing high density residential sites should include the submission of a Property Standards Building Audit to address a range of issues including, but not limited to: graffiti removal; structural soundness; and maintenance of lighting, heating, plumbing, mechanical systems, elevating devices, grass and landscaped areas in reasonable condition;
- property owners should be encouraged to undertake additional upgrades to their properties relating to items such as: green development standards; community amenities; safety audits; and, improved pedestrian infrastructure. These additional upgrades may require incentives or partnerships which need to be further examined; and
- for infill development, the opportunity may exist for community benefits to be secured under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

Study Conclusions and Recommendations

The study examines the existing characteristics and context of the East Bloor Corridor. It reviews the planning framework and opportunities for investment that would positively contribute to the area. A general assessment of potential infill locations has been undertaken and

interim urban design guidelines prepared. Conclusions of the review are:

- the area can benefit from sensitive infill as permitted in the Official Plan. Opportunities for infill are generally distributed around three areas along the 1.8 km (1.1 miles) corridor (see Section 5.2 and Map 5 in the study, under separate cover). There may be a few opportunities where development greater than permitted in the Official Plan may be appropriate, however, those cases should be reviewed on a site specific basis;
- the Official Plan includes policies that provide direction on intensification and infill development and, where appropriate, allows the City to require additional studies from applicants to assess a proposed development's impacts on traffic and community infrastructure;
- Urban Design Guidelines (Interim) have been prepared to assist in the review of applications, and through the Site Plan Approval process, any additional development would be evaluated to ensure it contributes positively to the area and appropriately reflects a cohesive built form; and
- mature trees along Bloor Street have created a strong presence in the corridor; this should be maintained and supplemented with significantly more green landscaping. It is proposed that the corridor evolve into a special "Tree District";
- the study recommends a number of initiatives to promote and ensure reinvestment in the existing apartment buildings and neighbourhood, such as:
 - requiring a Property Standards Building Audit;
 - encouraging further building and property upgrades (e.g. green development standards); and,
 - securing community benefits in appropriate situations, through Section 37 of the *Planning Act* .

These findings and recommendations provide the basis for reviewing applications and serve as the starting point for a second phase of the study that will include:

- transportation review: examine current transportation issues in the area, including potential changes to active transportation (e.g. potential cycling lanes);
- cultural and social infrastructure review: examine potential initiatives that can help strengthen the community (e.g. public art, additional support services);
- streetscape improvements: research and identify appropriate public realm strategies that can improve the area; and
- community improvement initiatives: examine the policy tools available to municipalities to encourage property owners to improve buildings and investigate experiences in Toronto with the Tower Renewal program.

In addition, where appropriate, further work should include a public engagement component, to identify and understand concerns as well as potentially generate ideas for improvement. As a result of any future work, it may be necessary to review the Official Plan and provide additional policies and/or guidelines.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The East Bloor Corridor Review responds to the following pillars of the Strategic Plan:

Move – setting the stage for considering how reinvestment, infill and city initiatives in the corridor, can enhance connections and create significant, positive impacts as it relates to the manner people move about the area (e.g. enhancing connections to a well-served transit stop).

Belong – recognizing the contribution the area can play in creating a City that thrives on its social and cultural diversity. Provision of affordable housing and convenient access to services, which nurture this cultural diversity, are an important aspect to maintain.

Connect – examining intensification and revitalization within the study area and how it can help contribute to creating a city which is vibrant with safe neighbourhoods and great public spaces.

Living Green – recognizing that revitalization in the study area offers the opportunity to promote responsible stewardship through conservation, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Not Applicable

CONCLUSION: The East Bloor Corridor is an older high density residential neighbourhood that plays an important role as a location for affordable housing and a gateway community for new Canadians. It is also an aging neighbourhood with potential development pressures. As such, the East Bloor Corridor Review was undertaken to investigate opportunities to revitalize and reinvest in the area, with specific attention to infill development.

The study concludes that there is some opportunity to accommodate infill development which in turn could benefit the area. The Official Plan provides direction on infill and allows the City to require studies to assess impacts from a specific development. To promote the positive contributions revitalization can provide to the community, the study makes a number of additional recommendations related to urban design guidelines, property standards, and community benefits from Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

Revitalizing older high density residential neighbourhoods, such as the East Bloor Corridor, is increasingly an important issue as the housing stock ages. This study provides background information and an interim strategy for reviewing applications and addressing issues related to the potential for reinvestment and revitalization of the area. It is recognized that additional research and further investigation is required in Phase 2 of this review.

ATTACHMENTS: Under Separate Cover:
East Bloor Corridor Review - Backgrounder and Interim Strategy

Edward R. Sajecki
Commissioner of Planning and Building

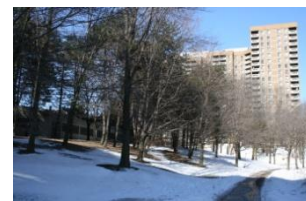
Prepared By: Paul Stewart, Policy Planner

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East Bloor Corridor Review

Backgrounder and Interim Strategy

March 2013



East Bloor Corridor Review

1.0 Introduction and Purpose.....	1
1.1 Study area.....	1
2.0 Understanding Character and Context	3
2.1 Selected Demographic Characteristics.....	3
2.2 Community Infrastructure.....	3
2.3 East Bloor Residential Buildings.....	5
2.4 Ownership, Vacancy & Rental Rates.....	5
2.5 Setting the Context.....	8
2.6 Mississauga's Towers In The Park	9
3.0 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats	10
4.0 Planning Framework.....	11
4.1 Strategic Plan	11
4.2 Official Plan	11
4.2.1 Direct Growth	11
4.2.2 Value the Environment	12
4.2.3 Complete Communities	12
4.2.4 Multi-modal City	12
4.2.5 Build a Desirable Urban Form.....	12
4.2.6 Land Use Policies	13
4.2.7 Other Official Plan Policies	16
4.3 Zoning By-law.....	16

5.0 Analysis Of Intensification Potential	18
5.1 Evaluation Criteria	18
5.2 Infill Findings	20
 6.0 Summary of Findings: Character, Planning Framework, Intensification Analysis	23
 7.0 Urban Design Strategy	24
7.1 Overview	24
7.2 Approach to Urban Design Strategy.....	25
7.3 Applying the Urban Design Guidelines	27
7.4 Urban Design Analysis	28
7.5 Streets, Blocks, Access and Walkability	29
7.6 Lot Fabric, Pattern, Size and Character	31
7.7 Building Typology and Form	32
7.8 Height Patterns & Transition.....	34
7.9 Building location, Siting and Orientation.....	35
7.10 Corridor Architectural Character	37
7.11 Landscape Open Space.....	39
7.11.1 Landscape Treatments within Apartment Sites.....	40
7.12 Streetscape and the Public Realm	43
7.13 Summary - Urban Design Strategy.....	46
 8.0 Revitalizing Existing Apartment Buildings and Neighbourhoods.....	48
 9.0 Conclusion & Issues for Further Review	50

East Bloor Corridor Review:

Backgrounder & Interim Strategy

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

Development along Bloor Street between Dixie Road and the Etobicoke Creek generally occurred approximately 40 years ago and consists of apartment buildings and townhouse complexes. The area is beginning to show its age, development pressures are starting, and with the current emphasis on intensification, requires an examination of the potential for infill development, opportunities for reinvestment and the impact on the existing community.

The purpose of this study is to:

- understand the existing characteristics and context of the area;
- review the planning framework for intensification;
- assess potential infill opportunities;
- provide information to assist in the review of development applications;
- prepare interim urban design guidelines to ensure new development contributes positively to the character of the area;
- identify opportunities for revitalization and reinvestment; and
- identify issues that require further study.

1.1 Study Area

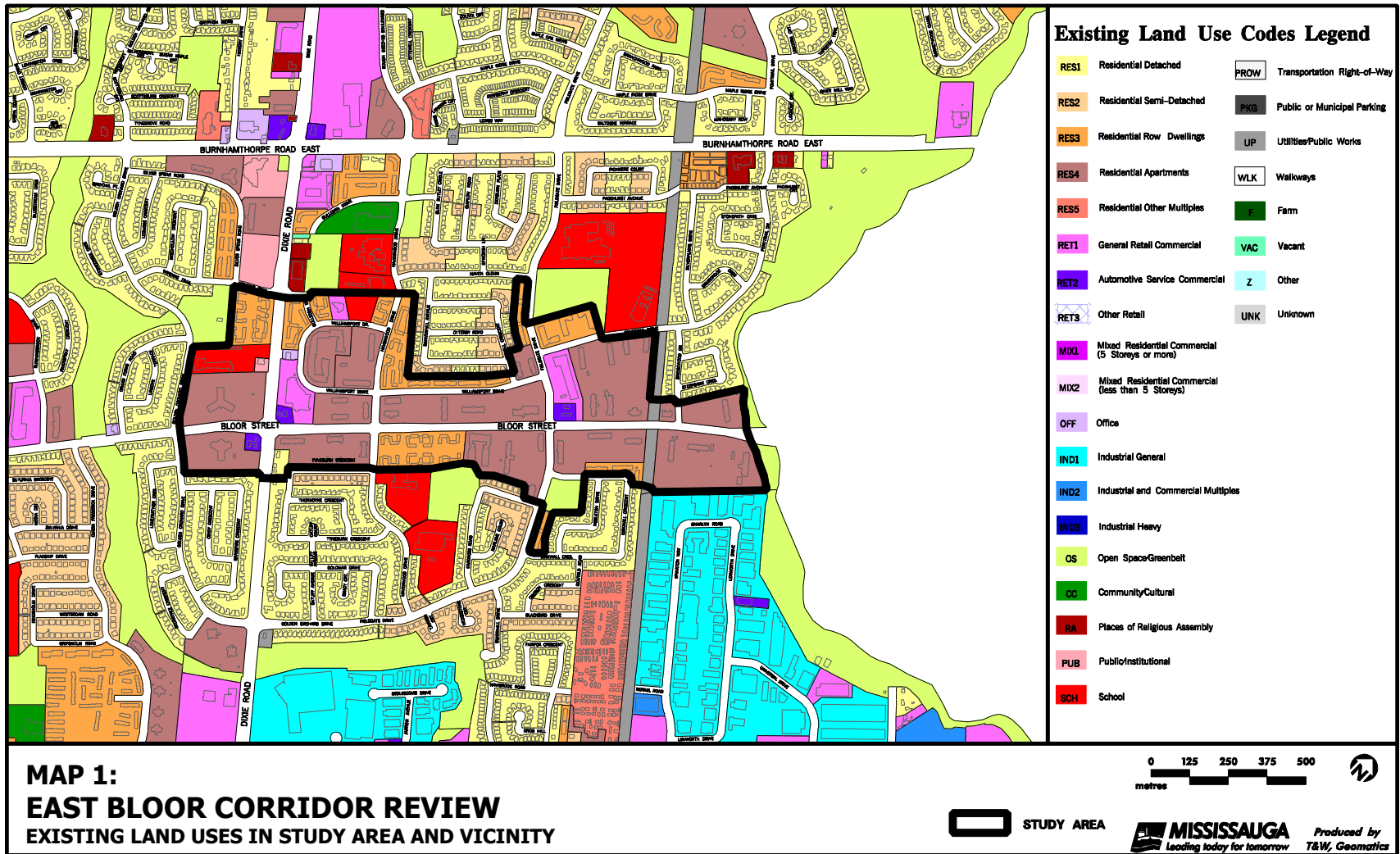
The East Bloor Corridor study area is located in Applewood, named after the apple farms that previously occupied these lands. Much of this community was developed in the 1960s and 1970s.

The study area contains a significant concentration of townhouse complexes and apartment buildings, located on the north and south side of Bloor Street, from west of Dixie Road, easterly to the municipal boundary of Etobicoke Creek (see Map 1). The study area is approximately 1.8 km (1.1 miles) in length, extending between 100 and 200 metres (328 and 656 feet) south of Bloor Street and between 150 and 400 metres (492 and 1,312 feet) north of Bloor Street. The total gross land area (including public roads) is approximately 84 hectares (208 acres).

With a population of approximately 13,300 persons, the area contains a significant concentration of population (e.g. more people live in the study area than in many planned community nodes in the City). In addition to residential uses, the study area includes neighbourhood-oriented shopping, schools and parks (see Map 1).

There are more than 60 land parcels in the study area. Properties range in size from less than 0.1 hectare (0.2 acres) to more than 4 hectares (10 acres) with an average of approximately 1 hectare (2.5 acres).

Surrounding land uses are predominantly detached and semi-detached residential subdivisions, creek ravine, schools and a business area.



2.0 Understanding Character and Context

Understanding the general character and context helps inform the approach for infill and redevelopment. This section provides a summary of selected characteristics related to demographics, community infrastructure, built form, ownership, vacancy and rental rates. In addition, a brief discussion on the historical development of higher density residential areas is provided.

2.1 Selected Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 and Figure 1 indicate that the area contains a greater percentage of immigrants and visible minorities compared to figures for the City. Although demographic statistics are not available for the study area as a whole, using information for a sub-area (roughly defined by north of Bloor, south of Ponytrail/Willmsport Drive, east of Dixie and west of Bridgewood Drive), the population includes:

- 71% immigrants (vs. 51% for the City);
- 43% immigrated between 2001 and 2006 (vs. 22% for the City);
- 66% are visible minorities (vs. 49% for the City); and,
- 47% of households earn less than \$40,000 a year (vs. 24% for the City).

The above statistics are from the 2006 Census undertaken by Statistics Canada which defines “immigrants” as people who have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. The term “visible minority” is defined as people who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.

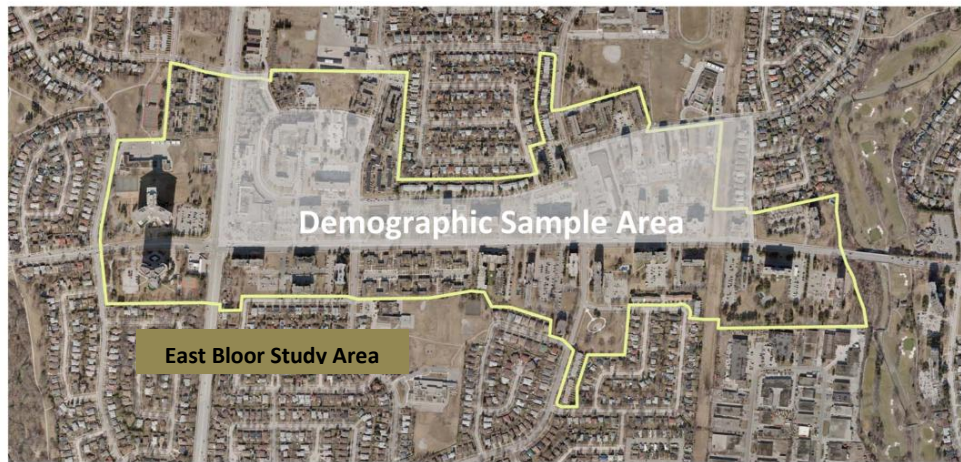
2.2 Community Infrastructure

Residents have access to a wide range of retail and personal services. There are two neighbourhood plazas which serve the day-to-day needs of residents. In proximity, there are a number of schools, the Burnhamthorpe Library, Burnhamthorpe Community Centre, and Region of Peel Learn Play Care Centre. As well, the East Bloor Neighbourhood Centre provides services and programs to meet the needs of the community including: employment (e.g. job search), newcomer (e.g. English classes), family (e.g. senior support programs), and community (e.g. landlord and tenant conflict resolution).

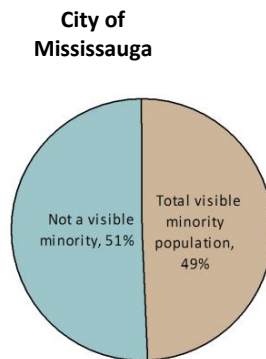
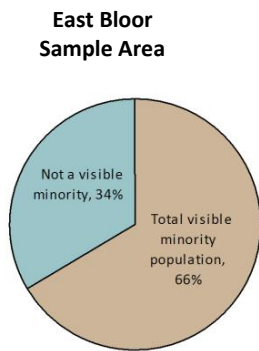
Interviews with service providers indicate that the area is as a gateway for new immigrants. Residents use the services available to get established in the community and the main reason people leave, is the opportunity of home ownership.

Table 1: East Bloor Sample Area – Income Characteristics

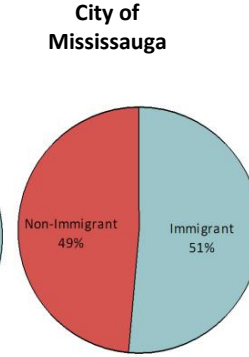
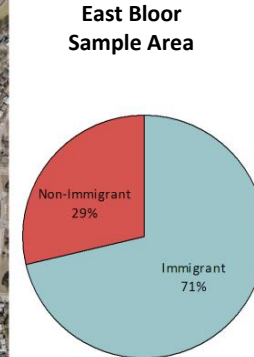
	East Bloor Sample Area	City of Mississauga
Average Household Income	\$49,647	\$88,162
Prevalence of low income	30%	14%
Percentage of Household earning less than \$20,000 /yr	16%	9%
Percentage of Households earning less than \$40,000 / yr	47%	24%
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006		



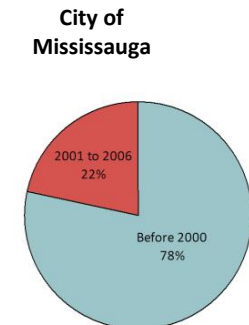
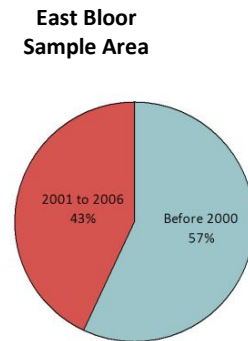
Visible Minority



Immigration



Period of Immigration



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Figure 1: East Bloor Corridor Review – Selected Demographic Characteristics.

2.3 East Bloor Residential Buildings

The study area contains approximately 4,800 residential units distributed amongst 54 residential properties. Approximately 63% of the properties (representing 80% of all units) contain buildings that are 5 or more storeys (see Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2: East Bloor study area Building Typology		
Height	Properties&Units	General Description
15+ storeys	2 properties 742 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 and 27 storeys built in “Y” configuration - typical “tower in the park” example with combination of underground and surface parking, with outdoor amenity space (tennis courts) and significant landscaping
5 to 14 storeys	32 properties 3099 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - average height is 9 storeys, taller buildings tend to locate in eastern half of the study area (e.g. 14 storey buildings located between hydro corridor and Etobicoke Creek) - sites represent a modified “tower in the park” development form where many properties include surface and underground parking, along with open space (although properties are smaller)
1 to 4 storeys	20 properties 1,002 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - majority of buildings are either 2 storeys or 4 storeys in height - buildings typically following one of two types: (a) row-townhouse development with parking in front of each unit or (b) townhouses built in a courtyard format with combination of surface and underground parking - typically this built form represents a transition between higher to lower density development (i.e. parks, schools, low density residential development)
Total	54 properties 4,843 units	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban Design Guidelines provide greater discussion of built form - Properties can have more than one building; however, within this study area buildings on the same property tend to have the same height. 		

2.4 Ownership, Vacancy & Rental Rates

Most of the residential properties (over 70%) are rental buildings (includes townhouses and apartment buildings). The two buildings at the northwest and southwest corners of Bloor Street and Dixie Road (which are 26 and 27 storeys, respectively) are condominiums and account for 742 units or 15% of existing units.

Other buildings under condominium ownership include: three properties at the southwest corner of Bloor Street and Fieldgate Drive; one property situated on the north side of Bloor Street between Fieldgate Drive and Havenwood Drive; two properties on Williamsport Drive; one property on Fieldgate Drive; and, one property on Kirkwall Crescent (see Map 2).

The vacancy rate for rental buildings was 1.2% (Oct 2011), which is below the City average of 1.4% and below what is considered a balanced market rate of 3%.

The average rent for apartment and townhouse units was \$1,046 per month, which is below the City average of \$1,094. Although rental rates are not available for condominiums, it is noted that in Peel (which is the only geographical level where information is published) units in rental apartment buildings tend to be more affordable than rental units in condominiums. In Peel the average rent for a condominium unit was \$1,472 vs. \$1,046.



Figure 2: East Bloor Corridor Review – Building heights in study area



2.5 Setting the Context

To understand the built form context, it is important to consider the history behind the development of apartments in this neighbourhood. The post-war years and the rise of personal automobile use, saw the rapid development of the suburbs throughout North America. The earliest suburbs in the Toronto area consisted of small detached homes built in the bungalow style, with split levels and larger two-storey homes emerging during later decades.

The post-war years also saw the rise of apartment style housing, representing an earlier planning model and different kind of thinking around 'complete communities'. It was intended through these developments, that neighbourhoods would have access to parks, schools, places of worship and commercial shopping centres.

New neighbourhoods and municipalities outside of Toronto experienced significant high-rise apartment building construction, as builders embraced the "towers in the park" design, invented by Le Corbusier (see Figure 3). The towers were built well beyond the sidewalks, leaving generous amounts of room on the property for park-like lawns, trees, surface parking and other landscaping features. Architecturally, they were simple, brick-clad high-rise buildings, having rectangular footprints and massing, with slab like appearances. As products of their time, embracing progress and modernity, these buildings have little ornamentation other than repeating balconies and banks of windows to highlight individual apartment units both vertically and horizontally.

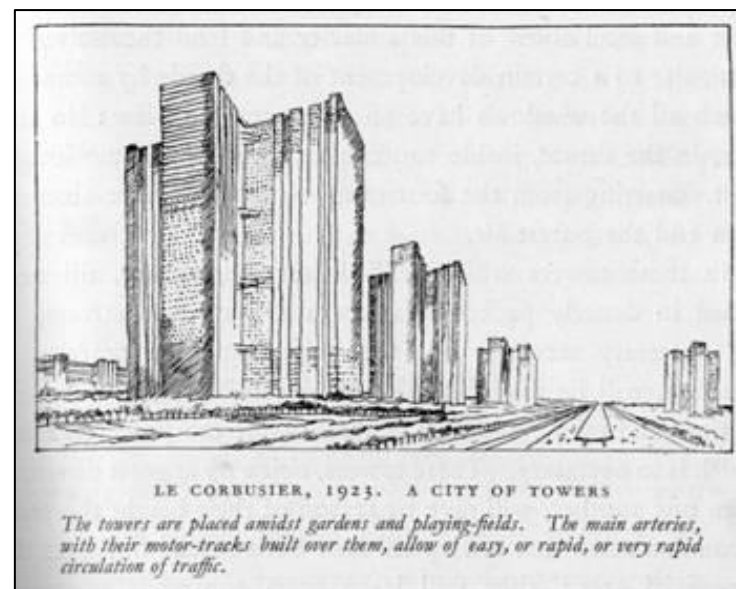


Figure 3: As a contemporary planning model, the Tower in the Park was born out of a utopian vision in the early 20th century, developed by Le Corbusier, a pioneer of the Modern Movement of Architecture. Source of pictures: Google Images

The form of these new neighbourhoods was intended to be different from the compact urban character of the city, as buildings and uses were fairly dispersed and reflected the assumption that every adult would have possession of a personal car. In the 1960s and 1970s, this kind of housing would attract young professionals and young families. In contrast to that vision, the reality is that these neighbourhoods today, primarily serve a much greater diversity, including new Canadians and lower-income residents. As such, with a decrease in car ownership in these neighbourhoods, there tends to be a greater dependency on transit and walking for daily trips according to recent studies.

The above discussion incorporates information from the article “Toronto’s Post-war Towers Enabling Positive Change”, by Elise Hug, Graeme Stewart, Jason Thorne, published in the Ontario Planning Journal, Jan/Feb 2013 Vol 23.No.1.

2.6 Mississauga’s Towers In The Park

As Canada’s sixth largest city, Mississauga has examples of development that incorporates aspects of the “tower in the park” design. The best examples can be found in the *Mississauga Valleys* located in the southeast quadrant of Burnhamthorpe Road East and Hurontario Street. This area exhibits significantly tall slab buildings with large setbacks and generous separation distances between towers. A great amount of open space, lawns and treed landscapes also envelopes these developments.

The East Bloor Corridor is also representative of the “tower in the park” model, but comparatively speaking, is somewhat lower in scale, and appears spatially ‘tighter’. In addition, there are a variety of building types, more rental tenure, and less regimented siting

and orientation of buildings when compared to other precedents in Mississauga and the Greater Toronto Area (see Figure 4).

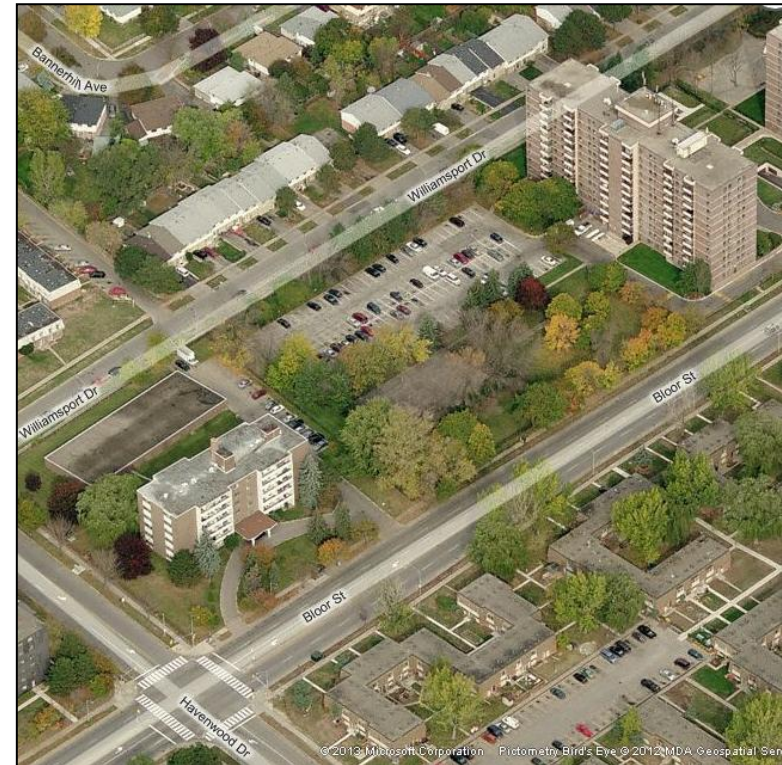


Figure 4: The East Bloor neighbourhood setting was primarily established in the 1960s and 1970s and provided generous amounts of room for landscaping and surface parking. Townhouses often formed a transition between apartment buildings and single detached dwellings. Source: Google Earthpro.

3.0 Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats For Intensification

To gain a better understanding of the community as a location for future intensification, a high level analysis of the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) was undertaken (see Table 3). This analysis takes into consideration the character and context described in previous sections, staff observations from field visits and discussions with service providers. A more detailed analysis, as it relates to urban design was undertaken as part of the Urban Design Analysis and Interim Guidelines.

Based on the SWOT analysis, many of the strengths relate to this important location for affordable rental housing in conjunction with access to a variety of day-to-day services such as shopping, community support services and transit. Weaknesses include the area now showing its age, with little coherent unifying feel to the corridor. In some locations, large surface parking lots contribute to the disjointed appearance of the area. Traffic and parking have been raised as a concern on some local streets within and adjacent to the study area. In addition, as the City is not a housing corporation, and most residential lands are privately-owned, there is limited ability to directly invest in new construction. The City's main instruments for affecting change are to provide incentives to encourage private sector development.

Opportunity exists to capitalize on the strengths by accommodating some additional development through redevelopment and infill of large surface parking lots and underutilized portions of the larger

Table 3: East Bloor study area – SWOT Analysis

Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable housing; - Access to stores, schools, and various community services; - Bus service along Bloor Street connects to Square One and Islington Subway Station; and - Diversity of built form offers a range of accommodation. 	Weakness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area is showing its age; - No cohesive built form vision (haphazard location of buildings); - Low vacancy rates limit access to rental units; - Concerns with safety have been raised which may be a function of poor lighting in areas and the removal of a community policing station; - Traffic and parking are issues in and adjacent to portions of the study area; - Minimizing and consolidating access on higher traffic volume roads is often a priority; and - The City is not a housing corporation and has limited ability to directly invest in new construction.
Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surface parking and underutilized lands, provide opportunity to accommodate infill development that can capitalize on infrastructure and reinvest in the area; - Redevelopment could be used to help upgrade site conditions, provide new investment in the community and potentially contribute Section 37 benefits; and - The City can provide incentives to encourage development. 	Threats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New development produces negative impacts (e.g. traffic sun/shadow, privacy, skyviews, loss of amenity space); - New development may not help to unify the area and further the haphazard appearance of buildings; and - Development revenues are not reinvested in buildings.

lots. This may create an opportunity for reinvestment and improvements to the existing buildings. New development can help revitalize the area. The main threats as a location for intensification relate to concerns that new development may produce localized traffic issues and loss of amenity space.

In summary, there is opportunity for intensification and infill in the study area; however, this needs to be carefully considered in the context of a positive contribution to the character of the area itself and surrounding neighbourhoods.

4.0 Planning Framework

The City's approach to intensification, is contained in a number of policy documents such as the Mississauga Strategic Plan, the Mississauga Official Plan and the Zoning By-law. The sections below provide a summary of the applicable policies and regulations that need to be considered when infill development or intensification is proposed.

4.1 Mississauga Strategic Plan

The Mississauga Strategic Plan provides a long term vision to guide the City. This study responds to a number of the Strategic Plan's five pillars for change as outlined below:

- **Move** – setting the stage for considering how reinvestment, infill and city initiatives in the corridor, can enhance connections and create significant, positive impacts as it relates to the manner people move about the area (e.g. enhancing connections to a well-served transit stop).

- **Belong** – recognizing the contribution the area can play in creating a City that thrives on its social and cultural diversity. Provision of affordable housing and convenient access to services, which nurture this cultural diversity, are an important aspect to maintain.
- **Connect** – examining intensification and revitalization and how it can help contribute to creating a city which is vibrant with safe neighbourhoods and great public spaces.
- **Living Green** – recognizing that revitalization offers the opportunity to promote responsible stewardship through conservation, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment.

4.2 Mississauga Official Plan

Mississauga Official Plan (2011), (the Plan), provides direction for the City's growth and contains policies to guide development. The Plan contains policies that address a wide range of issues, including intensification. This section provides a summary of selected policies applicable to guide future development. Additional policies to those summarized below are found in Part Two of the Plan.

4.2.1 Direct Growth

Mississauga is planned on an urban structure that contains various elements (e.g. downtown, nodes, neighbourhoods, employment areas, etc.) which perform different functions. The East Bloor study area is located within the "Neighbourhood" element of the City

Structure. Neighbourhoods are characterized as physically stable areas with a character that is to be protected. Residential intensification within Neighbourhoods will generally occur through infilling and the development of existing commercial sites as mixed use areas. Intensification within Neighbourhoods may be considered, where the proposed development is compatible in built form and scale to surrounding development, and enhances the existing or planned character of the area.

4.2.2 Value The Environment

The study area is located adjacent to the Etobicoke Creek and as such, the Plan includes policies that recognize this area as part of the City's Natural Heritage System and, in particular, a Natural Hazard that has to be considered when evaluating infill potential. Other policies that could influence infill development speak to the opportunity to accommodate stormwater management best practices, and enhancing the urban forest.

4.2.3 Complete Communities

Complete communities meet the day-to-day needs of people throughout all stages of life. The Plan includes policies intended to create communities that enable people to not only live and work, but also thrive. It is important to consider opportunities to improve the area in terms of public art, affordable housing, and community infrastructure (e.g. schools, emergency services, daycare, places of religious assembly, etc.). In addition, the Plan states that the proponent of an intensification project may be required to provide a Community Infrastructure Impact Study that will, among other things, assess the proximity to and adequacy of existing community

infrastructure, human services and emergency services to meet increased demand caused by proposed intensification.

4.2.4 Multi-Modal City

The study area contains a transportation system that includes a combination of Regional Arterial (Dixie Road), Major Collector (Bloor Street), Minor Collector (Havenwood Drive, Fieldgate Drive /Ponytrail Drive) and local roads that are intended to accommodate a range of traffic volumes and modes of transportation. The Plan speaks to the ability to require area-wide or site specific transportation studies when reviewing development applications, and that the design of roads and streetscapes will create a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

4.2.5 Desirable Urban Form

The Plan contains policies intended to achieve a sustainable urban form, with high quality urban design and a strong sense of place that is culturally vibrant, attractive, liveable and functional. For example, it is recognized that while new development within Neighbourhoods need not mirror existing development, it will, amongst other things:

- respect existing lotting patterns;
- respect continuity of front, rear and side yard setbacks;
- respect the scale and character of the surrounding area;
- minimize overshadowing and overlook on adjacent neighbours;
- incorporate stormwater best management practice;

- preserve mature high quality trees and ensure replacement of the tree canopy; and,
- be designed to respect the existing scale, massing, character and grades of the surrounding area.

4.2.6 Land Use Policies

Growth and development is also guided by land use policies in Section 3 of the Plan. This includes General Land Use policies, Neighbourhood policies, and the Applewood Character Area policies. Land Use designations are identified on Map 3.

General Land Use Policies:

Section 11 of the Plan outlines the land use designations and includes general city-wide policies related to uses permitted in the various designations, such as:

- *11.2.5.5 Lands designated Residential Medium Density will permit the following uses:*
 - a. *townhouse dwelling; and*
 - b. *all forms of horizontal multiple dwellings*
- *11.2.5.6 Lands designated Residential High Density will permit the following uses:*
 - a. *apartment building*
- *11.2.5.12 In addition to the uses permitted in the High Density Residential designation, a convenience commercial facility will be permitted provided that:*

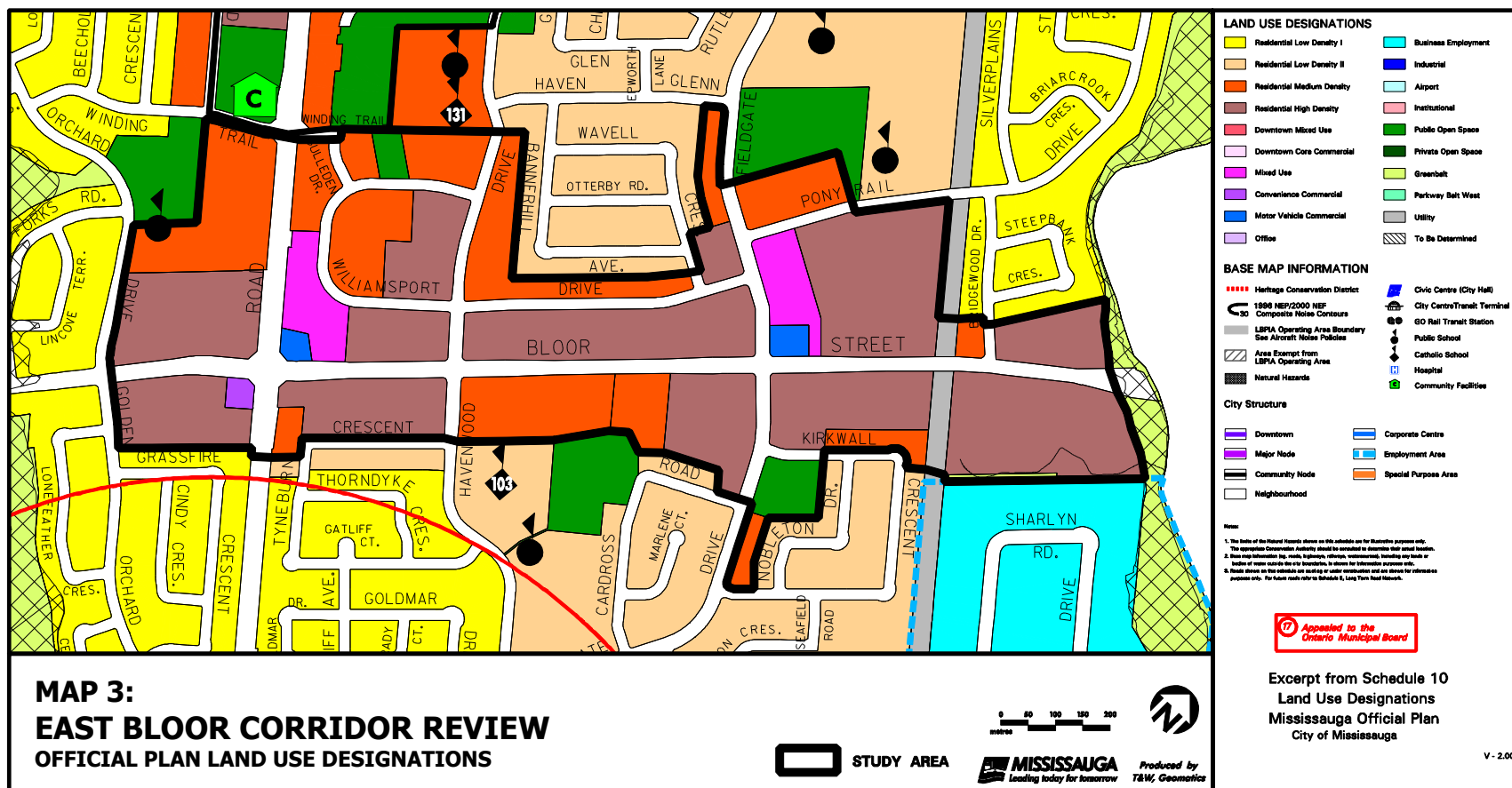
- a. *it forms an integral part of the ground floor of the building*
- b. *is oriented to pedestrian use.*

- *11.2.6.1.j Lands designated Mixed Use will permit residential uses.*

Neighbourhood Element of the City Structure:

The Plan contains a number of land use policies that are pertinent to intensification within Neighbourhoods, such as:

- *16.1.1.1 For lands within a Neighbourhood, a maximum building height of four storeys will apply unless Character Area policies specify alternative building heights requirements or until such time as alternative building heights are determined through the review of Character Area policies;*
- *16.1.1.2 Proposals for heights more than four storeys or different than established in the Character Area policies will only be considered where it can be demonstrated to the City's satisfaction, that:*
 - a. *an appropriate transition in heights that respects the surrounding context will be achieved;*
 - b. *the development proposal enhances the existing or planned development;*
 - c. *the City Structure hierarchy is maintained; and*
 - d. *the development proposal is consistent with the policies of this Plan.*



- *16.1.2.5 Proposals for additional development on lands with existing apartment buildings will be subject to the following, in addition to other policies regarding medium and high density residential development in this Plan:*

- a. on lands designated Residential High Density, development in addition to existing buildings will be restricted to uses permitted in the Residential Medium Density designation; and*
- b. as a condition of development, the site in its entirety must meet current site plan and landscaping requirements, and existing buildings must meet current building code, fire code and property standards.*

It should be noted that the City is considering revisions to this policy as it relates to issues of building code and fire code.

Applewood Character Area:

A number of policies are included in this section to address intensification, such as:

- Urban Design Policies Bloor Street:

16.2.1.1 East of Dixie Road, development consists primarily of high density residential uses, with some mixed uses. The following policies apply to development or infilling of this segment of the street to encourage an improved pedestrian environment:

- a. High density residential development should relate to the street, with buildings sited to minimize setbacks from Bloor Street. Efforts to develop a continuous street frontage through the construction of ground related podium structures (not including above ground parking structures), intensive landscaping at the street edge, and the orientation of buildings parallel to the street are encouraged.*
- b. the mixed use properties on Bloor Street should have a stronger relationship to Bloor Street, with the main entrances of the buildings oriented toward Bloor Street and at least half of the linear frontage occupied by built form, wherever possible.*

- Land Use Policies:

16.2.2.1 For Medium and High Density Development, new development should not exceed the height of any existing buildings on the property, and should be further limited in height so as to form a gradual transition in massing when located adjacent to low density residential development. Buildings immediately adjacent to low density housing forms should be limited to three storeys. In situations where the low density housing forms are separated from the high density development by a public road, park, utility corridor or other permanent open space feature, four to five storeys may be compatible.

- *16.2.2.3 Lands designated Residential Medium Density will also permit low-rise apartment dwellings.*

- the Applewood Character Area Map identifies the permitted Floor Space Index (FSI) for selected sites in the study area (primarily High Density and some medium density residential sites that were previously designated Medium Density II). The Applewood Character Area includes the following FSI ranges: 0.4-0.9, 0.5-1.2, and 1.2-1.5.

4.2.7 Other Official Plan Policies

Section 19 of the Plan establishes how policies are implemented and translated into programs. Policies that will guide revitalization include, but are not limited to:

- bonus zoning policies allow City Council to permit increases in height and density in the Plan and/or Zoning By-law to allow the City to secure specific amenities such as the provision of parkland above that which is required by the *Planning Act*, community infrastructure, public art, enhanced urban design features, affordable housing, streetscape improvements, etc. In all cases, the increase in height or density will be based on a site specific review and must demonstrate it is appropriate given the local context.
- property standards policies recognize that Mississauga will maintain and enforce a Property Standards By-law.
- Community Improvement Area policies recognize that the City can prepare Community Improvement Plans which may

consider matters such as: the condition of the housing and building stock if poor and in need of repair; identification of the need to provide affordable housing; identification of the need to improve streetscape amenities; opportunities for infilling and development of underutilized sites, etc.

In conclusion, the Plan contains a wide range of policies that can be used to address intensification and infill.

4.3 Mississauga Zoning By-law

The purpose of the Mississauga Zoning By-law is to regulate the use of land, buildings and structures. Zoning implements the Official Plan designations and includes a range of zones for different types of land uses such as convenience commercial, motor vehicle commercial, neighbourhood commercial, apartments, townhouses, open space, greenbelt, and utility. In cases where existing uses do not correspond to the Official Plan designation, a “D” zone has been used (e.g. existing detached dwelling in a medium density designation). A “D” zone recognizes existing uses but requires a rezoning application before the site can be redeveloped. There are four adjacent lots on Dixie Road that have a “D” zoning (See Map 4).

Zoning provides greater detailed regulations as to the development of a property than found in the Official Plan and deals with issues such as setbacks, landscaped area, amenity area, and parking. A number of sites have had the standard zoning modified (i.e. Exception Zones) to change the permitted uses or regulations that are applicable to the site. Examples include:

- RA1 zone has a maximum FSI of 0.9; however, a RA1-25 zone limits the maximum FSI to 0.5. There is one property with this specific exception zoning;
- RA2 zone has a maximum FSI of 1.0; however, the RA2-40 zone limits the maximum FSI to 0.8. There are 13 properties with this specific exception zoning;
- RA3 zone has a maximum FSI of 1.0; however, the RA3-1 zone increases the maximum FSI to 1.2. There are 9 properties with this specific exception zoning;
- RA4 zone has a maximum FSI of 1.8; however, the RA4-1 zone restricts the maximum FSI to 1.0. There are 3 properties with this specific exception zoning;
- RA5 zone has a maximum FSI of 2.9 and a maximum height of 25 storeys, however, the RA5-21 zone has a maximum height of 27 storeys and a maximum FSI of 1.5. There are 2 properties with this specific exception zoning.

Typically, with respect to infill development it is through the rezoning and site plan approval processes that specific details of the proposed development are addressed and design guidelines are reviewed.

5.0 Analysis of Intensification Potential

A high level review was undertaken to understand the extent to which infill development could potentially occur and contribute in a positive manner. Although the Plan currently limits residential infill to medium density development, the analysis considers a broader perspective and includes comments on additional types of built form. It should be noted, however, that many of the building permits were issued in the 1960's and there is often limited information on buildings (e.g. exact limits of underground parking structures not available).

The ability of any specific site to accommodate additional units will be affected by matters that extend beyond the scope of this review. Issues such as the physical extent of any underground parking, lifecycle of structures (e.g. if renovations are required it may be possible to incorporate additional units, whereas this is less likely if the structure is in good condition), development costs and market conditions for new units which play an important role in determining if additional development occurs.

5.1 Evaluation Criteria

A number of property characteristics were examined as part of the evaluation of infill potential. To be considered as having infill potential, a site should satisfy a number of criteria, including the following:

- a. **Size of property:** Larger lots offer greater opportunity to accommodate additional development and mitigate any

associated impacts. The larger the lot, the greater the opportunity to accommodate more development.

- b. **Proximity of uses that could mitigate impacts:** Land uses such as arterial and collector roads, provide additional separation distances between existing uses and any potential infill development. Adjacent employment uses (e.g. commercial plaza, industrial area) are less sensitive to height and density than low density residential uses and may allow an infill opportunity to be realized, although operational issues (e.g. noise, odour) also have to be considered.
- c. **Proximity of sensitive land uses:** Land uses such as public parks and low density residential development represent a constraint as issues of sun and shadow impacts have to be addressed on adjacent properties.
- d. **Proximity of apartment buildings:** Sites that are surrounded with higher densities may have greater opportunity to accommodate additional infill as it respects the existing scale of development. For example, underutilized land located between two apartment buildings, could have greater opportunity for intensification, than land adjacent to a low density subdivision. Proximity of existing development becomes a constraint; however, should the higher density buildings be too close and/or the property too small to reasonably assure issues such as overlook, and shadow can be properly addressed, then

- e. **Location of existing building:** For smaller sites, the location of the existing building should be considered. Building placement can inhibit or promote redevelopment potential, in that situating a building in the middle of a property can result in insufficient property depth to accommodate additional buildings while maintaining sight lines, reasonable separation distances etc. from existing and surrounding properties.
- f. **Extent of existing development and potential surplus land:** Sites that are not developed to the maximum Floor Space Index (FSI) permitted in zoning, or identified in the Plan, may have potential for additional development. FSI means the ratio of the gross floor area of all buildings and structures to the lot area. In addition, sites that have significant open space may have additional surplus land available that could potentially accommodate infill development (e.g. land at rear of properties where there is no readily apparent use).
- g. **Property ownership:** If adjacent properties have the same owner, there may be opportunity to consolidate underutilized portions of the site to create a new developable parcel. It should be noted that some of the properties that contain infill potential are under condominium ownership. Although condominium ownership is a deterrent to intensification, in the future some of these sites may become more proactive as their buildings age and there is a need for additional capital expenditures.

- h. **Land Use Designation:** Sites that are not fully developed to their permitted uses are considered to have infill potential. For example, there are four residential lots located on the east side of Dixie Road which have detached residential buildings; however, the property is designated for Medium Density development.
- i. **Extent of parking:** Sites with large surface parking lots and no underground parking are less constrained than properties where underground parking provides most of the parking. It is assumed new development would provide for any required parking that is eliminated.
- j. **Frontage onto roadways:** Properties with frontage onto roadways provide greater opportunity to contribute to the community by improving streetscape and character of the area. In addition, sites with frontage onto multiple roads have better opportunities to provide access to new development or create separate lots, especially in situations where there may be issues with consolidating and minimizing additional access points onto certain roads.
- k. **Extent Of Infill:** The number of units that could potentially be added to the site was considered. Sites where only a few additional units could be added were typically considered as having limited or constrained infill potential.

5.2 Infill Analysis Findings:

Based on the criteria outlined above, the findings of the intensification review are as follows:

- most of properties adjacent to low density residential development are constrained as they typically are developed with townhouses that have little surplus land available for infill. Landscaping and parking lots are relatively small and it would be difficult to add new buildings while still providing adequate parking, open space, and separation distances between buildings;
- complete redevelopment of many medium density sites with high rise apartment buildings is not encouraged given these sites typically serve as a transition to lower density residential uses or parkland where there are greater concerns with compatibility (e.g. impact of sun and shadow);
- there are four properties on Dixie Road (south of Bloor Street) which are designated “Medium Density Residential” that are not yet developed. These sites can be expected to develop with medium density uses and represent reasonable transition between the apartment building to the north and the detached and semi-detached houses to the south.

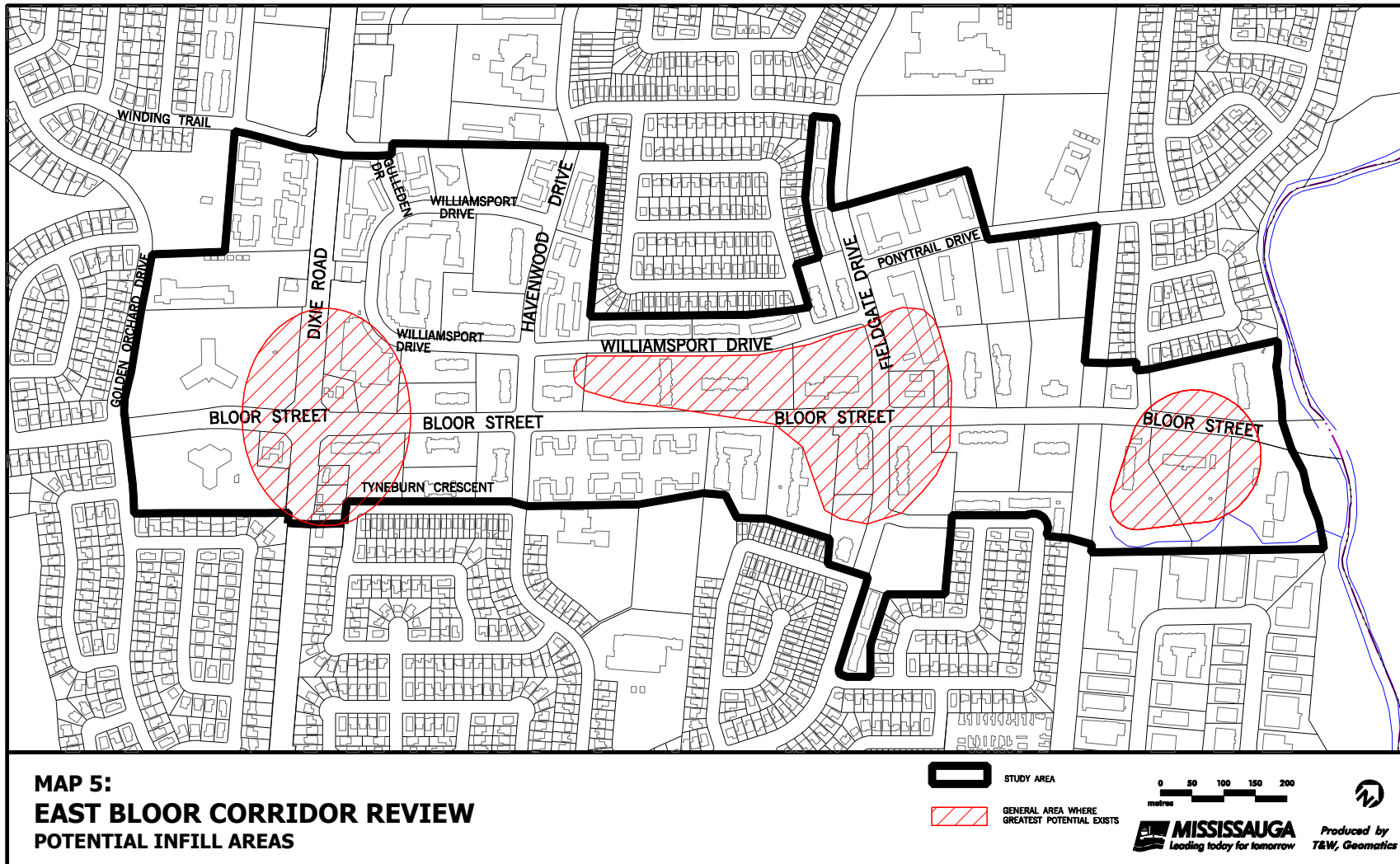
- commercial plazas have some potential for intensification, if the sites were redeveloped. The plazas, however, provide an important service to the community and any redevelopment should continue to provide neighbourhood commercial uses. Any redevelopment should give consideration to the potential for including adjacent gas stations, to create a more unified parcel. Accommodating parking for commercial uses represents a significant constraint to any redevelopment.
- properties that have access to more than one street represent reasonable candidates for considering infill development. For example, a lot that is bounded by multiple streets has greater flexibility in accommodating additional access points and increased opportunity to improve more than one streetscape than a site that has access to only one street. On some streets, such as Bloor Street and Dixie Road, minimizing and consolidating direct access is an objective that has to be considered when reviewing any infill application.
- although the policies currently restrict infill development to townhouses or in some cases a five-storey building, somewhat taller apartment buildings, may be appropriate in certain locations (e.g. when surrounded by other apartment buildings and townhouses, commercial plaza or employment areas). Attention to the appropriate height

and the need to reflect transition to adjacent properties is an important issue for consideration.

- in some cases, reconfigured onsite parking may create additional land for infill development; however, maintaining appropriate landscaping, amenity space, and sight lines need to be considered and, therefore, may limit opportunities.

It should be noted that potential infill sites are distributed throughout the study area, and are located mostly on major collector or minor collector roads which help to reduce impacts. Potential infill sites include properties at both the easterly and westerly limits of the study area, where properties are larger, as well as some larger sites more centrally located along Bloor Street (see Map 5 for general illustration of potential infill areas).

Based on the high level review, there are a number of apartment sites with some potential to accommodate additional development. In addition, the two existing commercial plazas could potentially accommodate new residential uses. As well, there are four residential lots on Dixie Road, south of Bloor which are designated for medium density residential uses that currently contain detached dwellings. The remainder of the residential properties have either limited potential (due to issues of parcel size, building placement, access issues) or are significantly constrained because minimal land is remaining to redevelop and/or full scale redevelopment with demolition of the existing building would be required.



NOTE: Site specific review required to confirm appropriateness of infill development, and may require amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law. There may be some sites outside of shaded areas where infill development could be accommodated.

6.0 Summary of Findings: Character, Planning Framework, Intensification Analysis

Based on the findings from the previous sections of this report, the following should be noted:

- This is an important area that provides affordable rental housing, and includes a gateway community for new Canadians;
- This is an area that would benefit from additional investment as it is aging and lacks a cohesive built form;
- Additional development, if done properly, can contribute to the health of the area;
- The Official Plan allows infill to occur and contains several policies that provide direction on how, and what intensification, should look like;
- There is potential for infill development within the study area;
- A high level assessment suggests that many sites have constraints that would limit the extent to which additional development can occur. There are a number of sites along the 1.8 km (1.1 miles) long corridor that have some potential for intensification, depending on the specific proposal.
- In addition to infill on apartment sites, the Plan permits residential development on the two commercial plazas and there are four detached houses on Dixie Road that are designated for medium density development;
- Although the Plan limits infill on apartment sites to medium density uses, there may be opportunities to allow for additional apartment development which could positively contribute to the area. However, given the different characteristics of each site, a site specific review as part of an Official Plan Amendment, is the recommended approach;
- The Plan contains policies that require infill development to address a range of issues (e.g. transition, respecting scale and character, etc.) that are to be reviewed when considering infill applications;
- The Plan stipulates that as a condition of additional development on sites that have existing apartment buildings, the site in its entirety must meet current site plan and landscaping requirements; and
- The opportunity may exist for a community benefit to be secured under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

The following section of this report includes an Urban Design Analysis and Interim Guidelines to assist in the review of development applications. Section 8 of the report identifies the next steps and issues that require further review.

7.0 Urban Design Strategy

7.1 Overview

The East Bloor Corridor can accommodate some additional infill development, as determined through an examination of the existing character and context, SWOT analysis, a review of the planning framework, and intensification potential analysis. To ensure new development respects and enhances the character of the area, as well as help unify the existing context, an urban design strategy has been prepared. The following section presents an analysis related to urban design, entailing detailed observations, Urban Design Guidelines and opportunities to guide enhancements and the evaluation of infill projects.



Figure 6: Aerial view of the study area.

7.2 Approach to Urban Design Strategy

To identify those areas where infill can make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood, an overarching analysis was undertaken that examines a number of layers and components that define its present day context, general character and sense of place. This also includes consideration of the corridor's planning and architectural origins linked to historic planning models of development, vis-à-vis "towers in the park", which came into vogue during a time of significant growth and expansion of suburbs in the Greater Toronto Area after WWII (*also see page 11, Section 2.5 'Setting the Context'*).

An underlying objective of the urban design strategy is to articulate Urban Design Guidelines that can be used to evaluate the potential for infill development on larger apartment sites. It should be noted that the Urban Design Guidelines have been generated with a view to ensuring that character defining features and place-defining aspects of the locale are considered and protected. Furthermore, where infill development opportunities may exist, the principles ensure that matters of compatibility, transition and 'good fit' are also addressed, so that such projects make a positive contribution to the overall presentation and enhancement of the study area. In addition to built-form aspects, this framework also addresses other components of urban design such as strategies for strengthening the public realm and 'greening' of the study area itself.

In guiding the strategy, the following have been identified as key issues to consider in the urban design analysis.



Figure 7: Figure Ground Diagram illustrating the study area.

1. What character defining elements and patterns shape the East Bloor Corridor?
2. What should be preserved or strengthened as elements that critically help to unify the existing context?; and
3. What guides the location, placement and design of infill opportunities in a manner that enhances the corridor character?

The strategy attempts to address these questions by articulating findings and observations within each component noted below and by identifying distinctive patterns and traits related to urban design, architecture and landscape in an integrated fashion. The components are listed as follows:

- streets and blocks;
- access and walkability;
- lot patterns, fabric, size and character ;
- buildings:
 - typologies and form;
 - location, siting and orientation; and
 - height patterns and transition;
- landscaped open space (disposition and distribution);
- corridor architectural character;
- existing landscape treatments; and
- the public realm

The analysis is expanded upon by articulating areas of opportunity related to proposed infill projects on larger apartment building sites with Urban Design Guidelines generated to provide direction for the components described above.



Figure 8: Tall Buildings at the western edge of the study area.

7.3 Applying the Urban Design Guidelines

The urban design strategy is best understood by reviewing all sections, text and diagrams, including the policies cited within the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

The Urban Design Guidelines are organized in a hierarchy, citing higher level objectives and general intent, together with more detailed parameters that cover specific built form aspects. As a whole, the strategy reflects a context sensitive approach that guides and provides direction on the general location, disposition and treatment of proposed infill development, including strategies for the public realm. The Urban Design Guidelines have been generated to communicate the design expectations related to development applications and the expected quality and outcome of development.

It should be noted that the Urban Design Guidelines within this interim strategy are by no means exhaustive in nature. As such, development applications may be subject to more rigorous urban design requirements and review against other planning policies and urban design documents that bear on the study area, including urban design reference notes and the *Urban Design Handbook for Low-rise Multiple Dwellings* (August 2007/Revised 2013).



Figure 9: Midrise slab form buildings and lower apartment buildings characterize a significant portion of the study area.

7.4 Urban Design Analysis

The urban design analysis is structured around a number of scales beginning with the streets and blocks and concluding with strategies for the public realm. Within each section, observations are made related to each component, with highlights on key opportunities and corresponding Urban Design Guidelines to guide infill proposals.

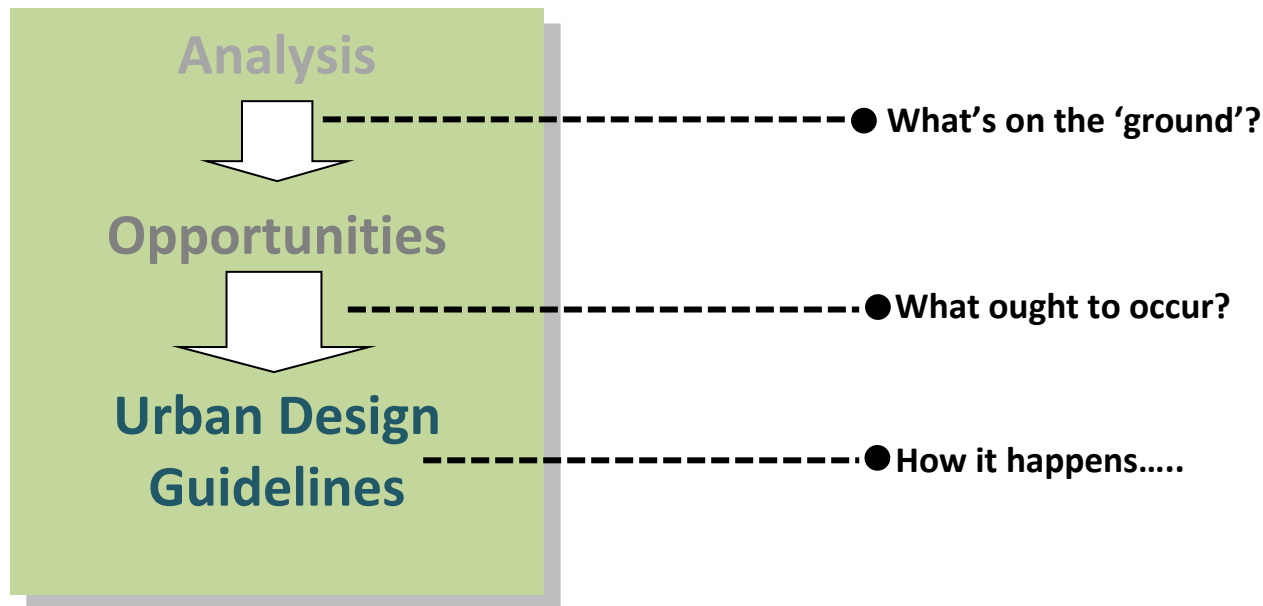


Figure 10: Framework for Urban Design Strategy.

7.5 Streets, Blocks, Access and Walkability

The existing pattern of the street layout and blocks in the East Bloor Corridor area is unassuming, and provides little in the way of clues or understanding around any original master planning scheme or comprehensive vision for the area when compared to the undertaking of planning initiatives today. The network and distribution of streets and blocks however is characteristically suburban on account of its dispersed qualities and organic-like patterns. The layout is opposite to the kind of grid network commonly found in more dense urban areas. Comparatively, these tend to be more rigid, rectilinear, dense, porous and with greater frequency in points of access and number of intersections.

The network in the study area is spatially distributed to form very large superblocks along Bloor Street (symmetrically configured on either side of the corridor). Havenwood Drive and Fieldgate Drive, are situated parallel to Dixie Road. They intersect with Bloor Street, but take on curvilinear geometries as they extend to the north and south. Streets that serve lower scale residential neighbourhoods outside the study area exhibit curvilinear organic qualities, and appear as crescents, cul-de-sacs and winding streets. These feed into north-south collectors (Havenwood and Fieldgate Drives) linking to Bloor Street, Burnamthorpe Road and Dundas Street.

Apartment building sites generally exist with little interruption along extensive frontages, forming very long super blocks and a street network that reinforces the automobile as a predominant means of mobility. This morphology fundamentally supports the Tower in the Park model, but presents a number of challenges related to

permeability, walkability and human scale attributes in contemporary planning terms.



Figure 11: Top - the street network and block structure within the study area has an organic pattern consisting of super blocks, winding streets, crescents and cul-de-sacs that provide confined points of access and little in the way of permeability. Bottom (left and right) – in contrast, the grid iron pattern of streets characterizes urban areas that have a significantly higher amount of permeability and predictability in the street network.

Driveways provide the principle means of access to apartment sites, sometimes in combination with drop offs and turn arounds, particularly where buildings have frontage along Bloor Street and some side streets. There are some walkways connected to the public sidewalk, but the site design of many of these apartment sites, as originally envisioned, suggest heavy reliance on the car as the principle means of arrival and departure.

The assembly and pattern of large land parcels, along with the configuration of residential subdivisions at the periphery, generally contribute to limited permeability through the study area. This is because the large super blocks and points of access are generally confined and relegated to main roads (Bloor Street) and thoroughfares (Havenwood Drive and Fieldgate Drive). The hydro corridor divides the study area at its eastern edge and provides a linear greenbelt between the east segment of the corridor and the western portions. Bloor Street currently serves as the only means of access and connectivity between these segments of the study area. (Also, refer to Section 7.12- Streetscape and the Public Realm).

OPPORTUNITIES

The strong influence of the automobile on the character and form of the study area gives little priority to the importance of the pedestrian environment, particularly for those residents who depend on walking, transit or cycling as a primary means of mobility and getting to and from local and/or regional destinations. As such, a strategy to enhance the pedestrian environment, within apartment sites, including linkages and connectivity through sites and to the public realm should be created to support improved walkability, access to transit and overall human health. Ensuring improved walkability within the study area is also predicated on a

need for placing limitations on road widenings to accommodate additional vehicles, particularly along Bloor Street.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

STREETS, ACCESS and WALKABILITY

1. *Enhance the existing pedestrian network by strengthening:*
 - a. *the pedestrian environment within apartment sites;*
 - b. *pathways and desire lines through apartment block sites with improved connections to existing public sidewalks, open space, transit stops and the surrounding community;*
 - c. *connectivity between adjacent apartment building sites and properties situated within super blocks.*
2. *Utilize existing roads and streets where possible in providing access for proposed infill.*
3. *Avoid road widenings to accommodate additional vehicles within the corridor.*



7.6 Lot Fabric, Pattern, Size and Character

Apartment building sites and lots in the study area vary in size, proportion and orientation. Some are very large sites, others are somewhat smaller in area, taking on either square, rectangular and pie shaped configurations.

Within the north-east section of the study area, there are groupings of properties that have narrow frontages relative to the street with corresponding longer depths. These contrast with the general pattern and character of other sites in the vicinity. Outside of the study area, residential subdivision lots at the periphery of the study area have a significantly finer grain quality, with a consistent proportion.

OPPORTUNITIES

Where such opportunities exist for infill development, additional buildings may be constructed on the property as part of an evolution of the site, provided that such proposals are able to demonstrate a careful integration with existing buildings, including attention to site organization, massing aspects, quality built-form treatments, landscape treatments and public realm improvements where required. Moreover, proposals will need to demonstrate good contextual fit in terms of compatibility with existing buildings and how infill projects contribute to the study area as a whole, with a view to ensuring that character defining features such as generous front and side yards, mature trees and significant landscaping are not negatively impacted or compromised.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

LOT FABRIC, PATTERN, SIZE AND CHARACTER

4. *Where infill projects are considered on apartment sites, development proponents will be required to demonstrate that:*
 - a. *there is sufficiently large enough space to accommodate additional development on the site, precluding landscaped open space frontages or areas that wrap the sides of apartment buildings that may contribute to the presentation of the apartment property and area character; and*
 - b. *such proposals are able to demonstrate how the siting of the new building(s) integrate positively with:*
 - *existing buildings on the property; and*
 - *the overall site organization and enhancement of the larger apartment property, including amenity areas, vehicular access and pedestrian circulation aspects;*
 - c. *projects are able to achieve:*
 - *a good contextual fit with adjacent properties, including built form compatibility with neighbouring buildings, open space and amenity areas; and*
 - *compatibility with the study area character as a whole.*

7.7 Building Typology and Form

There are two predominant types of buildings within the study area which take the form of slab style apartment buildings (low and midrise) and townhouses (grade related). The following general observations are made:

- Townhouse Form: exist as two storeys, grade related units, developed within super blocks, many are organized on sites around courtyard configurations. These tend to be of exterior brick veneer construction.
- Lower Midrise Apartments exist in rectangular slab and orthogonal forms (i.e. square), generally ranging in height up to 5 storeys, generally constructed with brick exteriors and metal balconies.
- Midrise Apartments exist as elongated slab form buildings and range in height from approximately 6 – 14 storeys, generally constructed with brick exteriors and metal balconies.
- Tower Form: exist as tall slab towers constructed in 'Y' shaped floor plates (a.k.a 'Mercedes' form). These are of concrete frame and precast construction.

In addition to the above, the following observations are noted with regard to the form of buildings that interface with the study area:

- Lowrise Dwellings exist as one storey, split level and two storey single and semi-detached dwellings, are generally of modest scale, light frame construction, concrete (block)

foundations, brick veneer, and limited use of exterior vinyl or metal siding.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

BUILDING TYPOLOGY AND FORM

5. The type, form and scale of infill development will be compatible with the typology of buildings that make up the study area. These generally consists of:

Townhouses: 2 Storeys (Grade Related)

*Midrise Buildings: Lower form - Up to 5 Storeys
Taller form - 6 to 14 Storeys.*

Tall Buildings: Towers: Up to 27 Storeys



Figure 12: The study area generally consists of buildings such as townhouses, midrise slab form apartment buildings and tall towers.

OPPORTUNITIES

Infill opportunities should make use of the existing typology of buildings to ensure a general consistency of built form and legibility throughout the area. Building types should also be selected on the basis of reinforcing existing spatial patterns and by generally creating an orderly arrangement of heights within the corridor.

Where sites contain apartment buildings, townhouse form structures may be better suited to infilling opportunities because they allow better access to sky views and views through sites (above the units themselves) in addition to performing better in terms of shadow impacts. In general, townhouses may provide an appropriate form of transition between apartment buildings and lower scale buildings. Where there are areas or streets containing building heights of one storey at the street frontage, infill should not exceed 3 storeys in height, with the upper most storey integrated within the roof line or set back. The purpose of this is to provide a more gentle transition and harmonious relationship with neighbouring modest scale buildings, particularly where buildings are expressed as one storey along frontages.

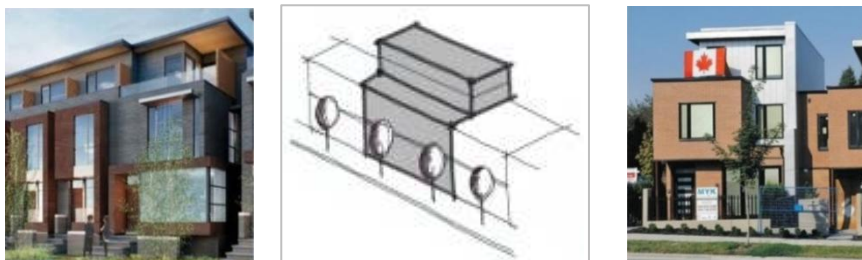


Figure 13: Townhouses can be articulated at the upper storeys in order promote better relationships with neighbouring that have a more modest height and scale.

BUILDING TYPOLOGY AND FORM (cont'd)

6. *The design of infill projects will:*

- a. *mitigate differences in height between the proposed built form and the existing height and massing of adjacent buildings within the study area;*
- b. *through built-form treatments, ensure compatible relationships with the form and scale of buildings that interface with the study area.*

7. *Where infill fronts onto a street with existing lowrise buildings having a height of one storey at the street frontage, proposals should:*

- a. *not exceed 3 storeys in height;*
- b. *incorporate built form treatments that strengthen relationships between new and existing building typologies, such as:*
 - *articulated front entrances, porches, stoops and/or verandahs on the ground floor;*
 - *incorporating terraces and step backs at the uppermost storey; or*
 - *expressing the uppermost storey within the roof line/space of the building using gable or dormer treatments.*

7.8 Height Patterns & Transition

Apartment buildings are generally located closest to Bloor Street, with taller midrise buildings (approaching up to 14 storeys) occupying the stretch of the corridor east of Havenwood Drive toward the hydro corridor and schools to the north-east.

Lower building heights, i.e. 6 storeys, can also be found in very close proximity to the stable residential neighbourhoods on both the north and south sides. Sometimes these are located on opposite sides of the street at corner entries to streets (Cardross Road) as witnessed on the south side of Bloor Street. Stable residential areas outside the study area generally have heights of two storeys or less.

The tallest buildings exist on the west side of Dixie Road, opposite to one another at the corner(s) of Bloor Street. These have 'Y' form tower floor plate shape and measure 26 and 27 storeys in height respectfully.

OPPORTUNITIES

Infill projects should follow existing spatial and vertical height patterns, contributing to an orderly arrangement of heights in the study area. Furthermore, building heights should transition down to the stable residential neighbourhoods, generally maintaining a consistent scale and height (i.e. 3 Storeys) with what exists.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

HEIGHT PATTERNS & TRANSITION

8. *Where a difference in scale exists between building heights, development will be required to deploy transition strategies through massing and built form, to achieve a harmonious relationship between proposed and existing development, and/or adjacent open spaces.*



Figure 14: Example of buildings transition from high to low (Port Credit, Mississauga).

7.9 Building Location, Siting and Orientation

Within the confines of the study area, there appears to be no traceable pattern or strong rationale in the way buildings are oriented on their sites and in relation to the adjoining streets, frontage(s) or adjacent open spaces. This contrasts to areas that are characteristically urban, where patterns between buildings and their sites are discernable and often very predictable. The following general observations are noted:



Figure 15: A number of lotting patterns, building orientations and siting conditions exist within the study area.

- The length of buildings (elongated facade) is either placed parallel to the street, or in the opposite fashion with the narrower side along the frontages.
- Buildings are generally placed toward the edges (relative to street fronts) with a generous landscape setback, either at the centre of the property, or in proximity to corners where streets intersect. This allows for surface parking and landscaped areas to be accommodated.
- Front yard and side yard setbacks vary considerably, with little sense of pattern or predictability.

- Some precincts within the study area may exhibit a stronger sense of pattern and consistency in building orientation and placement as groupings of properties.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

BUILDING LOCATION, SITING AND ORIENTATION

9. *The location, siting and orientation of infill projects will:*

- a. reinforce existing spatial qualities, setback patterns, and how buildings orient themselves to streets and frontages, sideyards and property edges;*
- b. be designed to complete the street or frontage along the length of blocks and apartment sites;*
- c. where positioned at the rear of buildings or back of properties, will be located to form site layouts that strengthen the internal organization of apartment properties, and create a sense of 'place'; and*
- d. through site design and building placement, mitigate any differences in setback(s) between adjacent development or buildings where there are contrasting conditions between sites.*

- The separation distance between apartment building ranges significantly, with the average occurring at 50 m between towers.

OPPORTUNITIES

Despite an absence of strong organizing Urban Design Guidelines in the East Bloor area, there are fundamental rules of good urban design that can be deployed in the context of infill projects particularly where there are a multitude of patterns that do not necessarily relate in any way.

In establishing the siting of buildings, patterns between adjacent properties should be deciphered by establishing spatial qualities, setbacks, how buildings orient themselves to frontages, sideyards and edges. Infill projects should attempt to replicate patterns where they can be easily ascertained, or mitigate differences between contrasting conditions with a view to achieving seamless relationships in the built environment, good transition and compatible fit.

Separation distances between buildings will vary depending on the height of a proposed building and its proximity to the scale, massing and height of adjacent buildings. As a general rule, taller buildings in slab form will require larger separation distances in order to secure sky views, visual permeability through sites and the benefit of having natural sunlight reach amenity areas, yards and open spaces on the ground. Separation distances also help to address

matters related to privacy between buildings and the impacts of shadows on adjacent development.

BUILDING LOCATION, SITING AND ORIENTATION (cont'd)

10. Infill development will be designed to:

- a. ensure maximum access to sky views, natural sunlight and privacy between buildings;*
- b. incorporate minimum separation distances between buildings, when such proposals are located on the same development site or block, or adjacent to an existing property or site containing other buildings; and*
- c. include a minimum separation distance between building(s) measured between outside faces:*
 - *20 m (66 feet) between an apartment building (up to 5 storeys in height) and a townhouse block.*

7.10 Corridor Architectural Character

The architectural character of buildings in the study area is largely eclectic in nature, but stylistically a large number of the taller form buildings are constructed under the influence of the Tower in the Park model born out of the Modern Movement of Architecture and International Style, with strong references to Corbusien architectural precedents. As products of their time, embracing progress and modernity, these building types make little reference to the past, have little ornamentation other than repeating balconies and bands of windows to highlight individual apartment units both vertically and horizontally. From a materials perspective, these buildings were constructed out of concrete structural frames, with exposed floor reveals an as an expression of structure (between successive stories) and brick colours ranging from browns, to deep reds, light beiges and contemporary whites.

OPPORTUNITIES

Today, there is a renewed interest in Modernism as a style of architecture that is seeing tremendous popularity in the execution of new residential housing in the GTA and elsewhere, particularly in midrise and highrise buildings. Lower form buildings such as townhouses, duplexes and single family homes are also being constructed in this style because of its streamline qualities, simplicity, use of materials (brick, stone, wood, etc) and appeal to contemporary tastes.

In the context of the study area, infill development should be compatible with the Modernist influences of the area wherever

Urban Design Guidelines for:

CORRIDOR ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

11. The exterior design of Infill proposals should:

- a. have a well-executed architectural expression that is compatible with the contemporary character and style of buildings in the general vicinity;*
- b. use high quality exterior materials that are resilient such as brick, wood, glass and architectural metals;*
- c. use stucco, horizontal or vertical siding materials in very limited amounts; and*
- d. use high quality fenestration and apertures, including entrance doors and garage doors.*



Figure 16: Existing buildings in the study area which demonstrate influences of Modernism.

possible, maintaining a contemporary quality that relates to, yet enhances the character of apartment buildings and surrounding residential areas. Over stylized or eclectic buildings alluding to such styles as Tudor or Georgian may not be the best fit for the area.



Figure 17: Buildings in the study area were influenced by the Modern Movement of Architecture and a contemporary character that came into vogue in suburban areas after WWII. Apartment buildings were simple, brick clad buildings, with repeating balconies and banks of windows to highlight apartment units both vertically and horizontally.



Figure 18: Above/Below - Residential buildings constructed today express a renewed interest in Modernism, deploying a contemporary interpretation of design elements from that period.



7.11 Landscaped Open Space

(Frontages, Side Yards, Amenity Areas and Surface Parking)

Landscaped open space is a significant character defining element of the study area. It unites the collection of apartment buildings, townhouse blocks and community facilities, and mitigates the widespread variation in patterns that exists between buildings types, apartment building orientations and site layouts. It is the most consistent feature indicative of the Tower in the Park model throughout the study area, and should be carefully considered with regard to infill and impacts along frontages and landscaped areas that wrap the sides of buildings.

Landscaped open space is prevalent along the frontages of buildings, at side yards, between buildings and within courtyards (townhouse developments). It also takes the form of amenity areas serving apartment building residents. Depending on building orientation, the amount of open space also lends significant visual permeability between slab form buildings, yielding views between sites, sky views and the ability for sunlight to reach green spaces, amenity areas, sidewalks and paths.

A significant amount of surface parking is also dominant within many apartment blocks, with most lots occurring behind or to the sides of buildings, and often buffered by sodded areas. In terms of opportunities, these areas may be the most viable for infilling, depending on the presence of structured parking below grade. Vehicular drop offs are also associated with front entrances and lobbies, sometimes integrated into the landscape design of apartment sites, particularly where buildings address or have a direct orientation to the street, or a main drive aisle entrance.



Figure 19: Landscape open space is a significant element which unites the range of building types, their orientations and siting on individual apartment sites.

7.11.1 Landscape Treatments within Apartment Sites

Landscape treatment varies depending on the site. Some apartment sites have a very barren quality, while others are better developed with mature trees and plantings that embrace the Tower in the Park concept.

Much like the placement of apartment buildings themselves, trees are planted in a random, sporadic fashion along frontages and side yards, with a mixing of deciduous and evergreen species. Sometimes trees are located within gaps between buildings, other times they form a part of extensive lawn systems that meet the public sidewalks. Often they are used to emphasize ornamental landscape treatments, placed at corners, side yards, near drop offs and front entranceways.

Within many apartment sites, there is a proliferation of silver frost free chain link fencing that borders edges, property lines and the public sidewalk along Bloor Street and other streets in the area. As barriers, these tend to detract from the curb-side presentation of the locale and from the public realm as a whole. The fencing also acts as a collector for waste, garbage and leaves. Other sites in the vicinity have upgraded metal fencing, appearing as black wrought iron grilles, placed at the edges beside the public sidewalk.

Another issue pertaining to apartment sites may relate to site lighting and the ability of residents to feel safe during evening hours while moving on foot between parking areas, walkways and apartment building entrances.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE

12. Infill development will be required to:

- a. conserve the generous spatial character and setback of lawns and landscaped areas that wrap around the frontages and sides of apartment buildings;*
- b. preserve existing landscapes, mature trees and vegetation that contribute positively to the existing character of individual apartment sites and the study area as a whole;*
- c. provide or enhance landscape treatments and plantings for:*
 - the infill project site itself; and*
 - the apartment property as a whole*
- d. build upon the existing pattern, siting and placement of trees using a mix of deciduous and evergreen species;*
- e. ensure existing amenity areas are provided, preserved or enhanced, through site furnishings, provision for playground areas and equipment;*

OPPORTUNITIES

As part of this interim strategy, it is recommended that a conservative approach be undertaken with respect to infill opportunities, allowing intensification to occur on large apartment sites, but behind buildings, on surface parking lots or areas of property(s) that are significantly underutilized.

Given the sporadic orientation and pattern of buildings across sites, vis-à-vis the influence of the Tower in the Park model, the preservation of green space around the frontages and sideyards assumes particular importance as the common thread that knits together all buildings and the general character of the study area. These zones should be carefully considered through planting programs that strengthen frontages, sideyards and amenity areas with additional greening, landscape treatments, walkway connections and linkages to the public realm in order to provide benefits to the community, improve the overall attractiveness of apartment sites and the environment.

Amenity areas for residents in apartment buildings should be preserved, enhanced or provided for with appropriate site furnishings. This includes accommodating the needs of children seeking play space, with provision for new or updated playground equipment and corresponding landscape treatments.

Contextually, the curb side appeal of the study area also has the potential to be significantly improved by removing the abundance of chain link fencing that exists around apartment sites. Not only would this result in a significant aesthetic improvement, but from a neighbourhood perspective would remove visual and physical barriers and strengthen the larger community context. As an

LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE (cont'd)

- f. strengthen walkways within apartment sites in order to enhance wayfinding, orientation and navigation through sites for residents and visitors;*
- g. consider the following with respect to fencing on apartment sites and improving the study area character:*
 - *removal of fencing to improve the presentation of the apartment site and streetscape; or*
 - *apply artful installations over existing fences with themes that express representations of culture, local history and/or community stories; or*
 - *relocate fencing to the building setback and provide soft landscape materials around the perimeter of properties;*



Figure 20: Art installations, depicting community themes and stories can be superimposed over chain link fencing as a means to improve the aesthetics of an area. (Location: Lansdowne Ave, Toronto).

important move, it would also restore the sense of 'spatial sequence' between the private and public realms relating to the transition between public, semi-public and private space zones.



Figure 21: Top: Site Illumination can assist with safety, comfort, and navigation through apartment sites during evening hours. Bottom: Screening of surface parking lots helps to improve the attractiveness and presentation of sites.

In addition to the above, there are number of opportunities to enhance the corridor with streetscape and public realm improvements. This is described in the following section.

LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE (cont'd);

- h. provide a generous landscape buffer between infill project sites and exiting surface parking areas that serve apartment buildings;*
- i. ensure that apartment sites have sufficient illumination in parking areas, playground areas, along walkways, and near entrances to improve safety and navigation through sites during evening hours;*
- j. locate and screen service areas, ramps and garbage storage areas to minimize the impact on the adjacent streets and residences;*

In addition to the above, the following will apply to parking areas within apartment sites:

- k. the creation of hard surface areas for additional parking on the site (as a result of site modifications), will be discouraged; and*
- l. existing parking areas will be screened with plantings where they are visible from the street, adjacent amenity areas or open spaces.*

7.12 Streetscape and the Public Realm

Bloor Street has an unassuming character. It is a major collector that serves the community with mainly apartment buildings built in the sixties and seventies. The presence of street trees is limited along Bloor Street, with the exception of plantings along the western edge and other areas.

The East Bloor Corridor neighbourhood has an established streetscape particularly in the residential area. These consist of tree lined streets with sidewalks on the street edge and private landscaping within the front yards of the houses. This should be maintained and augmented when new development occurs.

OPPORTUNITIES

Trees along Bloor Street have matured on a number of apartment sites, creating a strong presence in the community. Along with the preservation of these trees, additional plantings in key locations can collectively create a 'Tree District', resulting in a distinct area character that strengthens landscaped open space, particularly as it envelopes buildings and interfaces with the public realm. With reference to the Concept Plan shown on page 47 a number of design principles identify ways in which this can be realized, with a view to significantly enhancing Bloor Street and study area as a whole:

Urban Design Guidelines for:

STREETSCAPE AND THE PUBLIC REALM

13. The following improvements should be undertaken:

- a. create a Tree District by supplementing additional trees with in private land parcels and the public boulevard to support the continuity of trees along the entire length of Bloor Street;*
- b. provide a supplemental grove of trees for the Hydro Corridor adjacent to Bloor Street;*
- c. provide a Community Entry Feature which may take the form of horticultural displays and/or artful installations at the Etobicoke Creek, Dixie Road / Bloor Street Intersection and other key locations;*
- d. create enhanced pedestrian crossings at Fieldgate Drive and Havenwood Drive, to slow down traffic and recognize the heavy volume of pedestrians in these areas, including artful graphic street markings;*
- e. shaded sitting areas should be provided along Bloor Street;*
- f. provide pedestrian-scale lighting to the existing street lights to encourage area vibrancy and provide a better sense of security and comfort during evenings hours;*

- Trees and Enhanced Plantings – to effect the Tree District concept, it recommended that trees be planted along the length of the corridor, specifically within the public boulevard (where feasible) and on private lands. This also includes intensified plantings within expansive lawn areas on the south side of Bloor Street (refer to concept plan) where there is minimal planting today, and where such treatment is warranted.
- Entranceway(s) – opportunities to create distinctive entranceways that incorporate tree plantings, horticultural displays, and art installations at the eastern and western edges of Bloor Street. This includes a City entrance feature at the eastern limit of Bloor Street in proximity to the Etobicoke Creek.
- Intermediate Locations – In order to reinforce the Tree District concept and enhance the pedestrian environment, improvements can be undertaken at three (3) locations along Bloor Street to include additional plantings at (a) the hydro corridor, (b) Fieldgate Drive and (c) Havenwood Drive. In addition, graphic markings placed at signalized crossings for Fieldgate and Havenwood Drive(s) can reinforce the important principle of improved walkability and connectivity outlined on page 32.

In addition to the above, transition from any residential high rise building should include a generous landscape buffer and screening of fencing when a high rise development abuts a low rise residential development. This also helps to ensure that any existing trees and vegetation on the existing property and adjacent property can be preserved. Utilities and garbage areas will not be permitted in the landscape buffer areas.

Urban Design Guidelines for:

STREETSCAPE AND THE PUBLIC REALM (cont'd)

- g. enhance the streetscape associated with the frontages of the property implemented through infill development proposals;*
- h. enhance transit stop locations with street furniture such as seating, refuse containers and shelters for pedestrian comfort;*
- i. maintain the existing established streetscape in the residential areas and where new infill is proposed;*
- j. provide a 7.0 m landscape buffer and 2.0 m screen fencing when a high rise development abuts a low rise residential development; and*
- k. utilities and garbage areas will not be permitted in the 7.0 m landscape buffer area.*

Concept for Bloor Street TREE DISTRICT

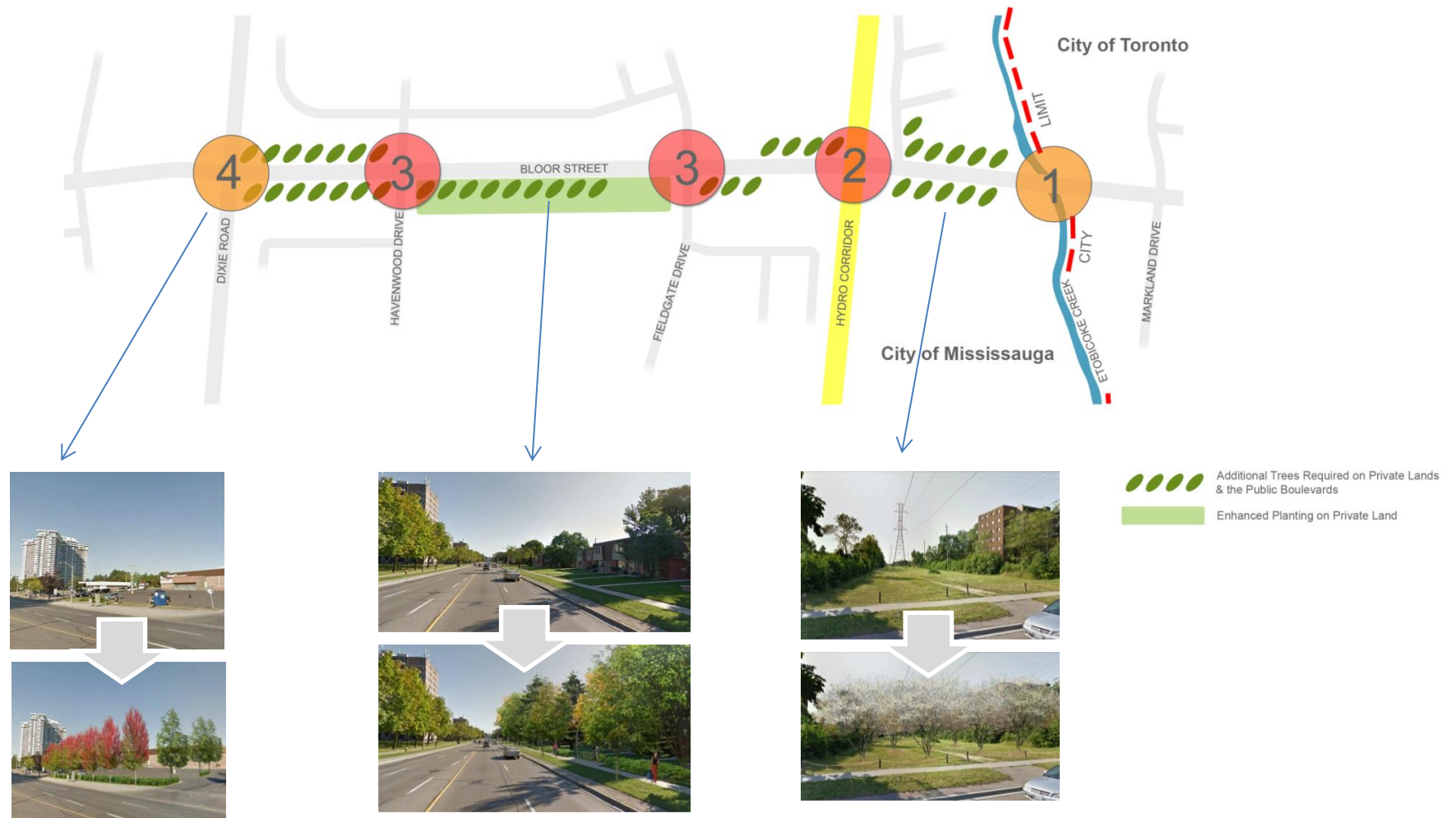


Figure 22: A concept plan for the Tree District which illustrates potential improvements along Bloor Street.

7.13 Summary - Urban Design Strategy

1. The character defining elements and patterns that shape the East Bloor Corridor are:

- the typology of buildings which constitute midrise (slab form) buildings (5 to 14 storeys in height) and townhouse form buildings. This also includes tall buildings that rise to 27 storeys (approx.) at the western edge at Dixie Road and Bloor Street;
- the random siting, location and placement of buildings on apartment properties that are defined by large superblocks. Collectively, these are designed and predicated on the influence of the Tower in the Park – which had significant presence as a planning model throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) from 1945 - 1984, including the City of Mississauga;
- mature landscaping that consists of trees and plantings on many apartment sites, alluding to a park like setting around buildings;
- the siting and location of taller buildings (representing midrise slab buildings and tall towers) and lower apartment buildings in proximity to Bloor Street. Some of the lower forms transition out towards the low-rise residential areas at the periphery of the study area; and
- surface parking located behind and/or beside apartment buildings.

2. Elements that critically help to unify the existing context include:

- The spatial qualities and character of landscaped open space which wraps the frontages and side yards of apartment buildings; and
- The type and mix of landscape materials and species generally consisting of deciduous and evergreen trees, and shrubbery.

3. To enhance the character of the corridor, the location, placement and design of infill on larger apartment properties should:

- follow existing spatial patterns taking into consideration compatible heights and separation distances between buildings and adjacent properties to ensure access to sunlight, sky views, privacy, visual permeability and comfort on amenity areas, playgrounds, pathways and green areas;
- mitigate differences in setbacks between adjacent properties, ensuring that infill projects complete streets, and follow existing patterns or orientation, particularly in the way buildings face streets and frontages;
- ensure that proposals contribute to an orderly arrangement of heights in the study area through appropriate location and placement, and by deploying transition strategies;
- resolve differences in height with adjacent buildings (within and concentric to the study area) through built form and/or massing treatments;

- provide ample landscape treatment in relation to the infill project; and
- provide improvements to the apartment site by:
 - improving walkability, comfort, safety, connectivity to the public realm and linkages to other apartment sites, transit, local amenities and adjacent neighbourhoods.
 - strengthen or providing landscaping, green treatments, amenity areas, playgrounds, illumination and the streetscape related to the apartment property. This includes, removing, reconsidering or replacing elements which detract from the presentation of the apartment property and study area as a whole, i.e. the prominence of frost free chain link fencing that surrounds many apartment building sites.

In addition to the above the City should pursue the creation of a “Tree District” - enhance Bloor Street into becoming a special Tree District with opportunities for entranceway treatments, planting programs, horticulture displays and improved pedestrianization of the area..

8.0 Revitalizing Existing Apartment Buildings and Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods evolve and change over time. In situations where change reflects a decline in the overall health of the area, action may be required.

A common concern raised with aging apartment buildings and associated neighbourhoods, is they are not adequately maintained. Infill development represents new investment in an area and can indirectly encourage surrounding owners to upgrade buildings in order to retain their tenants.

There is, however, no assurance that existing property owners will upgrade their buildings, or that individual developments will adequately address broader issues found throughout the neighbourhood (e.g. pedestrian scale street lighting).

As an issue for further review, the City should identify and assess initiatives that can encourage property owners to improve their properties as well as improve the overall health of the area. There may also be opportunities to acquire Section 37 benefits associated with increases in density from an infill development. For example, the City of Toronto Official Plan stipulates that the City may secure needed improvements and renovations to existing rental housing in accordance with policies pertaining to the use of Section 37 of the *Planning Act*, with a condition that this cost is not passed on through increased rents.

In addition to Section 37 benefits, the City could investigate the suitability of preparing a Community Improvement Plan that would

outline City initiatives intended to achieve physical improvements to the neighbourhood on both private and public lands.

There may be other initiatives that the City could examine to help revitalize older apartment areas. For example, the City of Toronto has the Office for Tower Renewal that is responsible for a program to drive broad environmental, social, economic, and cultural change by improving Toronto's concrete apartment towers and surrounding neighbourhoods.

The appropriateness of undertaking additional initiatives and programs needs further research. However, as noted earlier, policy 16.1.2.5 in the Official Plan requires as a condition of development, that existing buildings meet current property standards. Based upon this policy, and to provide further clarification, it is recommended that applications for infill development on existing apartment sites include the submission of a Property Standards Building Audit.

The audit will address issues, including but not limited, to:

- buildings, structures fences and other objects shall be kept clean of graffiti at all times;
- all structures are required to be structurally sound and all exterior walls, roofs and foundations are required to be free of water leaks and painted or otherwise treated or waterproofed;
- the interior and exterior of all buildings must have an adequate level of lighting;
- all interior hallways and stairwells of buildings must be kept clean and free of hazards;

- all heating, plumbing and mechanical systems and elevating devices must be maintained and operational in good working order;
- all driveways, walkways, ramps and parking areas on private property must be kept clear of accumulations of ice and snow and free from pot holes; and
- all land and yards are to be kept clear of inoperative vehicles and grassed and landscaped areas are to be maintained in a reasonable condition.

The possible mechanism to initiate the building audit is for the owner to obtain a letter of compliance from the City's Compliance and Licensing Enforcement staff.

The issues addressed through property standards provide an appropriate starting point for upgrades to existing buildings. Properties proposing infill development should be encouraged to undertake additional upgrades to their properties as it relates to items such as:

- green development standards (e.g. energy conservation initiatives);
- community amenities (e.g. upgrade children's playground equipment);
- undertaking a safety audit to identify measures to improve safety and implementing recommendations (e.g. trimming bushes to improve sightlines, installation of security cameras); and
- improved pedestrian infrastructure (walkways and landscaping).

Some of the additional upgrades may be appropriate to be addressed through the site plan approval process (e.g. landscaping), whereas other upgrades may require additional incentives or partnerships with various government agencies in order to implement.

9.0 Conclusion & Issues For Further Review:

This study examined the existing characteristics and context of the easterly portion of the Bloor corridor, from the west side of Dixie Road to the Etobicoke Creek. It reviewed the planning framework and the area's potential role in accommodating intensification. A general assessment of infill opportunities was completed and interim urban design guidelines prepared. Key findings included:

- The area can benefit from sensitive infill as permitted in the City's Official Plan. Opportunities for infill are generally distributed around three areas along the 1.8 kilometre (1.1 mile) corridor. There may be a few opportunities where development greater than permitted in the Official Plan is appropriate; however, those cases should be reviewed on a site specific basis;
- The Official Plan includes policies that provide direction on intensification and infill development, and, where appropriate, it allows the City to request additional studies to assess a proposed development's impacts on areas such as traffic and community infrastructure;
- Urban Design Guidelines (Interim) have been prepared to assist in the review of applications, and through the Site Plan Approval process, additional development could contribute positively to the area and appropriately reflect the existing character;

- Mature trees along Bloor Street have created a strong presence in the corridor; this should be maintained and supplemented with significantly more green landscaping. It is proposed that the corridor evolve into a special "Tree District"; and
- To promote and ensure reinvestment in the existing buildings and revitalization of the neighbourhood, infill development applications should include a Property Standards Building Audit. Further, the City should investigate potential incentives to encourage property owners to undertake upgrades including securing community benefits under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

These findings provide the basis for reviewing applications and potentially undertaking additional research on issues that were beyond the scope of this study. Additional areas for further investigation include:

- Transportation review: examine current transportation issues in the area, including traffic patterns, potential changes to active transportation (e.g. potential cycling lanes), and research on the extent to which people walk, rely on transit, or take a vehicle;
- Cultural and social infrastructure review: examine potential initiatives that can help strengthen the community (e.g. public art);

- Streetscape improvements: research and identify appropriate public realm strategies that can improve the area. Develop an inventory of existing trees over 100 cm in diameter along Bloor Street. The tree inventory should note tree species, present diameter, location, drip line of the tree and condition;
- Community improvement initiatives: examine the policy tools available to encourage property owners to improve buildings and investigate experiences in Toronto with the Tower Renewal program.

In addition, where appropriate, further work should consider a public engagement component, in order to identify and understand concerns as well as potentially generate ideas for improvement. As a result of any future work, it may be necessary to review the Official Plan and provide additional policies and/or guidelines.

