

Development Concept

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The “Development Concept” resulted from the analysis of the planning framework, existing site conditions, input from key stakeholders and the application of best practices.

A governing vision and key objectives have been created for the concept, and then various components of the design itself are broken down and explained further.

Vision:

To create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive mixed-use community that allows people to live, work and shop in their neighbourhood through a variety of modal options.

Study Objectives

1. To create a mix of land uses.
2. Promote compact built form.
3. To provide well distributed, well appointed and attractive open spaces.
4. To provide a building framework that engages the public realm.
5. To maximize the built potential for use of public transit.
6. To create beautiful, pedestrian-oriented streets.
7. To create connections across existing barriers.
8. To develop a strong public realm framework that supports a diverse program mix and vibrant urban life.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document:

Mid Rise Building

A building up to 8 storeys in height.

Tall Building

A building over 8 storeys in height.

Tower Floorplate

A Tall Building floorplate gross floor area, not including balcony floor area.

Transit as Catalyst

Throughout the 2004 Land Use Review, OPA 620, Steeles West Secondary Plan, the Official Plan as well as the Mobility Hub Guidelines, it is apparent that the extension of the subway to and through the Study Area provides the rationale for increased density in the Steeles West Study Area.

An analysis of these documents shows that the density permissions and height limits are at the highest surrounding the new subway station, located roughly mid point in the site. Density and height then gradually terrace down towards the edges (at Jane and Keele). The intent of this is to provide the greatest amount of residents and workers, in mixed uses, in close proximity to the subway station within walking distance. In addition, buses will connect with the subway station and will provide surface connections to intra-regional and regional transit.

As stated, one of the objectives of this Plan and the design guidelines is to maximize the ability to achieve those permitted densities and heights. This will provide the highest potential number of future riders and users of transit, and will provide mobility alternatives to the personal automobile.

Development Intensities

In the various reference documents mentioned above, there are different radii used surrounding the proposed Steeles West Station as indicators of development intensity.

This results in part from differences in the walking distances within the “two and a half”, “five” and “ten” minute window. They generally range from 200-250 metres for 2.5 minutes, 400-500 metres for 5 minutes, and 800 metres for 10 minutes. Within this Plan, we will reference the upper end of the range for development intensity limits, so that 250m means the distance travelled in 2.5 minutes, 500m is the distance travelled in 5 minutes, and 800m is distance travelled in 10 minutes.

Based on the Mobility Hub Guidelines, the “Primary Zone” (0-250m) is the area most influenced by the high level of accessibility to transit, where pedestrian activity should be most prioritized, and traveler amenities can be provided through development (ie. retail, pedestrian connections).

The “Secondary Zone” (250m-500m) provides opportunities for transit-oriented development, and safe and direct walking and cycling connections to the transit station through this zone are critical.

The “Tertiary Zone” (500m - 800m) is the transition of the mobility hub to the area outside of the hub, and direct and safe walking and cycling connections to the station are still very important, but also should connect to other transit and cycling systems outside the hub.



Conceptual Renderings of Full-Site Build-Out

Development Concept

Conceptual Plan

The Plan built on the three options presented in the July 2010 consultation and created a preferred “Conceptual Plan” for the overall full development of the lands.

This plan builds upon the Secondary Plan framework of primary and secondary street network, allowable heights and densities, and the distribution of open spaces to imagine a full build-out as properties redevelop over time (25+ years).

This option was selected as it provided the most equitable and even distribution of parks and open spaces that would act as focal points for each surrounding area, and provides more units fronting onto parks. The east-west mid-block road (“Greenway”) was offset to the south to create larger northern blocks that would allow for buildings oriented north-south. The blocks facing Steeles would be single-loaded and could allow for office or residential buildings. This midblock greenway was an essential element to the connection

throughout the District and its function would be more local than the street on the north (Street “X”), or Steeles Avenue.



Figure DC.1 Axonometric Conceptual Rendering of Full Build Out

Development Concept

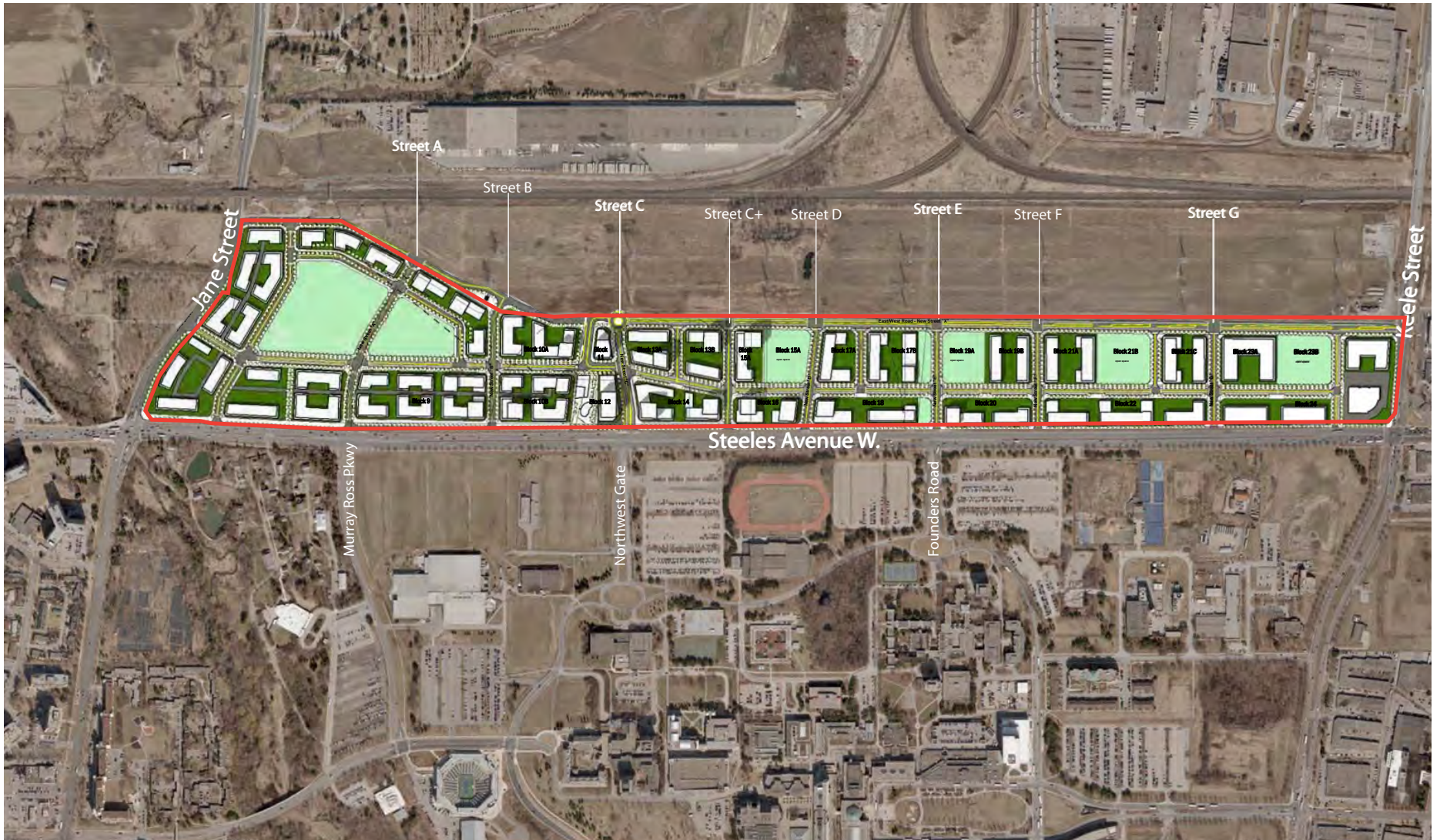


Figure DC.2 Overall Conceptual Rendering of Full Build Out

Development Concept

Streets

Streets are the primary public realm element in the Steeles West Urban Design & Streetscape Plan.

Streets:

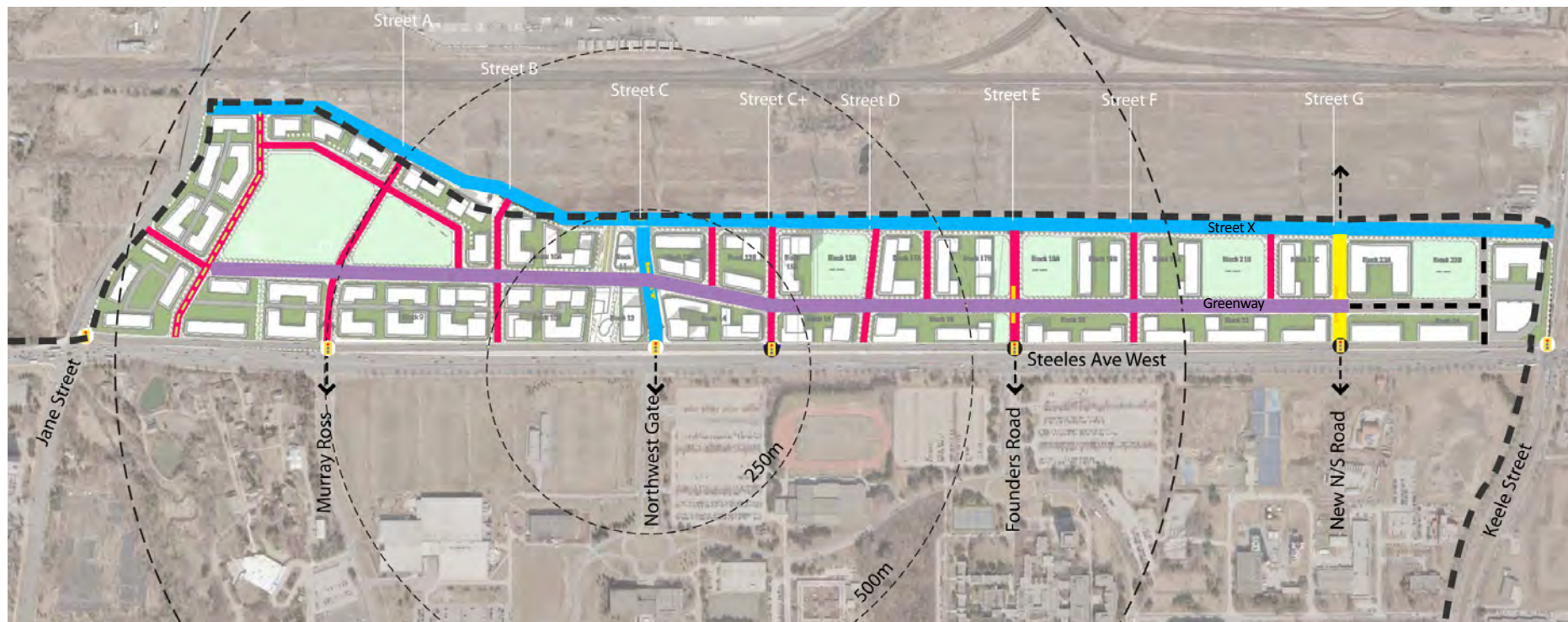
- divide up larger land holdings into blocks
- provide connections through communities
- provide connections to other communities
- provide building address and access to individual developments
- are public spaces and an important part of the public domain
- are democratic environments
- are green infrastructure

The existing large landholdings will be subdivided by public streets; not in a piecemeal fashion of individual roads serving inward developments, but within a larger grid which provides multiple functions and travel routes for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Streets found within the Secondary Plan are included within the overall concept street network, as well as a number of recommended additional “local” streets that help create pedestrian-friendly block sizes.



Conceptual Rendering of Street “G”



New blocks should be sized to create a pedestrian-friendly environment and provide dimensions that accommodate efficient underground parking layouts.

There are several specific street types that are important throughout the District. These streets should be planned and constructed to the dimensions provided and further detailed within the Conceptual Plan.

This plan also deliberately shows continuous streets that connect throughout the District. In particular, the east-west mid-block street (The Greenway) is shown as a street intended, ultimately, to connect blocks from the east to the west. This Greenway street is an essential local connection between blocks and should prioritize pedestrian and cyclist mobility. The E-W collector (Street “X”) is designed to prioritize transit and vehicular movements.

Note: Streets C-, D+, F+ are recommended additions to the Secondary Plan Street Network

Figure DC.3 Street Network (ROW)

- ▬ 26.0m ROW with Transit
- ▬ 17.5m Greenway ROW
- ▬ 23.0m ROW with Transit
- ▬ 20.0m ROW no Transit *
- ▬ Cycle Track
- Existing Traffic signals
- New Traffic signals
- Proposed Mobility Hub Boundary

Streetscape Character

Streetscape Character Areas have a distinct identities within the Steeles West Study Area. These areas will have common characteristics, features and functions that will help create identity. Compatible development and specific public realm design will enhance and support the identity of each Streetscape Character Area.

Retail Hub

This is the most concentrated Streetscape Character Area, centred around Street and the location of the proposed Steeles West Subway Station. Street “C” also is the northward extension of Northwest Gate, a key ceremonial entrance into York University and the location of the Subway Station entrance south of Steeles Avenue.

The “Retail Hub” area will be the focus of the highest amounts of density and height, consistent with the location around the Station as prescribed in the Mobility Hub Guidelines and Secondary Plan. It will be the urban activity centre within the Steeles West District with local shopping, restaurants, and transit activating the streetscapes. This area will be a destination for commuters moving through the hub, but also people who live and work in the District. As a result, the highest concentration of residents and workers will be located around this street. In addition, the location of the commuter parking lot within the hydro corridor will bring a large number of commuters to and from the site, as they park and walk to the subway station.

The “Retail Hub” area will feature wider sidewalks, street-related service, commercial or public uses, encouraged to spill out into a sidewalk area, as well as main building entrances for buildings above. It will also provide for movements of pedestrians, buses, passenger vehicles, taxis, and dedicated bicycle lanes. The design of Street “C” should prioritize mobility based on the Metrolinx Mobility Hub Guidelines:

- i) trip reduction, shortening or avoidance
- ii) walking
- iii) cycling
- iv) transit
- v) ridesharing and taxis
- vi) single-occupant vehicles

Greenway

The east-west midblock street is otherwise known as the “Greenway” Streetscape Character area, which is the main internal connection of the entire Study Area. This neighbourhood street is intended to connect the various parks and open spaces proposed on the north side of the development blocks, and provide a linear “green” linkage throughout the District.

The design of the Greenway incorporates street trees on both sides, as well as suitable building setbacks for landscaping. The north side will include room for a second row of trees and potential bioswale, and will directly connect and link the multiple open spaces proposed on the north side. Layby parking will also be provided on the north side where feasible.

Ceremonial Edge

The “Ceremonial Edge” is the character area facing Steeles Avenue and York University lands. Steeles Avenue has a long, fairly straight frontage that will be framed by a number of mid-rise scaled buildings, with some taller buildings closer to the subway station at Street “C”. The north side of Steeles Avenue will feature large canopy trees and a generous setback of buildings to continue the landscaped corridor and sensitivity to the cultural landscape of York University on the south side of the street. A separate cycle track is proposed. Buildings will provide frontage (including entrances) on Steeles, while at-grade uses should be activated with multiple residential unit entries/exits, and especially at key intersections for future service and retail commercial uses. As per both the Steeles West and York University Secondary Plans, buildings on both sides of Steeles are to be a minimum of 4 storeys in height.

Priority Connection

Five streets, Street “A”, “C”, “E” “G” and “X” are identified as “priority connections”. They are arranged fairly evenly across the District, and will account for the main entrances in from Steeles West, Keele and Jane Street. They also will align with connections south, across Steeles West into York University, connecting the two sides (also municipalities, Vaughan and Toronto) through signalized intersections. Streets “C”, “G” and “X” will also feature surface transit routes.

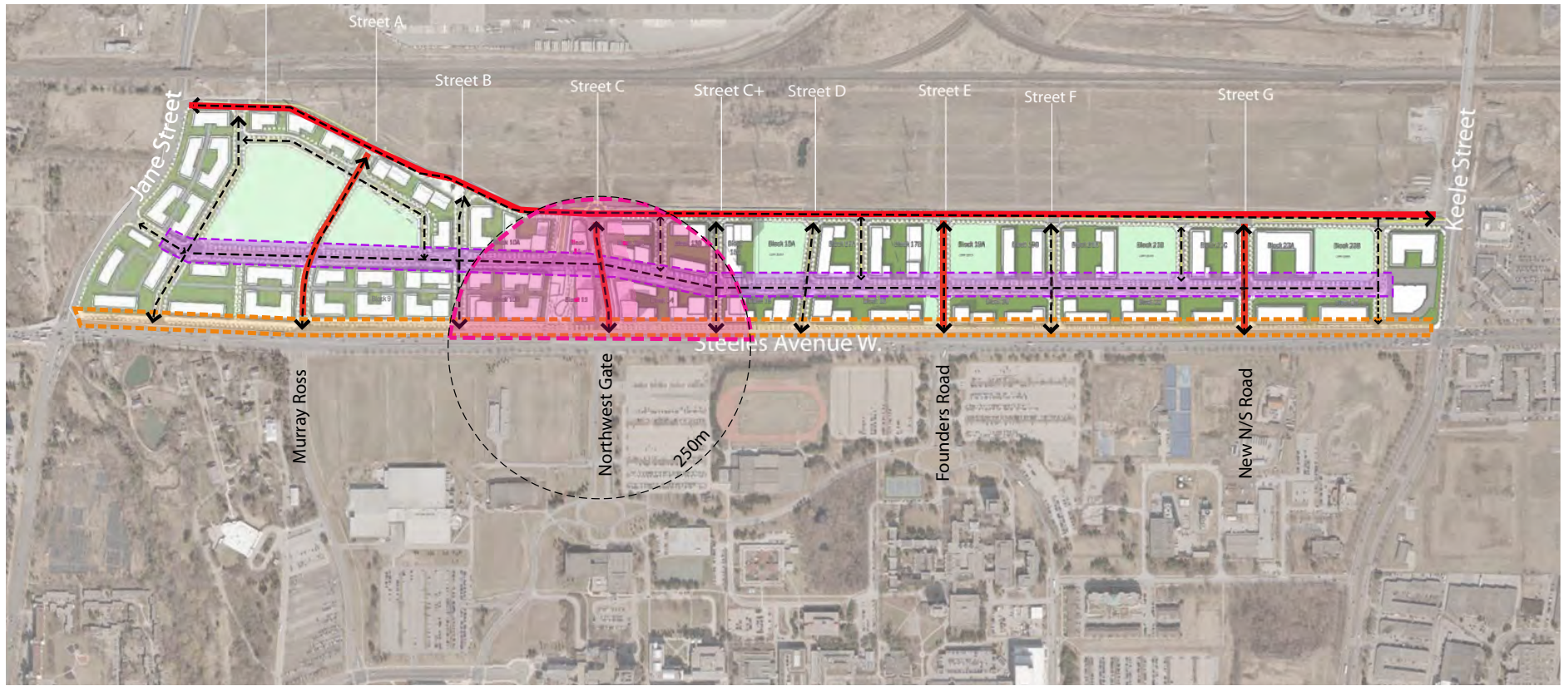


Figure DC.4 Streetscape Character Diagram

- Retail Hub
- Greenway
- Ceremonial Edge
- Priority Connection

Retail

A key characteristic of the success of the Steeles West District is a consistent “streetwall”, or building frontage, which draws the pedestrian along the street, provides a consistent edge to the street and maintains interest. In mixed use areas, the visual interest and comfort of pedestrians on the street and in public spaces hinges on how the buildings and their uses interface with these spaces. The character and scale of the street wall is important because it is the part of the building that is most intimately involved in shaping the image of a place and the quality of the pedestrian experience.

A high quality pedestrian experience is often associated with the provision of grade-related retail uses. Grade-related retail provides a variety of shopping activities and street animation that promotes energy at the street level. This is vital to enable workers, residents and visitors to shop for daily needs, including meals, close to where they live and work, without the need for car trips. This is opposite to the separation and spreading of single-use buildings common to suburbs that typically require individual car trips between destinations. Including grade-related retail in key locations will concentrate retailers and create focal shopping areas within the District.

There are three areas where retail is strategically identified within the District, and each location factors into the creation of “Character”. All buildings in the three retail areas identified should

be designed to provide for retail either immediately, or in the future. Accordingly, appropriate ground floor heights should be incorporated to protect for retail uses.

Primary Retail

“Primary” Retail areas are where a mandatory provision of grade-related retail is recommended in the development of any new building. These areas are at major entry points into the area from Steeles, along Streets “A”, “C”, “E” and “G” (“Priority Connections”). The location of Primary retail is premised on providing some retail within a 2.5 minute walking distance of almost the entire Study Area (250m). This will allow for convenient access for pedestrians who are living and working in the area.

The area along Street “C”, which is the main cross street of the new Steeles West subway station and bus terminal(s), will have the greatest concentration of density and height, and therefore the largest number of potential users. It is anticipated as the primary initial provider of grade retail in new development, due to the activity generated around and at the subway station and bus terminals. The area at Street “G” is also anticipated as a key retail location that could be developed in the short-medium term.

Secondary & Tertiary Retail

Areas categorized as “Secondary” and “Tertiary” Retail are areas primarily facing the proposed east-west Greenway. This Greenway is anticipated as the major interior, neighbourhood connection for the whole District. It will have a more local nature in vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist movements, which will lend itself to being a good Secondary Retail option that connects to the Primary Retail.

In particular, Secondary Retail is retail connected to Primary Retail and that terminates adjacent to the parks within the overall plan. These locations opposite the parks will be good locations for restaurants, cafes, or retailers. Secondary Retail is located on the north side of the Greenway.

The “Tertiary” Retail is retail located along the south side of the Greenway that connects with the Primary Retail areas. These areas would function well as residential or live-work units in the interim until retail is viable in these locations.

Retail fronting Steeles Avenue West

As noted, some retail is anticipated at key intersections with Steeles Avenue (on Priority Connection Streets “A”, “C”, “E”, and “G”). Retail is permitted along the length of Steeles Avenue West.

Development Concept

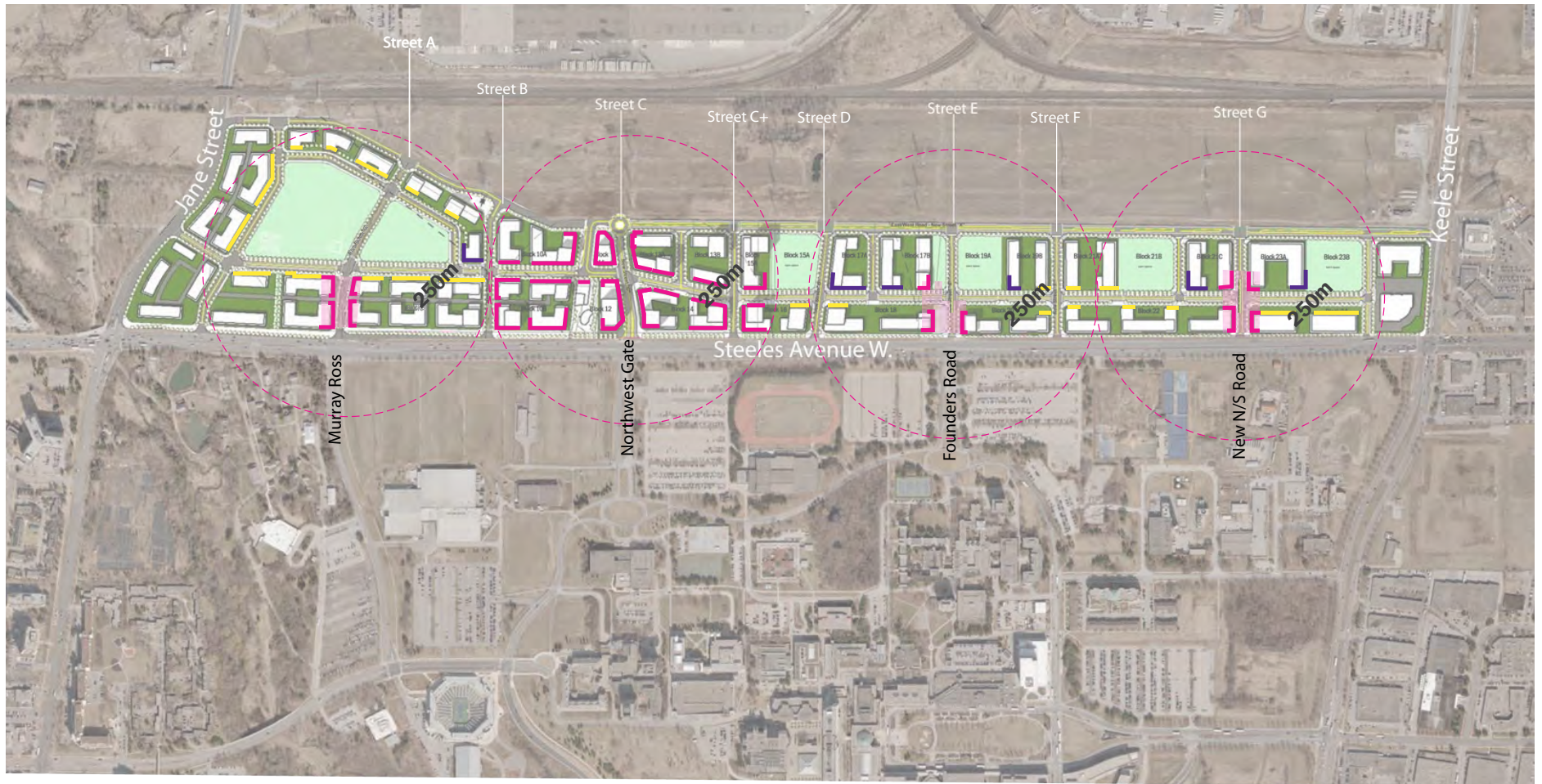


Figure DC.5 Retail Frontage Diagram

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary

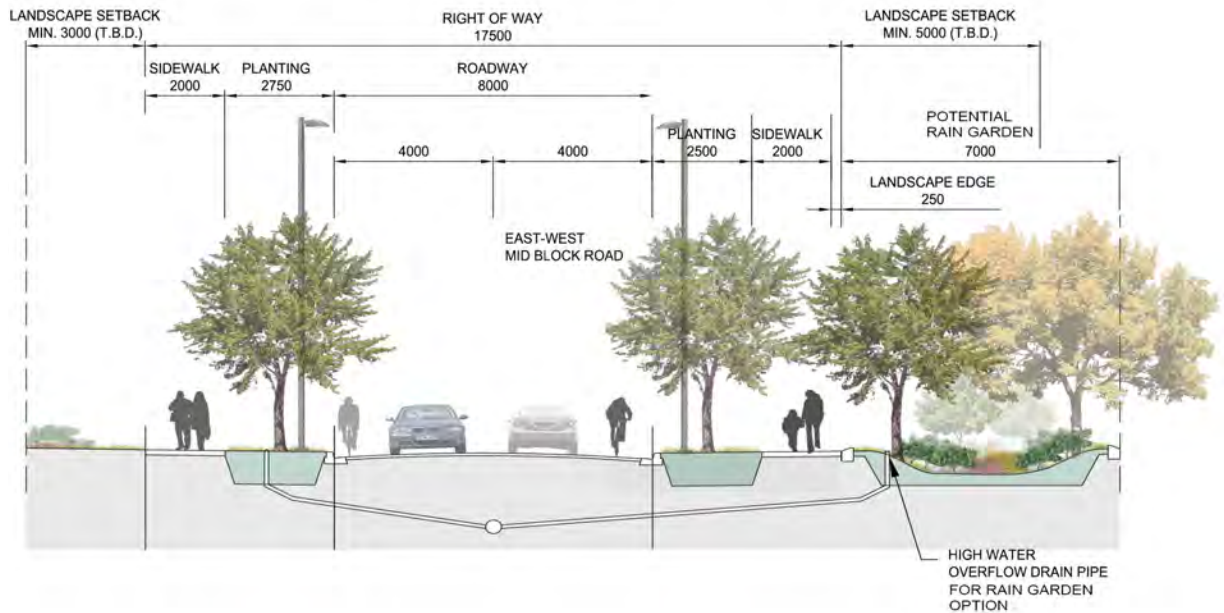
Development Concept

Street Type - Greenway (17.5m)

One of the most important streets to be created within the overall plan area is the east-west “Greenway” which will connect through the entire Study Area, from east to west, in a mid-block configuration. This street is the primary internal connection between neighbourhoods in the Study Area and the central transit station. It is the primary local connection for pedestrians and cyclists across the District. The Greenway will also need to provide on-street parking to support the mobility hub pick-up and drop-off, and parks.

The Greenway has a 17.5m right-of-way (ROW) with an enhanced boulevard on the north and south side which will also connect the planned parks and open spaces spaced throughout the Plan. Within the ROW, one travel lane will be provided in each direction. Boulevards on either side allow for street trees, sidewalks and lighting. Traffic calming and enhanced public realm measures such as curb extensions should be employed wherever possible in the detailed design. This street will also support Secondary and Tertiary Retail.

The Greenway has been jogged at Street “C” to align with the TTC’s location of the bus terminal driveway access. This has been coordinated so that this driveway will be protected for and upgradeable to allow for the continuation of Street “C” through and beyond the bus terminal in the future. A larger intersection / pedestrian area at Street “C” and the Greenway is to be included to serve high pedestrian volumes associated with the Mobility Hub.



Greenway Street
17.5m (row width)

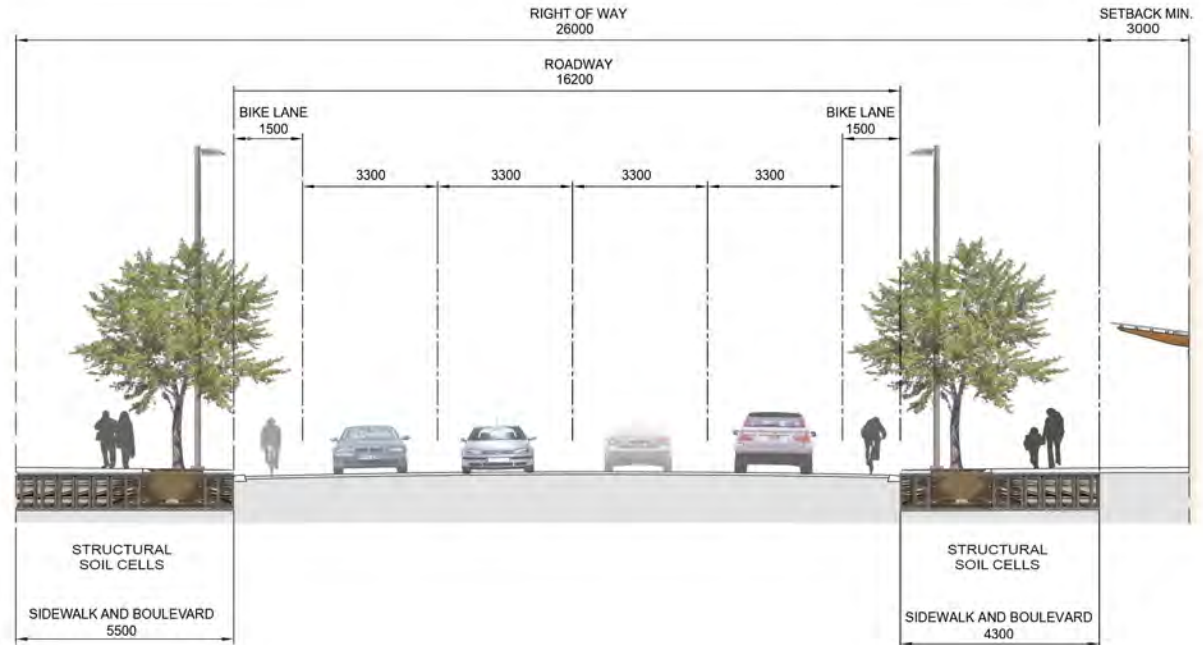
The expanded North boulevard includes a double row of street trees, as well as the potential option for a Rain Garden (subject to further study and detailed design).

Street Type - Street "C" (26m)

Street "C", the northward extension and connection of Northwest Gate from the York University lands, will travel north-south between Steeles Avenue and the East-West Collector Road (Street "X"). This is one of the main gateway streets of the new District, and will be the intersection of surface transit (bus terminals north and south of Steeles) and the new subway station. Accordingly, the built form surrounding Street "C" carry the greatest height and density permissions for the area. The street will be designed as a 26.0m ROW with transit, which allows for two travel lanes each way, a dedicated bike lane, a turning lane, and a premium pedestrian boulevard on each side.

Street "C" will also be the main retail street the District, with the greatest amount of pedestrian activity driven by the highest population density, as well as proximity to transit access (subway station and bus terminal).

In the short term, Street "C" will be the primary connection to the new subway station as well as the main connection to the planned commuter parking lot in the hydro corridor from Steeles Avenue West. It will also service the north bus transit terminal. This will make the initial function heavily weighted towards passenger and bus traffic, but once the adjacent streets and blocks are developed, they will provide some traffic relief.



*Street C, North @ Street X
26.0m (row width)*

Flanking boulevards are critical pedestrian connections between York University, Steeles Avenue West and transit facilities.

Built form along the street will have active frontages with retail use and setbacks for patios and display.

The coordination of structural soil cells with underground utilities is to be determined through detailed design.

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Street Type - Public Laneway

Public local and private laneway design shall conform to the City of Vaughan Design Standards, from 7.5 to 8.0m. (Secondary Plan - 11.3.12.15).

Street Type - Private Driveways

Private driveways will be built primarily to locally service buildings internal to blocks. All streets identified within the Corridor are required to be built and maintained to a City operational standard and shall provide permanent public access for traffic through the Corridor at locations satisfactory to the pertinent authorities (Secondary Plan - 11.3.12.19).

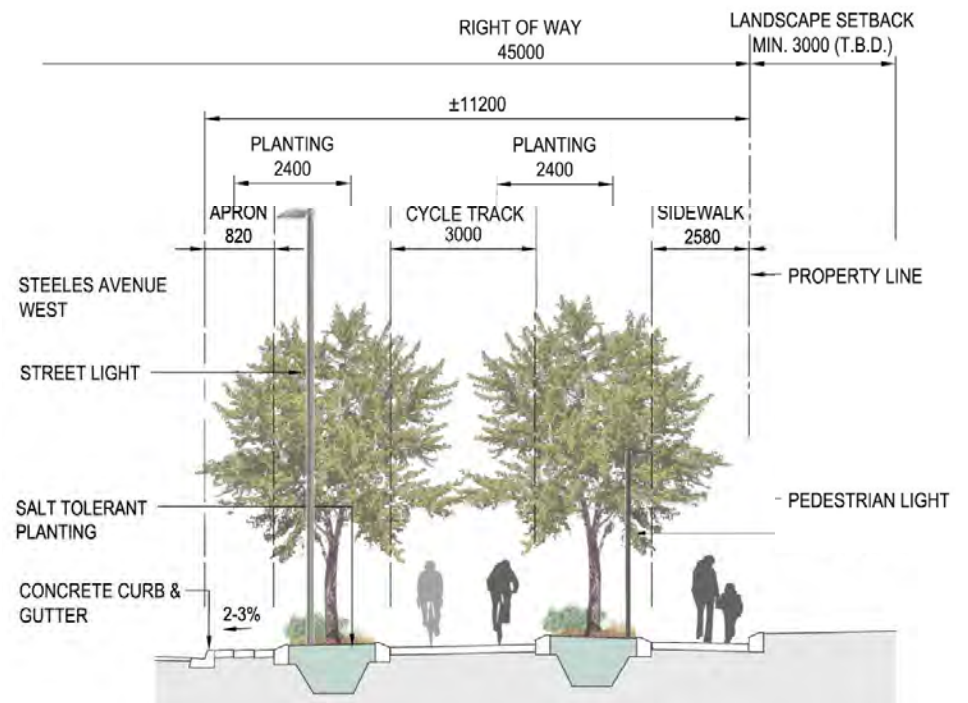
The City may permit private driveways designed and built to City standards with public easements that convey the road to the City at no cost, any time in the future that the City deems necessary. (Secondary Plan - 11.3.12.20)

Steeles West - North Boulevard

The North boulevard of Steeles Avenue West will be characterized by a double allee of trees framing an enhanced 3.0 metre wide cycle track for cyclists, and a minimum 2.0 metre wide sidewalk for pedestrians. While the width of the North boulevard on Steeles Avenue West varies along its length across the District, it is anticipated that the dimensions demonstrated will be adjusted to suit local conditions.

*Proposed North Boulevard
+/- 11.2m (row width)*

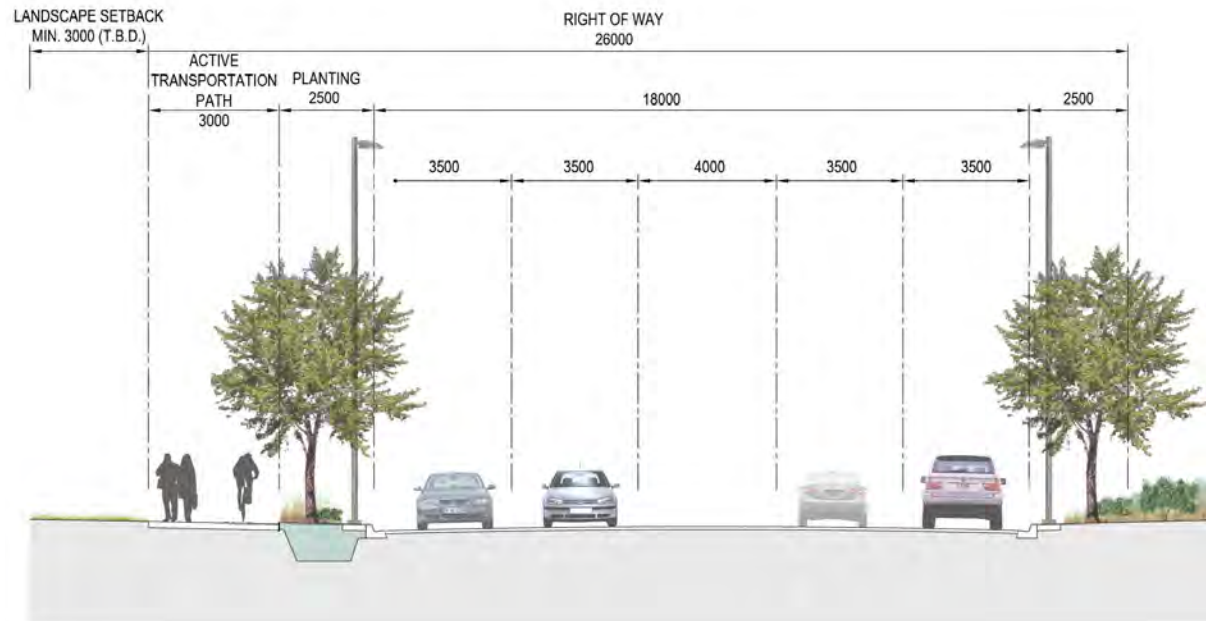
This boulevard features a continuous cycle track and double allee of trees.



Street Type - Street "X" / East-West Collector (26m)

The East-West Collector Road (Street "X") design and location is the result of an Environmental Assessment completed in 2012, which creates a 26.0m collector street on the northern edge of the District, adjacent to the existing hydro corridor. This street features an asymmetrical cross section, with two travel lanes each direction, along with a centre turning lane with additional width which will be used by the various buses travelling to the new bus terminal located at Street "C". Street "X" will be transit priority. The street is also aligned to the southern boundary of the hydro corridor. A larger boulevard will be provided on the south edge of the ROW for pedestrian sidewalks and planting. The East-West Collector Road / Street "X" will relieve traffic congestion from Steeles Avenue, as it will connect to Keele Street. Through detailed design, it is recommended to optimize the roadway design in order to include a cycling facility on the north side of Street "X".

Eventually this street is proposed to connect westwards to Jane Street to provide an alternate east-west route between Jane Street and Keele Street.



*East-West Collector (Street X)
26.0m (row width)*

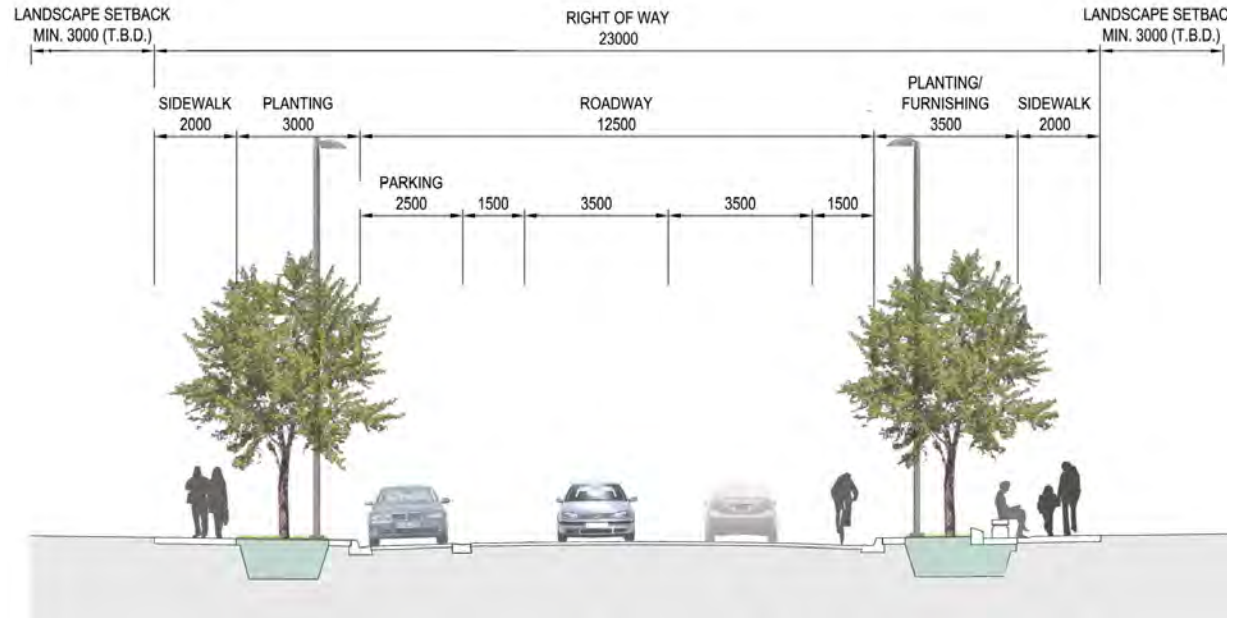
The South boulevard shows a boulevard with an active transportation path, planting and street lighting, while the North accommodates street lighting.

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Street Type - Street "G" (23m)

Street "G" will have a 23.0m overall ROW width with travel lanes supportive of bus transit and dedicated bike lanes. Street "G" is the northward extension of Founders Road from the York University lands, north of Steeles Avenue. It may continue through the Hydro Corridor in the future, and also provide vehicular traffic relief from Keele Street.

Lay-by parking is to be provided, where feasible, on the west side of the street (on north block).



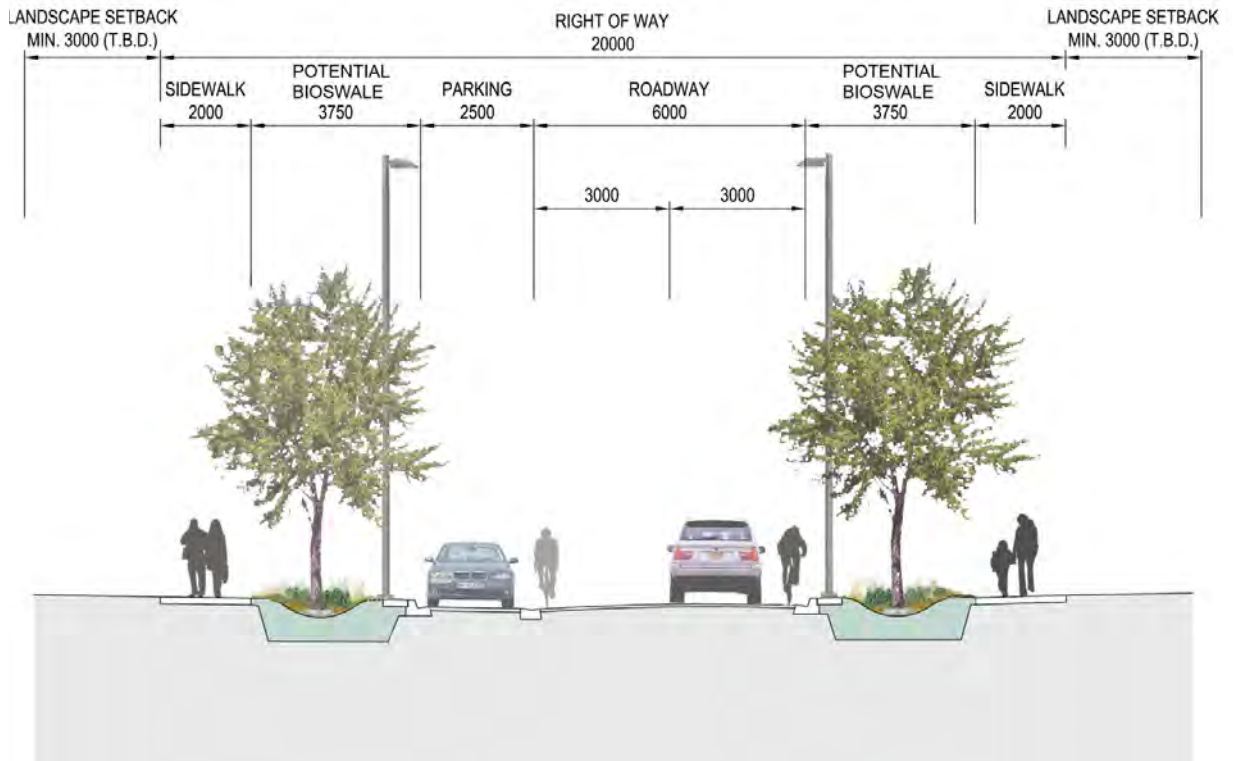
*Proposed Street G
23.0m (row width)*

*On-street, off-peak parking is provided
on one side of the right-of-way*

Street Type - Local Streets (20m)

The majority of the remaining new streets will be classified as Local Streets, with a 20.0m ROW. This will allow for one travel lane in each direction, and either parking on one side or sharrow lane widths to provide safe cycling. Bump-outs or curb extensions are traffic calming measures. These extensions will also provide enhanced pedestrian crossings. A 5.75m boulevard on each side will be provided to support plantings, sidewalks and lighting. These streets will be found in the north-south direction between Steeles Avenue and Street "X".

Note: An alternate cross section for Street E (to include bike lanes) is to be determined through detailed design.



*Proposed Local Street
20.0m (row width)*

On-street parking is provided on one side of the right-of-way

Green Streets (bioswales) are subject to further study and detailed design.

Blocks

Blocks come in different sizes, but certain dimensions provide for the ability to unlock the potential for multiple building types, which is important in a mixed-use, higher density community like the Steeles West Study Area. Blocks that are too big, either overall, or in one dimension, create fragmented, undevelopable blocks, or blocks that rely on excessive private driveways and private streets to service buildings. Private driveways do not extend the public realm or connect parts of communities. They are typically confusing for visitors to navigate and embody the disconnection between ownership of the area. They are not naturally surveilled, since pedestrian and/or vehicular travel is missing from their structure. Blocks that are too small only allow for traditional, less intensive building types and will remain problematic for future flexibility and uses as they limit traditional building types.

For example, low density residential building types can fit within block depths up to, and less than 35 metres, while mid-rise and tower buildings typically need 40 to 50 metres or more.

Generally, the blocks have been laid out at 90 to 110m in width, which allows for two mid-rise or tower buildings with adequate separation between buildings, and sufficient width to make efficient parking garages, provide on-site amenity, and servicing.

Design Implications

The geometry of the site, particularly between the hydro corridor and Steeles Avenue, provides limited options in terms of the numbers of blocks that can be created. The east-west street depicted mid-block throughout the site (the “Greenway”) creates two blocks, one north and one south. The preferred development option utilizes this configuration. The southern blocks are suited primarily to buildings facing Steeles Avenue West (as well as on the Greenway Street), which when paired, create significant private amenity spaces with courtyard shapes. The northern blocks are slightly deeper, and allow for north-south buildings also addressing the local north-south streets and parks.

There are a number of north-south streets also depicted in the Secondary Plan. This breaks up the blocks created by the intersections of the conceptual streets. Three additional small streets outside of the Secondary Plan street network are proposed; these additional streets will improve connectivity and break up larger blocks in accordance with the principles in the Steeles West Secondary Plan.

The blocks have been laid out to allow for double-loaded blocks (two series of buildings), other than the blocks facing Steeles West which have a depth more suited to one building.

Development Concept

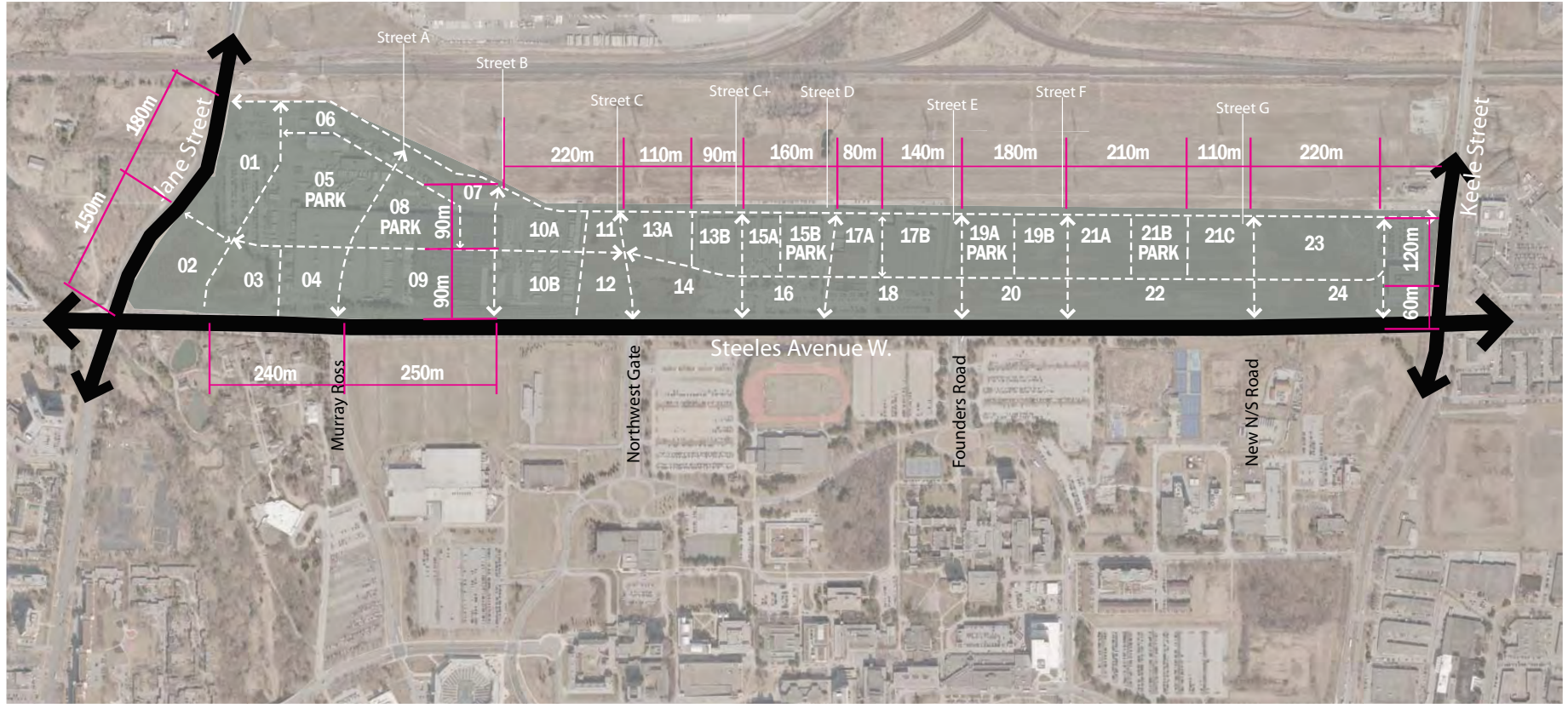


Figure DC.6 Conceptual Block Plan with preliminary block dimensions.

Built Form

Built Form is an encompassing term that collectively describes all buildings and structures and how they relate to the adjacent streets and community. Managing the ways that buildings interface with streets and open spaces is important in the creation of beautiful and high-functioning communities. Cohesive, coordinated built form can generate beautiful and successful communities, while disparate, fragmented built form often leads to less beautiful, enjoyable and ultimately less successful places to live and work.



Conceptual Built Form, West from Subway Station

The Steeles West Secondary Plan provides “built form” policies that provide a baseline for this Plan:

(11.3.10.5) Buildings are to:

- a define street edges, public spaces and intersections;
- b face and have their main entrances onto a public street and sidewalk;
- c have their main entrance facing Steeles (where the buildings are located on Steeles Avenue);
- d be massed at an appropriate scale to ensure good sunlight, sky views, and wind conditions in streets, parks and open spaces, providing setbacks as appropriate;
- e be sited and organized to achieve a harmonious relationship to the planned built form context through building massing and setbacks, roofline, profile, and scale;
- f be designed, where through-lots are provided, so that all elevations facing a street present active front elevations and fenestration;
- g address the street such that a continuous building facade along the street frontage and at corners is created;
- h be generally sited parallel to the public street and along the edges of parks and open spaces;
- i maximize ground floor coverage;
- j be sited and organized at-grade to enhance the public nature of streets, open spaces, and pedestrian routes, and so provide convenient access for pedestrians to public transit;
- k have grade-oriented main entrances connected directly to the public sidewalk and, where possible, located close to on-street parking; this applies in particular to each commercial use located at grade;
- l each building shall have its own lobby and entrance adjacent to the street;
- m be sited and organized so that principal windows and walls are separated to ensure adequate light, view and privacy; light view and privacy setbacks should be proposed, to regulate the design of building facing conditions; and
- n overlook all streets, parks and publicly accessible open spaces with active building faces, in order to provide “eyes-on-the-street”.

Building typologies

The expected building typologies are high density residential, prestige office employment, commercial uses in mixed use development, and public and institutional uses. These types, in combination with the permitted densities are expected to generate higher-intensity multiple-storey building forms throughout the lands, including mid-rise and tower buildings.

The tallest buildings will be located on the corners closest to the subway station, and fronting onto Steeles Avenue West (11.3.10.8). On Steeles Avenue West, buildings are a minimum of 4 storeys or 13m in height (11.3.10.8).

Streetwall and Frontages

The creation of a consistent streetwall through the coordination of the scale and position of adjacent building frontages is important to creating a consistent street “look” and “feel”. Generally, when multiple buildings line up, they create a seamless and reinforced street edge, thereby defining the public environment, which creates a more comfortable pedestrian “feel”, or experience.

The Secondary Plan currently describes specific urban design policies relating to the creation of strong streetwall and frontages through discussion of setback areas (11.3.10.9), build-to-lines (11.3.10.10), and minimum built frontage (11.3.10.11).

The Urban Design Guidelines included in this Plan demonstrate and describe how to coordinate and control these elements to achieve consistency.

The conceptual design of the Steeles West District provides consistent streetwall/frontages, generally with a suitable minimum building setback (3-5m) to allow for landscaping, and appropriate distinction between the public realm (on the street) and the private function of the buildings. It will also allow for coordinated grade-related retail and building lobbies.

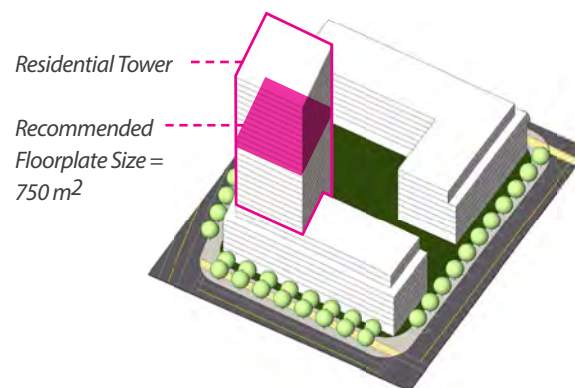
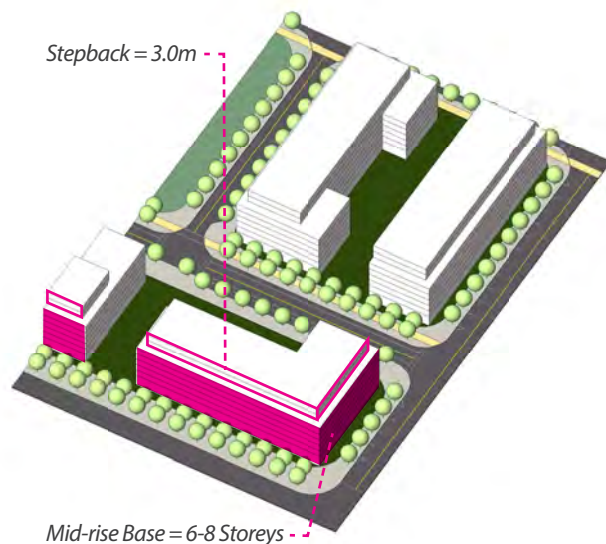
Built Form

Design

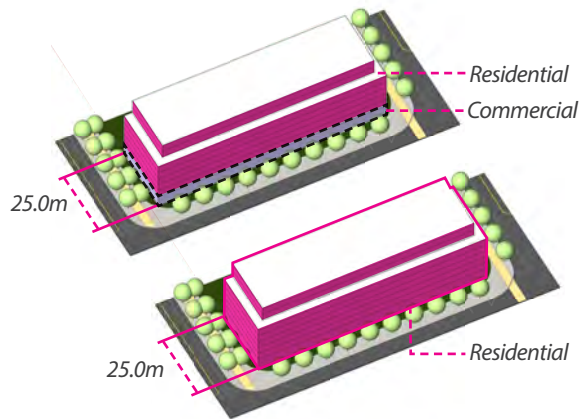
The built form of the preferred concept is primarily mid-rise, where buildings are generally massed at 6-8 storeys at the streetwall, and any further building mass is setback from that base building. Any elements taller than 8 storeys are setback from the streetwall by 3 metres in an effort to break down the mass and provide distinction between the base building.

All towers (other than Blocks 11 and 12) are shown as residential point tower floorplates, at a size of 750 square metres maximum. Towers should generally be setback a minimum of 3m from mid-rise streetwalls to break up the overall heights, provide a human-scaled street wall, and to provide microclimate wind protection on the surrounding streets.

The buildings found within Blocks 23 and 24 (at the easternmost part of the land area, between Street "G" and Keele Street), are shown as typical prestige office building types (with building depths for double-loaded corridors at 33 metres wide). The existing 4-storey office building found at the intersection of Keele and Steeles, being recently built is expected to remain. These buildings were shown specifically as Prestige Office building types to maximize the available density potential.



The remaining mid-rise buildings are shown as residential typology, with building depths with double-loaded corridors at 25 metres wide. This assumption is not meant to be prescriptive, as the Secondary Plan permits a number of mixed uses, but demonstrates the application of the streetwall and frontages at a block scale. The street blocks are designed to accommodate a variety of building types, as their individual application will demonstrate as lands are developed over time.



Parks and Open Spaces

A variety of parks and open spaces are located conceptually within the Secondary Plan, distributed throughout the developable area. They are located mostly one per block as defined in the Secondary Plan (for larger blocks), with the exception of the western block at Jane, and the western block at Street “C”.

Parks and Open Space blocks are categorized in the Secondary Plan as:

- Neighbourhood Park (3)
- Neighbourhood Square/Green (5)
- Urban Plaza (1)
- Potential School Site or Open Space (1)
- Existing Stormwater Management Pond (1)

Parks and public squares will: “provide central common spaces and key social gathering spaces for citizens. Public squares are smaller than typical neighbourhood parks, and are intended to address the passive recreation needs of residents and employees of the Secondary Plan Area.” (11.3.8.7)

Parks and public squares should be designed based on the following design guidelines as outlined in the Secondary Plan (11.3.8.11):

- a Parks and squares should be planned as focal points
- b Streetscapes along the street right-of-way that abut a park should be designed to reinforce a high-quality, formalized relationship between the open space and its adjacent land uses.
- s Buildings should front onto the park to create built form edges to the public space.
- d The landscape along the street frontage should include high canopy street trees and be complementary on both sides of the street.
- e Entry/access points should be located conveniently and incorporate civic design themes.
- f Hard and soft landscape elements and features shall be designed to define and articulate activity areas, circulation, entry points, seating and gathering areas.
- g Parks and squares should be designed with a minimum of two (2) street or lane frontages.
- h Neighbourhood parks should be 0.8 - 2.5 hectares in size. Public squares will range in size from 0.4 to 0.8 hectares.

Design Implications

Working together with City of Vaughan Staff, a Development Concept Plan has emerged which supplies all the parks and open spaces found within the Secondary Plan. They are provided in a variety of shapes and sizes, and situated in the same approximate locations as per the Secondary Plan.

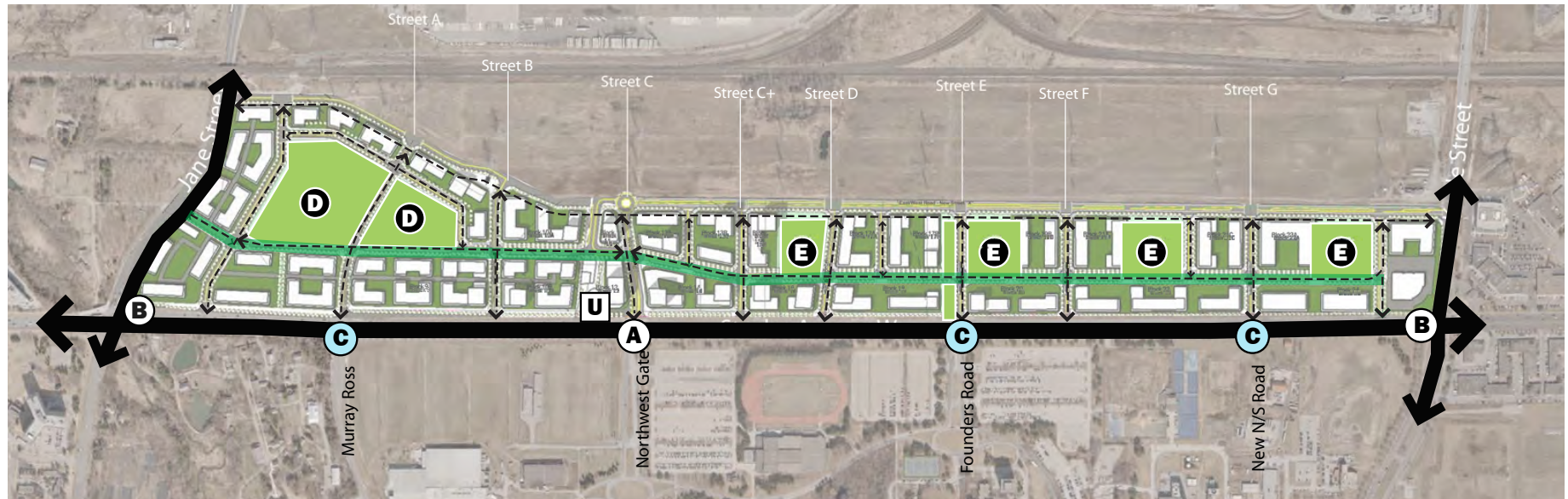


Figure DC.7 Gateways, Urban Plaza and Parks & Open Spaces

Gateways

The most significant gateways and key sites are located at the following major intersections.

Three Major Gateways:

- Ⓐ Northwest Gate / Street “C” and Steeles Ave. W. (Block 12 and Block 14)
- Ⓑ Jane Street and Steeles Ave. W. (Block 2)
- Keele Street and Steeles Ave. W (Block 24)

These three locations are significant intersections. Most people will arrive at Gateways “B” by personal vehicle or surface transit. Those arriving via subway will emerge at Gateway “A”.

Three Minor Gateways:

- Ⓒ Street “A” and Steeles Ave. W. (Block 4 and 9)
- Street “E” and Steeles Ave. W. (Block 18 and 20)
- Street “G” and Steeles Ave. W. (Block 22 and 24)

See also York University Secondary Plan - Gateways.

Urban Plaza U

The Urban Plaza will be created as part of the Steeles West subway station redevelopment. It features an iconic station entrance (designed by ALSOP Architects), with a large square in front that provides visibility and address onto Steeles Avenue West. The Square will be 0.4 - 0.8 ha in size. (11.3.8.12)

Park and Open Space Blocks

- Ⓓ Block 5 and 8
- Ⓔ Block 15A, 19A, 21B and 23B

The park blocks are meant to act as large attractors of residents and visitors in acting as focal points for the community. They will provide large and convenient respites from the significant density and larger buildings that will surround them. Parks are located to provide orientation and larger common amenity areas.

The block labelled “D” is conceptually planned to include a potential elementary school site (11.3.8.17). The integration and design as a school will be reflected at the appropriate trigger point (approximately 10,000 residents) (11.3.8.20)

Phasing: Initial, Interim and Continuing

The full build-out of the District will develop in parts, as individual landowners construct new buildings or applications for developments are filed and received.

It should be noted that United Parcel Service Ltd. (UPS) has advanced plans to establish, maintain and enlarge the UPS facility at this location due to its proximity and accessibility to the Greater Toronto Area and recent investments in the facility. The near doubling in size of the operation in 2009 will be followed by a further expansion to the full limit of the development potential available under existing zoning rights. It would therefore be reasonable to accept that this operation will remain in operation and expand within and beyond the time frame of the Steeles West Secondary Plan and the City of Vaughan Official Plan planning time horizon.

Modification to the Steeles West Secondary Plan (Volume 2) of the City of Vaughan Official Plan

See Ontario Municipal Board Notice of Decision pertaining to United Parcel Service Canada Ltd.

2900 Steeles Avenue West

11.3.18.1 That the following policies shall apply to the lands identified as 'Lands Subject to Policy 11.3.18.1' on Map 11.3.A 'Steeles West Secondary Plan – Land Use':

a. The area identified as 'Lands Subject to Policy 11.3.18.1' on Map 11.3.A 'Steeles West Secondary Plan – Land Use' shall be subject to the provisions of the OPA 450 "Prestige Area" and "Employment Area General" Designations.

b. The existing use of the lands identified as 'Lands Subject to Policy 11.3.18.1' on Map 11.3.A 'Steeles West Secondary Plan – Land Use' is expected to exist beyond the timeframe of the Official Plan and shall continue to operate and develop.

c. Expansion or extension of the existing use in accordance with the Zoning By-law shall be permitted. Expansion or extension of the existing use requiring an amendment to the zoning by-law shall also be considered without amendment to this Plan.

d. Policy 5.2.1.2 of Volume 1 of this Plan shall apply to applications for more sensitive land uses proposing to locate in proximity to the existing employment use on the subject lands and such applicants will be required to provide landscaping, buffering or screening devices, and any other necessary mitigation measures to ensure land use compatibility with the employment use prior to development, at the expense of the applicant for the more sensitive land use.

e. Zoning by-law amendments for any part of the subject lands shall permit only uses that are in conformity with the "Prestige Area" and "Employment Area" designations of OPA 450. Redevelopment of any part of the subject lands for uses not in conformity with the "Prestige Area" and "Employment Area" designations of OPA 450 shall only proceed by way of an approved tertiary plan. New non-employment uses contemplated by a tertiary plan would not constitute a conversion, as requirements under the Growth Plan (Policy 2.2.6.5) have been fulfilled through the Vaughan Official Plan 2010 review.

The remaining Secondary Plan lands can be developed in accordance with the Development Concept in the Steeles West Urban Design & Streetscape Plan. It is recognized that these lands may also remain as-is, with existing buildings and site plan configurations for the near term.

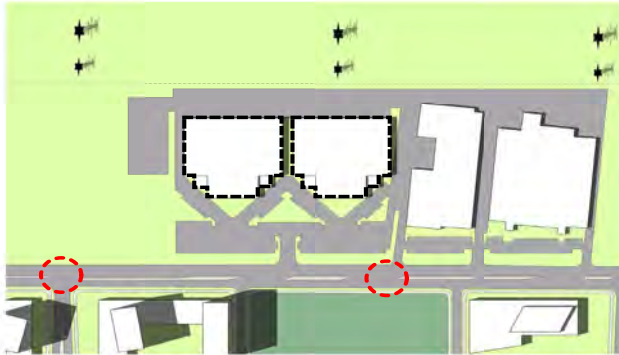
The intent of the Steeles West Urban Design & Streetscape Plan is not to force landowners to move or redevelop. The Development Concept provides a framework to plan and review future application(s) in the Steeles West Intensification Area.

Phasing is an important concept for the infill or redevelopment of existing sites. Market demand and financing may restrict the ability to provide too many buildings in short spans of time. Accordingly, portions of an existing site can be infilled incrementally to support overall site redevelopment.

The following series of images demonstrate how a potential phased redevelopment of a sample of the Study Area lands might occur:

Development Concept

1



*Existing Site (Vacant/Light Industrial)
Identify and utilize (where possible) existing intersections.*

2



Initial Phase
Develop the street edges with new buildings. Establish internal through streets within the existing lot. Parking demand can be maintained with a combination of remaining existing surface and new underground or structured parking spaces.

3



Interim Phase
Internal infill of buildings and allocation of parks and open spaces should be structured in anticipation of connections between new and existing streets.

4



Continuing Phase
Extend street connections to existing and new neighbourhoods where possible. Re-configure new blocks to coincide with the development concept.