

## Laird in Focus – Mobility Report | Final Report (July 2018)

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/laird-in-focus/information-reports-laird-in-focus/>



### Leaside (incl. Business Park and Employment Area)

*The Laird Focus Area includes the properties located on the south side of Eglinton Avenue between Vanderhoof Avenue, Laird Drive, and to the western limit of Aerodrome Crescent. To address broader travel issues in the Leaside neighbourhood, both the residential and employment areas, a larger transportation study area extended the geographic area that includes Laird Drive on the west, the CPR tracks to the south and east, and Eglinton Avenue to the north. The transportation study area includes the review of key intersections and corridors along Laird Drive and Eglinton Avenue.*

*Laird Drive will become a central spine in the area, unifying existing residential neighbourhoods, retail uses and employment areas with an attractive multi-modal transportation corridor. It connects existing and planned community centres, has major bus routes and provides access to the vital employment lands. Existing cycling*

*routes lack safe connectivity to the Leaside neighbourhoods and beyond the study area to the network. Further, existing sidewalks and boulevards are generally unattractive, due to narrow widths, utility pole locations, numerous driveway depressions, and limited greenery and amenities. The re-imagined Laird Drive is highlighted by implementing continuously on both sides a grade-separated cycle track facility and wide sidewalks. Boulevard widths are optimized for streetscape greening and street furniture, with additional width generally provided along the west side to integrate with emerging mixed-use development. Another key design component is integrating the bus stops into the boulevards, ensuring that shelters, street furniture / seating, shade, lighting, and bike parking, are incorporated to enhance the comfort of transit patrons. This is being achieved while maintaining reasonable traffic operations, including goods movement via trucks, within the established right-of-way.*

## **Business Park Highlights of Transportation Study**

### **(Appendix B – Final Consultant’s Report)**

A coordinated goods movement strategy is required to support the on-going vitality of the Leaside employment lands, while co-existing with the increasing mobility demand for transit and active transportation for employees and residents.

Support for employment land uses includes the identification of specific truck routes to facilitate movement within and beyond the Leaside Business Park. These routes tie into the larger arterial and highway road system and should be designed to minimize pedestrian and cyclist conflicts with heavy vehicles while also ensuring truck movement is efficiently realized.

The integrated planning process considered safe mobility access and choice in the development of the overall planning framework. Supporting the vitality of employment lands is critical to an economically sustainable City.

## Guiding Principles

### 3.1.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2014

- Build strong, healthy communities by supporting density and land uses which support active transportation, are transit-supportive, and freight-supportive.
- Safe, energy efficient, transportation systems that move people and goods

### 3.1.2 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017

- Provide for the safety of all system users.

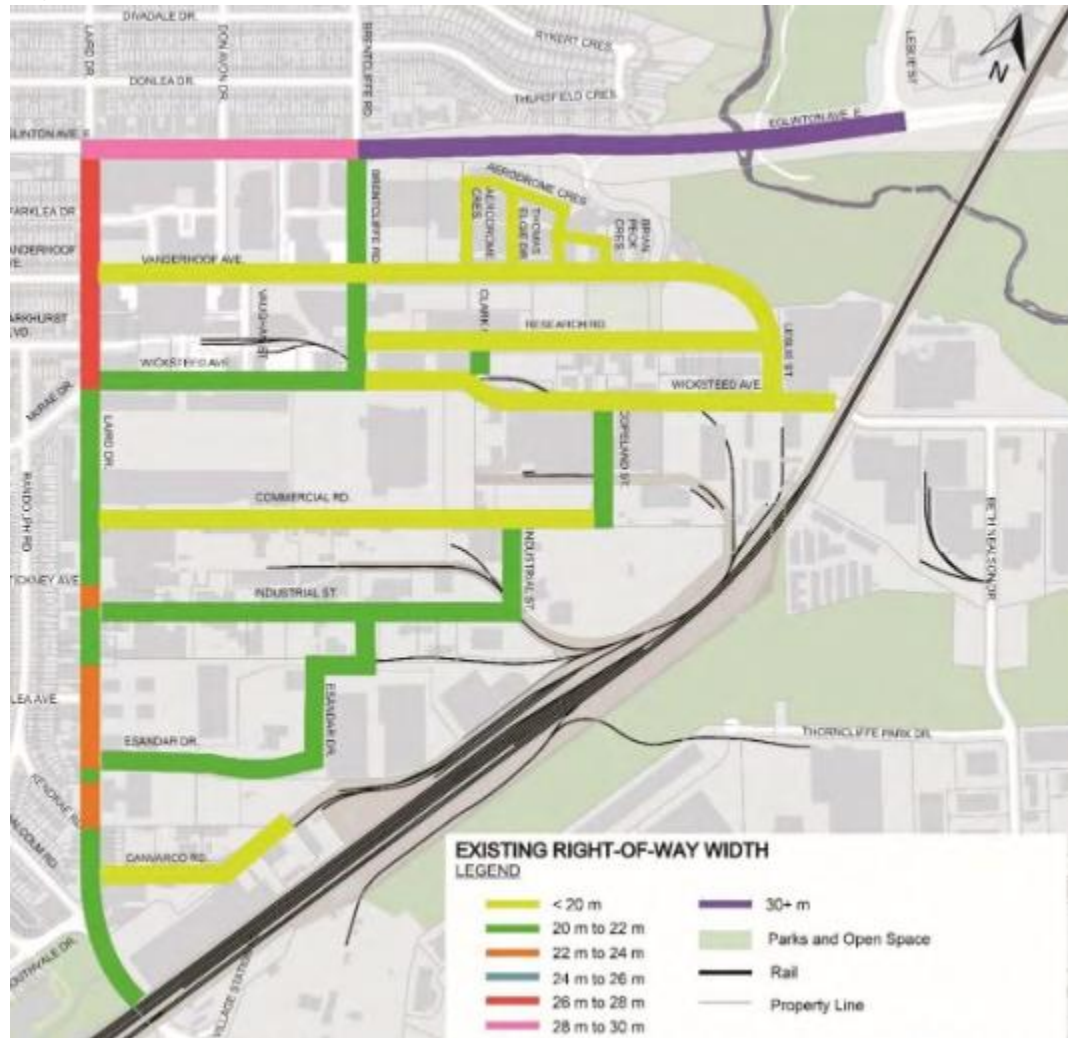
### 3.2.2 Official Plan, 2015

- Achieving a balanced and multi-modal network.

### 3.4.2 MTO Transit Supportive Guidelines, 2012

- Creating complete streets that support all road users
- 3.4.3 Design Guidelines: There are numerous design guidelines provided by the City of Toronto and Province of Ontario, that are relevant to transportation solutions in the study.
- *City of Toronto Curb Radii Guidelines, 2017* - While Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guidelines are typically relied upon for design, the City of Toronto Curb Radii Guidelines were developed to better incorporate the needs of all road users

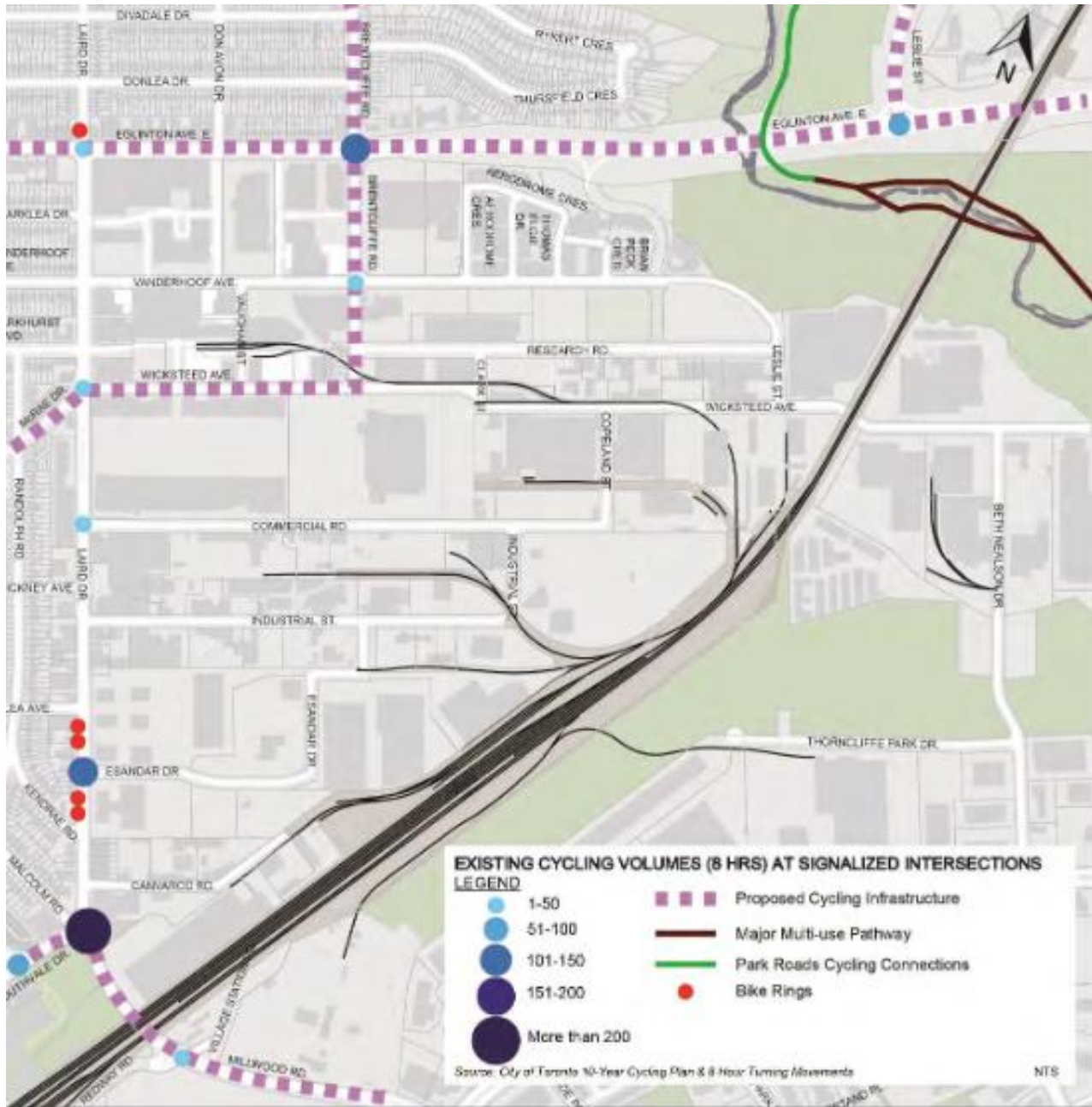
## Right of way road widths



### 4.5.1 Planned Cycling Network

- Based on the City of Toronto's 10-Year Cycling Plan, Eglinton Avenue, Leslie Street, Brentcliffe Road, Wicksteed Avenue, Southvale Drive, and Millwood Road will have dedicated cycling lanes in the future.
- Noted in the study: Need to consider the number of commercial driveways and heavy truck movements for good cycling environment
- Study conclusion: There is a need for improved cycling infrastructure and linkages to other parts of the City's network. A cycling option along Laird Drive and Vanderhoof Avenue would provide a connection to the existing network and planned destinations. The City's 10 Year Cycling Plan should be amended to reflect Laird Drive and Vanderhoof Avenue as the preferred streets for cycling infrastructure.

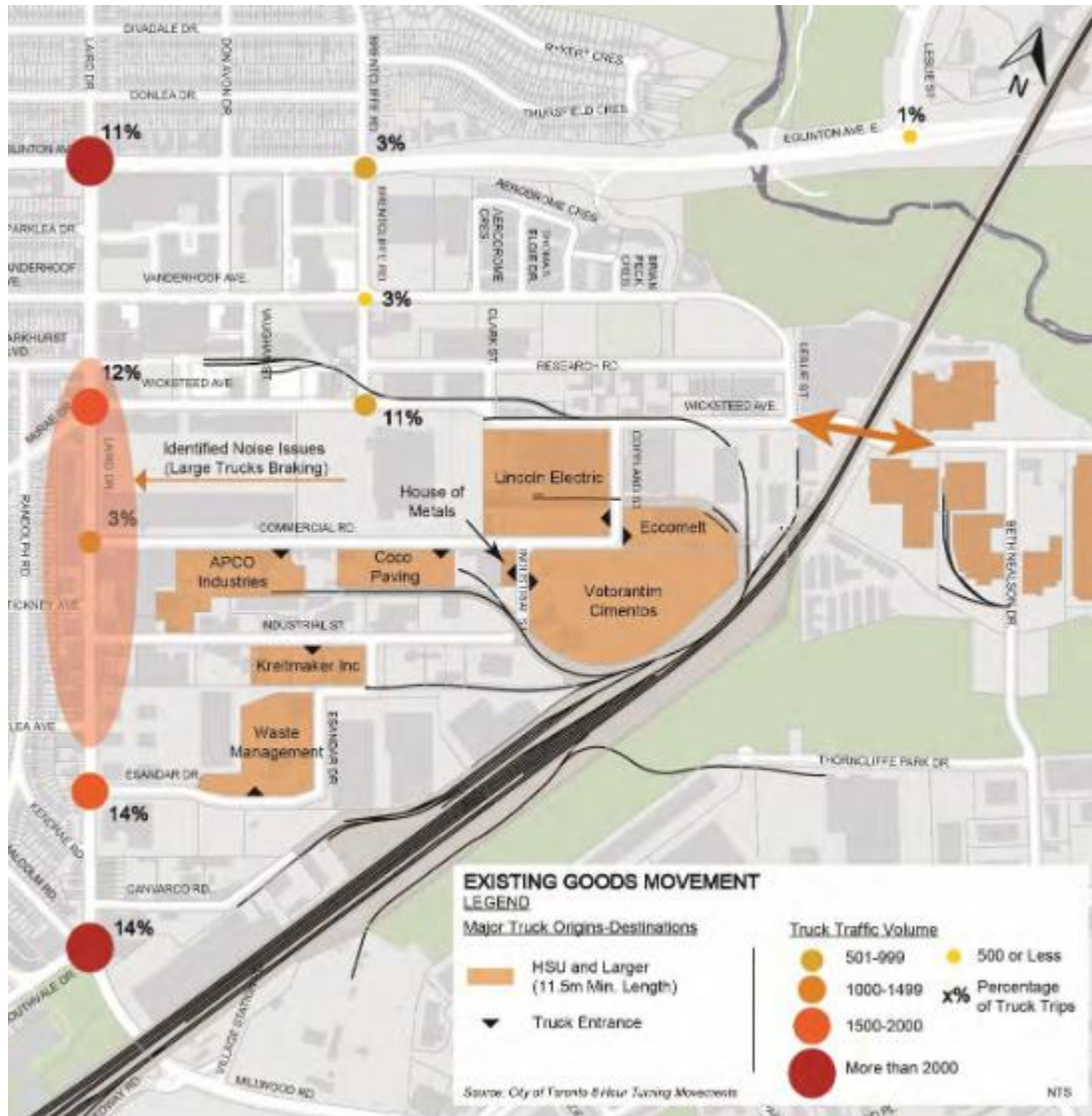
## Existing and proposed cycling routes



### 4.8 Goods Movement

- Major trucking routes are Eglinton Avenue, Laird Drive, Millwood Road, Brentcliffe Road, and Wicksteed Avenue

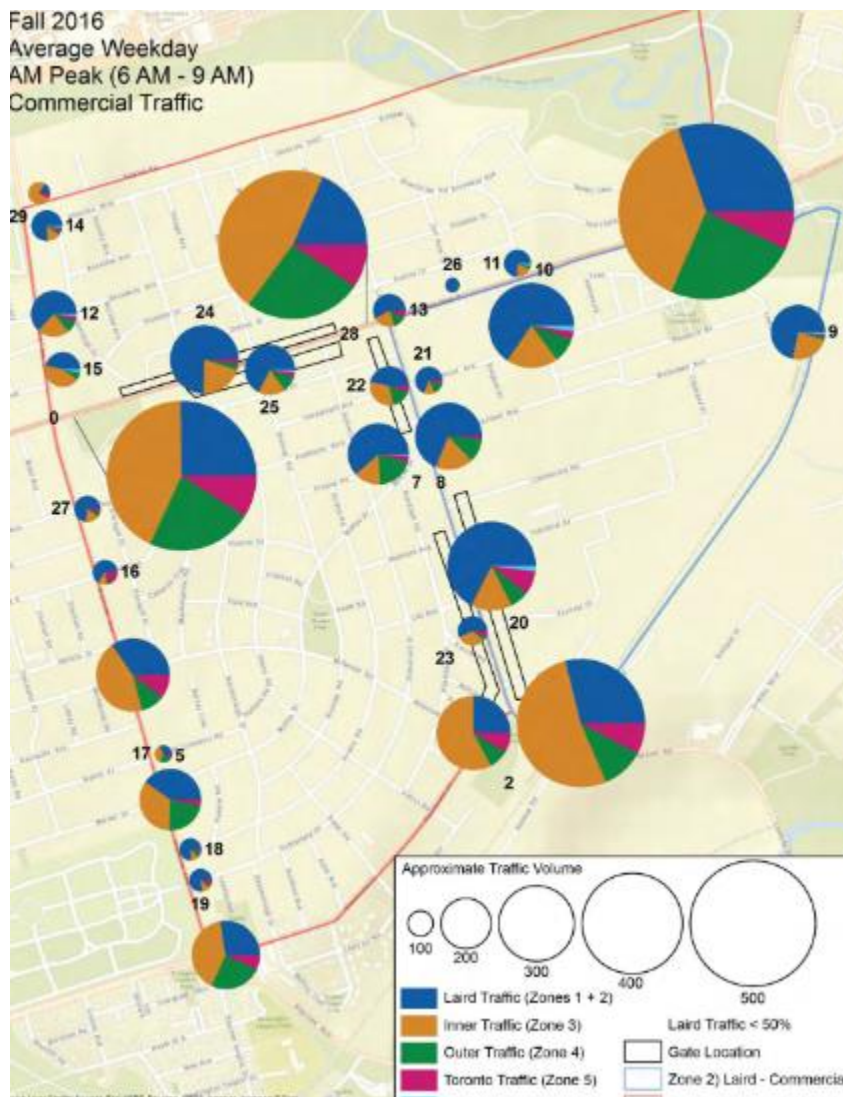
**The observed major truck generators within the study area**



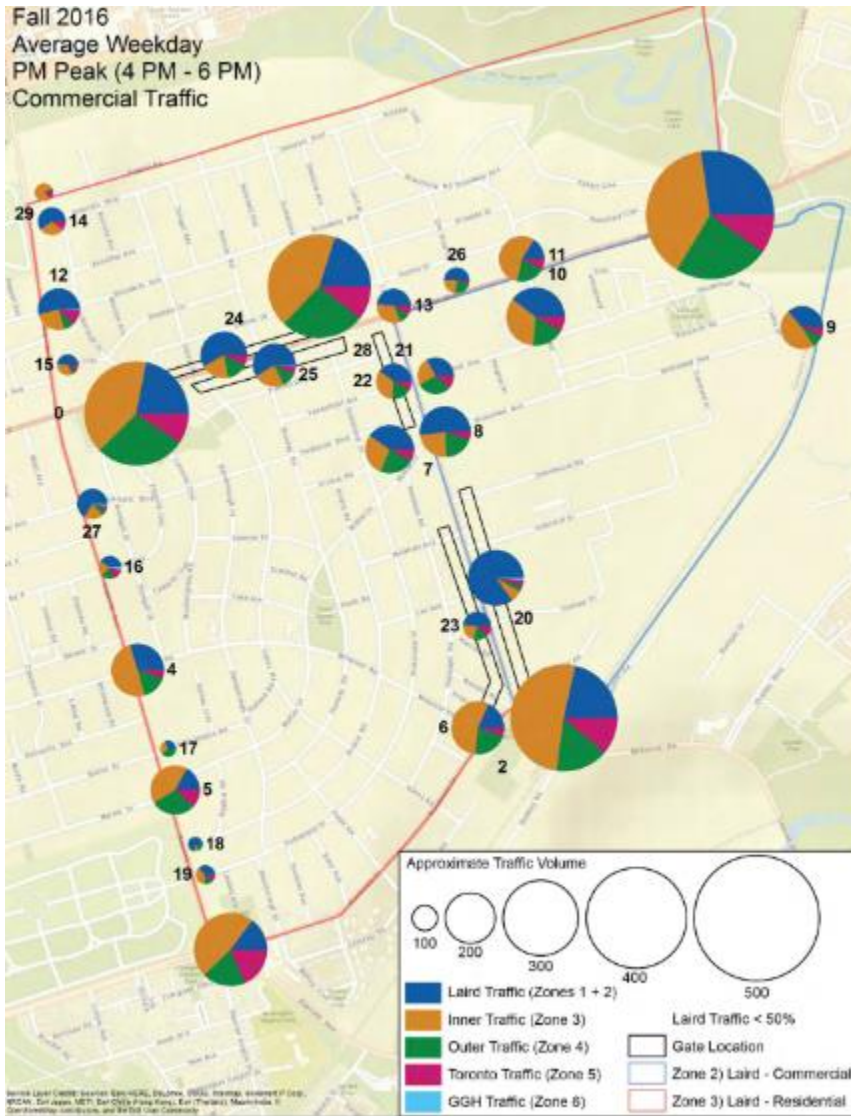
- To supplement this analysis, recent and more comprehensive location-based travel data was used. [Figure 4-28](#) and [Figure 4-29](#) (see below) show the travel patterns for commercial traffic between the identified destination zones. The pie charts in each figure are to scale relative to the total commercial vehicle travel volumes through that location, with the percentage of traffic to / from each zone also illustrated.
- This commercial vehicle travel data indicates the following:  
AM and PM findings are similar with respect to travel patterns; however, AM volumes are larger than the PM volumes. Majority of commercial traffic into the study area is to / from within the City of Toronto

- Access points into the study area include Brentcliffe Road from Eglinton Avenue, Wicksteed Avenue / Commercial Road / Industrial Street / Esandar Drive from Laird Drive, and Wicksteed Avenue from east of the rail tracks
- Study conclusion: The existing conditions assessment and stakeholder input highlighted a need to maintain truck access to the employment lands area. To safely accommodate truck movements, several strategies will be adopted to identify designated truck routes where appropriate designs can be incorporated; provide dedicated turn lanes; and, provide larger receiving lanes and turning radii at key intersections for the preferred truck routes. **The LBPA needs to be vigilant that this happens in future road planning**

**Figure 4-28**

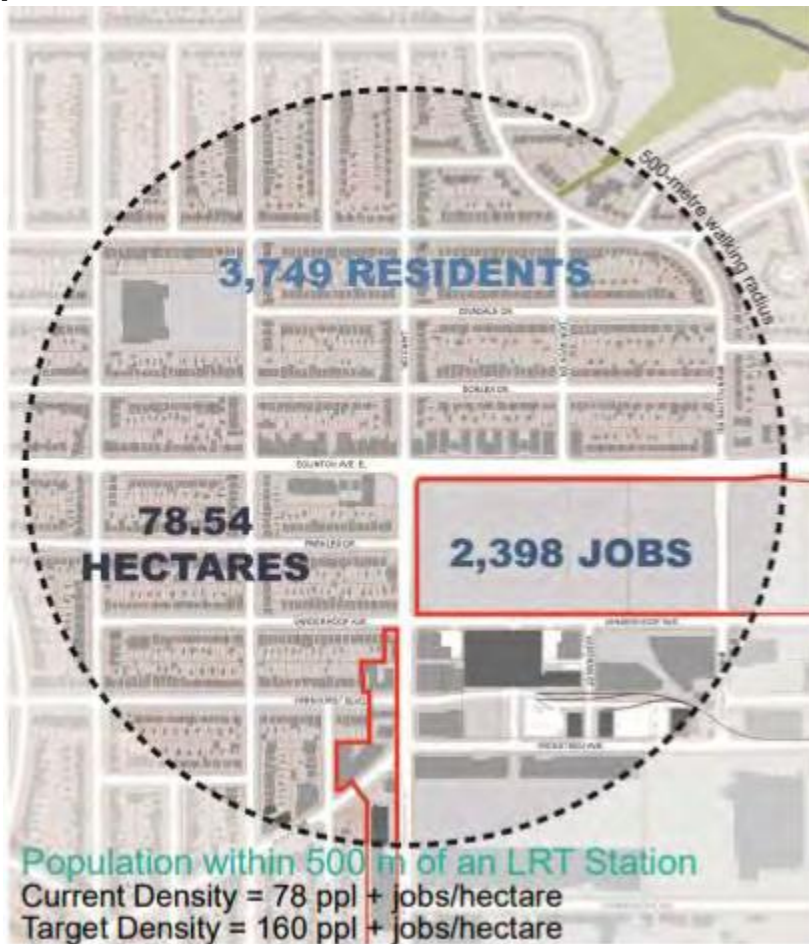


**Figure 4.29**





**City of Toronto Resident and Job Density Goals  
(Reinforces LBP Work/Live arguments for Business Park growth - evolution plans)**



7.4. Transportation Demand Analysis (Transportation Demand Management -TDM)

Commercial

- Most existing commercial development is within Area C. As a result, Zones C3 and C5, which contain two of the largest commercial blocks were assumed to generate the majority of commercial traffic within Area C. All shopping purposed trips from TTS in this zone were assigned to these two blocks to remain conservative. The institutional land use within Area B was approximated using commercial rates given the lack of data available

## ***Demand Analysis Zones***



### 8.3 Road Network

- Capacity constraints are identified along Laird Drive south of Eglinton Avenue and these issues can be addressed by providing additional north-south linkages south of Eglinton Avenue through the proposed development. With improved north-south connections between Wicksteed Avenue and Eglinton Avenue, users would have alternative routing choices and capacity constraints along Laird Drive would be reduced.

- Eglinton Avenue near Brentcliffe Road is another constraint area, particularly for eastbound movements during the AM peak hour. Additional roadway capacity options are difficult to provide here due to the existing Don Valley ravine system, and rail corridor. Improvements along existing roadways, such as Wicksteed Avenue, could improve east-west roadway capacity

### 8.3.3 Goods Movement

- The existing conditions assessment and stakeholder input highlighted a need to maintain truck access to the employment lands area. To safely accommodate truck movements, *several strategies will be adopted* to identify designated truck routes where appropriate designs can be incorporated; provide dedicated turn lanes; and, provide larger receiving lanes and turning radii at key intersections for the preferred truck routes.

## **Report recommendations**

### 9.0

- Recommendation 3: Establish a new east-west mid-block green street that will act as a connector from residential areas to destinations. Destinations include the transit station, the existing and planned community centres, and emerging retail and office uses. With an attractive public realm treatment, the new street will be pedestrian-friendly with a focus on intimate passive activities in comparison with Eglinton
- Recommendation 4: Transform Vanderhoof Avenue into a greenway spine. This will connect the existing Leaside neighbourhood and the planned developments with new and existing parks, as well as the Don Valley trail system to the east. This greenway spine will have a widened north boulevard comprising of a generous 2.1 m sidewalk, and a 3.0 m multi-use path buffered with additional greenery. The widened boulevard and associated buildings setback present a walking and cycling environment that is appropriate for all users and age, while establishing a clear transition to the remaining employment lands to the south.
- Remove existing Laird Drive medians which encourage unsafe mid-block pedestrian crossing but investigate new controlled pedestrian crossings at key intersection or mid-block locations.

- Modify signalized intersection configuration at Laird Drive and McRae Drive to remove traffic island and to reduce radii, including potential turning restrictions, to shorten the walking distances and reduce vehicular speeds at this highly pedestrian-active intersection

### ***Improvements to McRae Road/Laird Drive intersection***



- Promote active transportation along Brentcliffe Road on the west side to avoid significant northbound turning truck movements at Eglinton Avenue and provide continuous uninterrupted sidewalks across driveways and minor unsignalized intersections
- Recommendation 10: Undertake a refinement to the City's 10 Year Cycling Network Plan, that includes a continuous grade-separated cycle tracks along Laird Drive between Eglinton Avenue and Millwood Road, and a continuous off-street multi-use path along Vanderhoof Avenue between Laird Drive and the Don Valley trail system.

## **Cycling connections**



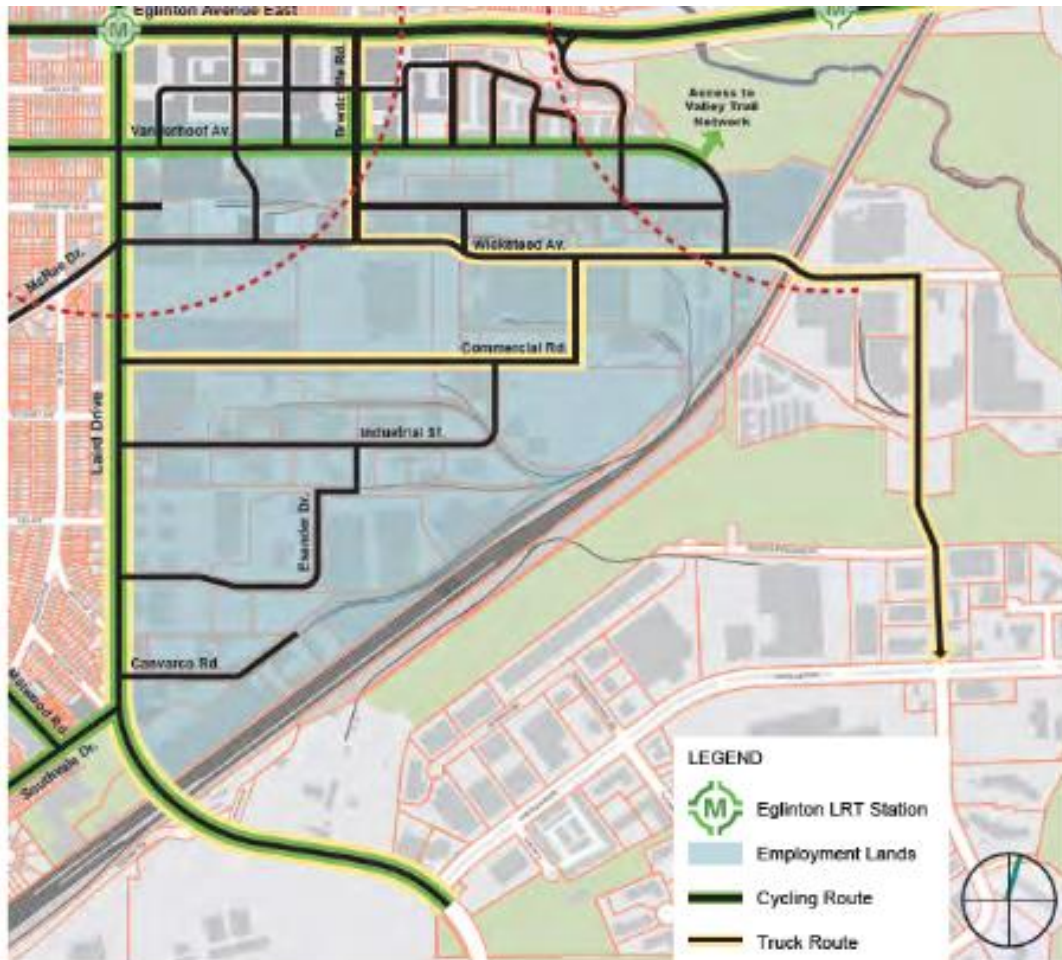
- **Recommendation 11: Residential / Business Park transitions:** Transform Vanderhoof Avenue into a greenway spine connecting the existing Leaside neighbourhood and the planned development with new and existing parks, as well as the Don Valley trail system to the east. This greenway spine will have a widened north boulevard comprising of a generous 2.1 m sidewalk, and a 3.0 m multi-use path buffered with additional greenery. The widened boulevard and associated buildings setback present a walking and cycling environment that is appropriate for all users and age, while establishing a clear transition to the remaining employment lands to the south.
- *Recommendation 13. Incrementally enhance and safely connect to the refined and broader cycling network within the employment lands as redevelopment or capital works occurs with the provision of buffered cycling facilities. **The LBPA needs to have a strong voice in future conversations in determining future cycling paths in the Business Park***

### 9.1.6 Goods Movement

- Supporting the vitality of Employment Lands is critical to an economically sustainable city. The City recognizes the importance of the Leaside Business Park and is committed that the Leaside employment lands are to remain as “employment lands”, maintaining access to and from their operations. The mobility plan recommends a safe and balanced approach to maintaining the employment lands vital, while providing the opportunity for people to work, live and play locally.

- Recommendation 37: Support key truck / goods movement routes, consisting of arterial roadways to the Leaside Business Park (i.e., Eglinton Avenue, Laird Drive, Brentcliffe Road and Millwood Road), and internal roadway access via Commercial Road and Wicksteed Avenue, including the provision of truck turning radii and lanes where appropriate.

### **Proposed Truck Routes**



Recommendation 38: Implement appropriate roadway / streetscape designs and utilities placement to reduce potential conflict with pedestrians and cyclists. The intersection of Vanderhoof Avenue and Laird Drive will be signalized. (To be noted, to maintain a consistent cross-section with the multi-use trail on the north side, the travelled roadway of Vanderhoof Avenue will have to be shifted to the southeast of Aerodrome Crescent and in the vicinity of Leonard Linton Park).

Recommendation 39: Goods servicing for the emerging new development along Eglinton Avenue will be accessed from the internal local roadways, preferably to underground facilities and / or to screened locations off the local roadways.

Recommendation 40: Goods servicing for development along Laird Drive will be at the rear of the property, accessed from the local streets, and not from Laird Drive.

Recommendation 41: Implement a southbound left turn lane along Laird Drive approaching Commercial Road to separate the primary truck entrance into the employment lands from other traffic to improve safety and ensure operational efficiency.

Recommendation 43: Consider improvements to Wicksteed Avenue by providing additional roadway capacity and to facilitate goods movement.

Recommendation 49: Additional Road capacity such as Wicksteed Avenue improvements are potentially required as development occurs, subject to actual TDM effectiveness and diversion to transit. Additional study would be required, but a preliminary concept envisions, as a minimum, a roadway widening from Brentcliffe Road to Millwood Road via Beth Neilson Drive, including a CPR grade separation

*McRae Drive to Commercial Road:* In addition to improving the pedestrian / cycling / transit environments, this segment will need to address major driveways to planned developments on both sides of Laird Drive, and significant truck volumes as Commercial Road is the proposed designated truck route and access point into the Leaside Business Park.

*Esandar Drive to Millwood Road:* This segment will ultimately be a 4-lane cross-section, two lanes in each direction. Although the designated ROW is 27.0m, additional property may be required: to facilitate an ultimate 4 - lane transition at the Esandar Drive intersection; to provide a typical bus stop configuration; and, to ultimately extend the cycle track network across the CPR corridor. The recommended Laird Drive 4-lane typical section from south of Esandar Drive to the reconstructed Millwood Road follows the typical cross section

*New Local Streets (should not affect BP traffic):* A new east-west local street is proposed between Eglinton Avenue and Vanderhoof Avenue linking key destinations include the transit station, the existing and planned community facilities, parks, and emerging retail and office uses. The new local street was not extended to Laird Drive to minimize impact to bus and vehicle movements south of Eglinton Avenue close to the LRT station. New north-south local streets are proposed between Laird Drive and Brentcliffe Road, the extension of Don Avon Drive and Street 'B'. These streets between Eglinton Avenue and Vanderhoof Avenue are critical to implementing a finer grain street network that will provide alternative routing choices. As part of the redesign of the Don Avon Drive and Eglinton Avenue intersection, which will be signalized, vehicular through movements will be restricted to minimize vehicular traffic on local streets. The intersection design will focus on providing safe pedestrian and cycling access for the local community. These streets will be classified as local streets with a 20m right-of-way. With an attractive public realm treatment, the new street will be pedestrian-friendly with a focus on intimate passive activities in comparison with a busier and active Eglinton Avenue.

*Brentcliffe Road:* Brentcliffe Road between Eglinton Avenue and Wicksteed Avenue is a minor arterial that will continue to, provide a significant transportation role with respect to vehicular, transit, and goods movement. This is a major consideration in the re-balancing of transportation elements within the planned 25.0m right-of-way.

It is envisioned that Brentcliffe Road will remain as a key goods movement route, in and out of the Leaside Business Park. Providing a long northbound right turn lane at Eglinton Avenue, uninterrupted with a mid-block stop, including a larger turning radius, will continue to support goods movement activities. Generous 2.1m sidewalks are provided on both sides buffered by a wide landscaping zone on the roadway side with a minimum 3.0m width that will significantly enhance the pedestrian environment for all ages and abilities.



A 3.0m multi-use trail on the west side will connect to the proposed multi-use trail along Vanderhoof Avenue and terminate at Street 'A' in the vicinity of a proposed park facility. **A two-bus bay along Brentcliffe Road in the southbound direction, south of Eglinton Avenue, is also proposed for timed layovers for potential multiple routes. Ask if this will take the place of a wider turn radius for trucks. The bus could go down Laird.**

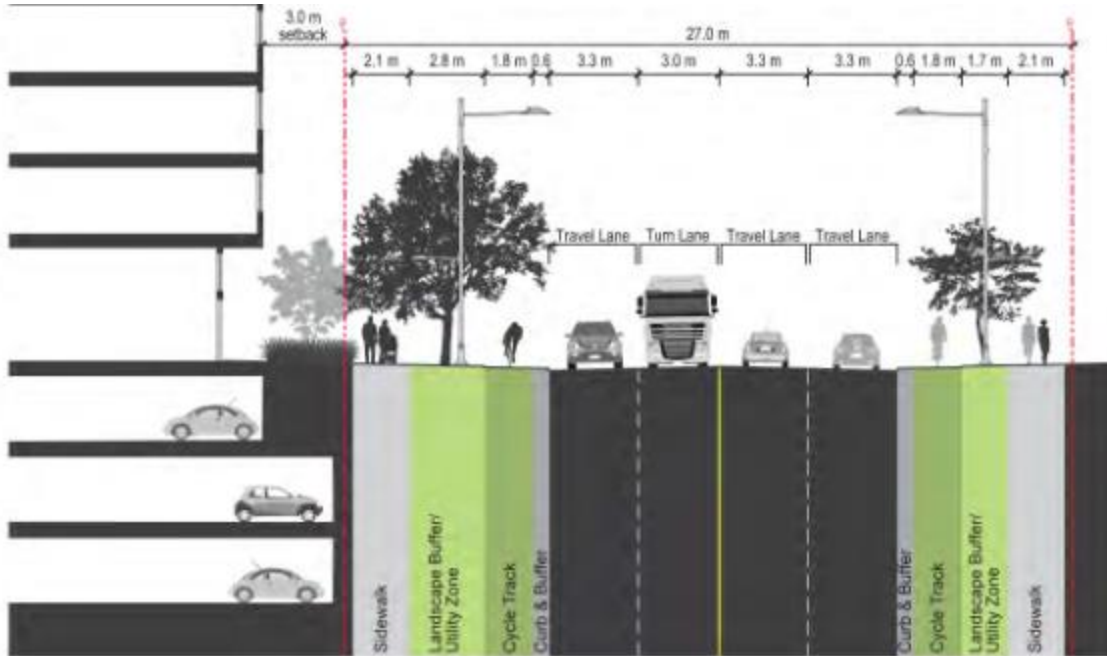
### 9.3.1 Development Phasing

The recommended mobility plan findings present an implementation plan based upon development levels and the need for additional infrastructure (to be noted assumes ECLRT operational). An additional critical roadway improvement is envisioned to add capacity to the network. A potential option is a Wicksteed Avenue roadway widening from Brentcliffe Road to Millwood Road via Beth Nelson Drive, including a CPR grade separation. The improvement will provide additional east-west roadway capacity, including increased connectivity and access to and from the employment lands.

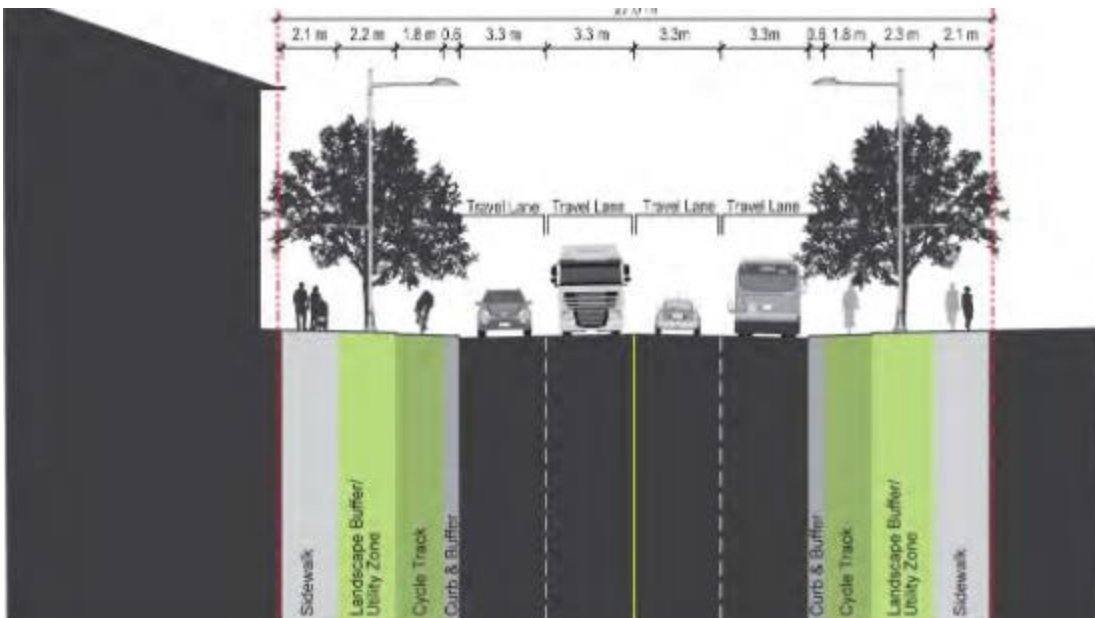
### 9.3.3 Environmental Assessment (EA) Requirements

Based on the recommended mobility plan, potential EAs that need to be undertaken have been based on the recommended mobility plan, potential EAs to be undertaken have been identified: Road capacity improvements such as Wicksteed Avenue road widening and CPR grade separation; and, Laird Drive reconstruction, dependent on scope and capital costs, could include the addition of cycle tracks, roadway reconfiguration, municipal servicing and other utilities, and the extension of the proposed Laird cycle tracks across the CPR corridor to Millwood.

**The recommended typical section along Laird Drive between McRae Drive and Commercial Road.**



**Esandar Drive to Millwood Road recommendation:**



**Brentcliffe Road south of Eglinton**

