

3. Planning Context

3.1 Study Area

The Highland Creek community is located within the east portion of Toronto in the District of Scarborough, between Highway 401 and Highway 2A, east of Morningside Avenue and to the west of Meadowvale Road. It is comprised predominantly of low-rise residential uses and open space with a core commercial area along Old Kingston Road and Highway 2A, between Lawson Road and Military Trail. This core commercial area, known as Highland Creek Village (HCV), is designated 'Mixed Use Areas' by the City of Toronto Official Plan. Mixed Use Areas are generally intended to accommodate the residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The UTSC is located to the northwest of the community.

The TMP study area, which is illustrated in **Exhibit 3-1**, is located in the corridor bounded on the south and north by Highway 2A and Kingston Road / Old Kingston Road, and between Military Trail in the west and Meadowvale Road in the east. The nearest Highway 401 interchanges are located approximately 1 km to the north at Meadowvale Road and 1 km to the east at Highway 2A. Many of the area roads provide important connections to Highway 401 and the rest of Scarborough, along with downtown Toronto and Durham Region.

3.2 Policy and Background Materials Review

3.2.1 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

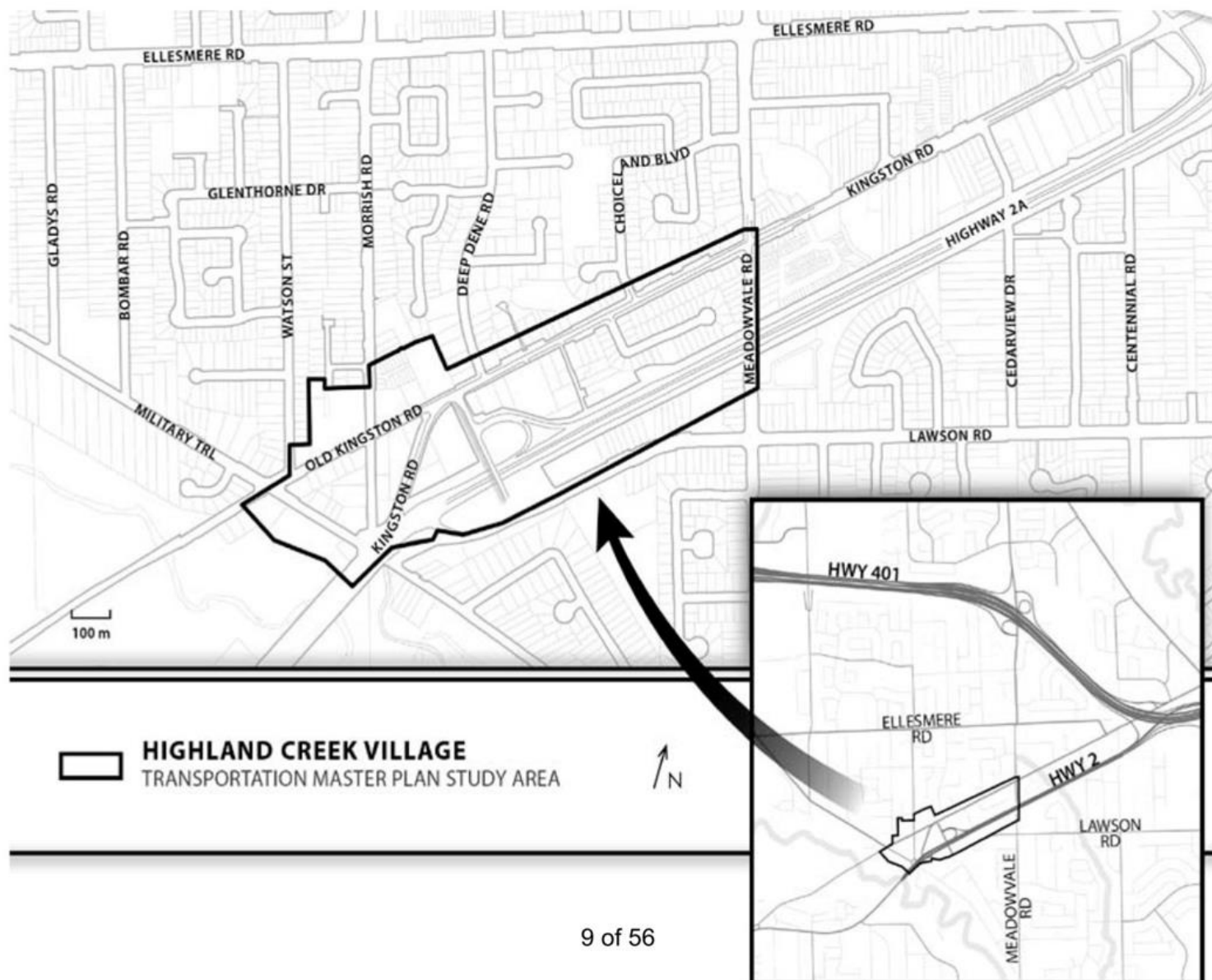
At the time of report writing, the 2014 PPS was applicable to this study. The 2014 PPS was issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, replacing the 2005 PPS, and provided policy direction related to land use planning and development in Ontario. The set of policies outlined in the PPS were intended to address the following:

- Building Strong Communities;
- Wise Use and Management of Resources; and
- Protecting Public Health and Safety.

The PPS policies regarding infrastructure and public service facilities focused on a municipality's responsibility to:

- ensure that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are available to meet current and future needs;

Exhibit 3-1: Highland Creek Transportation Master Plan Study Area



- optimize existing infrastructure and public service facilities to avoid premature development of new infrastructure and public service facilities; and
- locate infrastructure and public service facilities in a strategic manner to meet the needs of emergency management services.

With respect to transportation in particular, the PPS also contained a series of policies that directed municipalities to:

- promote a land use pattern that minimizes the length and number of vehicle trips and supports the development of viable alternative transportation modes;
- integrate transportation and land use considerations through all stages of the planning process;
- use existing and planned infrastructure (including transportation infrastructure) efficiently; and
- provide a transportation system that is safe, energy efficient, facilitates the movement of goods and people, and has sufficient capacity for projected needs.

With respect to transportation and infrastructure corridors, the PPS directed municipalities to:

- plan and protect corridors and right-of-way (ROW) for transportation, transit, and infrastructure facilities to meet current and projected needs; and
- consider the environmental impacts when planning for corridors and ROW for significant transportation infrastructure facilities.

On May 2, 2019, the government released More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan. The Action Plan included a series of distinct, but coordinated initiatives to address housing supply, including a commitment to review the PPS. The proposed changes to the PPS included the following:

- encourage the development of an increased mix and supply of housing
- protect the environment and public safety
- reduce barriers and costs for development and provide greater predictability
- support rural, northern, and Indigenous communities
- support the economy and jobs
- maintain protections for the Greenbelt

Building upon the policy direction of the 2005 PPS, the 2014 PPS also required the promotion of active transportation and transit-supportive development and provides for connectivity among transportation modes. In addition, the recognition of community design as an element of a healthy community was also required by the 2014 PPS.

Since the initial report writing, the 2020 PPS has been adopted. The PPS 2020 sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land and provides for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural and built environment. The PPS 2020 includes a number of policies governing transportation systems, and transportation and infrastructure corridors. The key sections of policies relevant to this study include:

- 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns
- 1.2 Coordination
- 1.6 Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities
- 2.1 Natural Heritage
- 2.2 Water
- 2.6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology
- 3.0 Protecting Public Health and Safety

Pursuant to Policy 1.6.7.1, transportation systems should facilitate the movement of people and goods in a safe and energy efficient manner to address projected needs. As the City continues to grow and develop, new transportation infrastructure is needed to address the existing, planned, and future development within the Study Area.

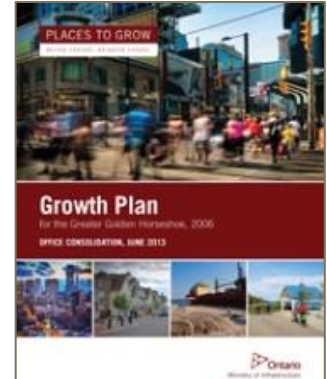
As per Policy 1.6.7.2 and Policy 1.6.7.3, this study aims to efficiently use this planned infrastructure while maintaining connectivity as part of a multi-modal transportation (vehicular, transit, pedestrian, cycling) system where possible.

3.2.2 Places to Grow Act and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan)

The Growth Plan is a strategic Provincial vision for long-term growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe and surrounding areas. The Growth Plan guides municipalities to optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth, and to co-ordinate infrastructure planning, land use planning and infrastructure investment. The Growth Plan mirrors policies found in the PPS with respect to transportation corridors.

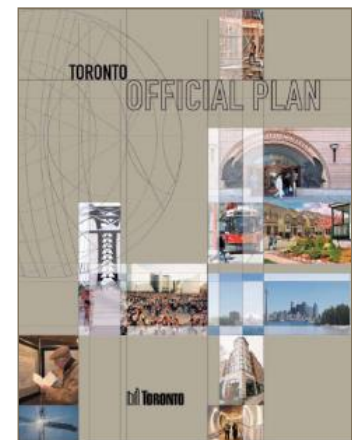
The focus of the Growth Plan is to provide “complete communities” that are well-designed, offer a range of transportation choices, accommodate people at all stages of life and comprise an appropriate mix of land uses while providing easy access to stores and services to meet daily needs.

Many policies in the Growth Plan deal with planning for transportation infrastructure, with an emphasis on encouraging municipalities to plan for transportation systems that are adequate for the level of anticipated growth, offer multi-modal access to destinations, provide safety for users, and are interconnected and planned for in a co-ordinated manner. Municipalities are required to integrate pedestrian and bicycle networks into transportation planning as part of the Growth Plan.



3.2.3 City of Toronto Official Plan (OP)

The City of Toronto OP sets out the vision for where and how Toronto will grow. The OP outlines policies that support the link between land use and transportation planning with the objective of creating an effective strategy for accommodating the City's future growth in travel demands. The OP aims to reduce auto-dependency by making transit, cycling, and walking more attractive alternatives to private automobile use. Finally, creating a walkable city that provides an attractive, safe, and comfortable pedestrian environment that encourages walking and strengthens local retailing is also an important component of the OP vision.



The City's OP was approved in 2006, and the first statutory Five-Year review began in 2011. Since that time, a number of Official Plan Amendments (OPA) have been adopted or are still in review by the Province. A comprehensive review of the OP's transportation policies has been

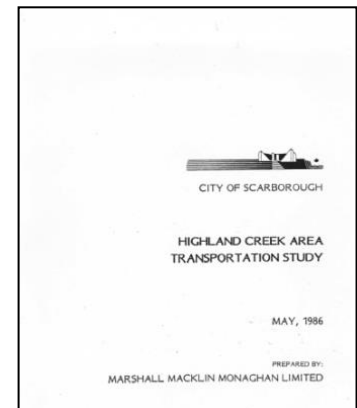
conducted through the “Feeling Congested” consultation process⁶, completed in 2014. The City consulted on OPA 274 draft policy changes that were officially adopted by Council on August 25-28, 2014. The final OPA 274 was approved by the Province on December 31, 2014. OPA 456 was adopted by City Council on February 26, 2020 and is currently being reviewed by the Province. The amendments include policies that:

- Emphasize using available road space more efficiently to move people instead of vehicles and looking at how the demand for vehicle travel can be reduced in the first place
- Encourage designs which promote walking and cycling
- Incorporate a “Complete Streets” approach for new and existing City streets that balances the needs of various users and uses within the ROW
- Encourage active forms of transportation
- Support the implementation of transportation demand management (TDM) measures that will reduce auto dependence and rush hour congestion
- Recognize the importance of the link between transportation and land use planning

3.2.4 *Highland Creek Area Transportation Study (1986)*

The Highland Creek Area Transportation Study was completed in 1986 to address transportation issues in the Highland Creek, Centennial, and Rouge Communities. This study examined the need for new and improved transportation facilities within the study area. The study identified the need for improved north-south access to and from Highway 401 at Meadowvale Road, and the need for improvements in the easterly direction on Highway 401, including the provision of a 12-lane core / collector system.

Additionally, the study recommended the installation of a full-movement traffic signal at Meadowvale Road and Highway 2A, the replacement of the Highland Creek Overpass at Highway 2A and Lawson Road with an at-grade intersection, and the widening of other roads within the Highland Creek Village road network.

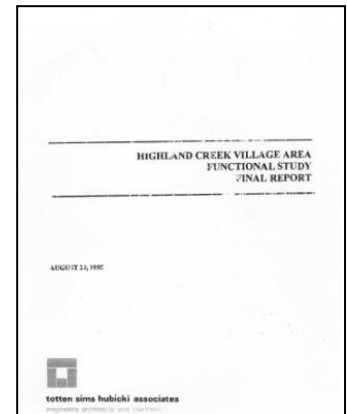


6. For more information on the “Feeling Congested” consultation process visit: [backgroundfile-71992.pdf \(toronto.ca\)](https://www.toronto.ca/files/backgroundfile-71992.pdf)

The recommended road network included a combination of the Alternatives proposed in the study. The key recommendations for number of lanes, pavement widths and ROW provisions are presented in **Appendix B**.

3.2.5 Highland Creek Village Area Functional Study (1995)

The Highland Creek Village Area Functional Study was completed in 1995 to address remaining unresolved issues from 1986 study. This study was focused on the Village area of the community and included the assessment of the existing and future role of the Highland Creek Overpass. The study identified growing traffic demands in the Village area over the next 10 to 20 years (from 1995) and concluded that the existing road network would be unable to accommodate this growth. In particular, it was noted that there would be increased pressure to provide additional long-term north-south capacity in the study area.



The study included recommendations for retaining the Overpass, providing a new westbound on-ramp at the Overpass, a new signalized intersection at Military Trail and Highway 2A, and a new at-grade intersection at Meadowvale Road and Highway 2A to alleviate North-South traffic. The recommended long-term plan developed from the study is illustrated in **Appendix B**.

3.2.6 Toronto Bike Plan

At the timing of writing this TMP, the Toronto Bike Plan was in effect. This plan established the City of Toronto's vision and plan to create a safe, comfortable and bicycle friendly environment. A series of principles, objectives and recommendations related to cycling safety, education, programs, and infrastructure were set forth in the Bike Plan. To support the City's strategy to encourage more people to cycle more often, the Bike Plan was structured around six key goals which will each contribute towards the vision of a Bicycle Friendly City:



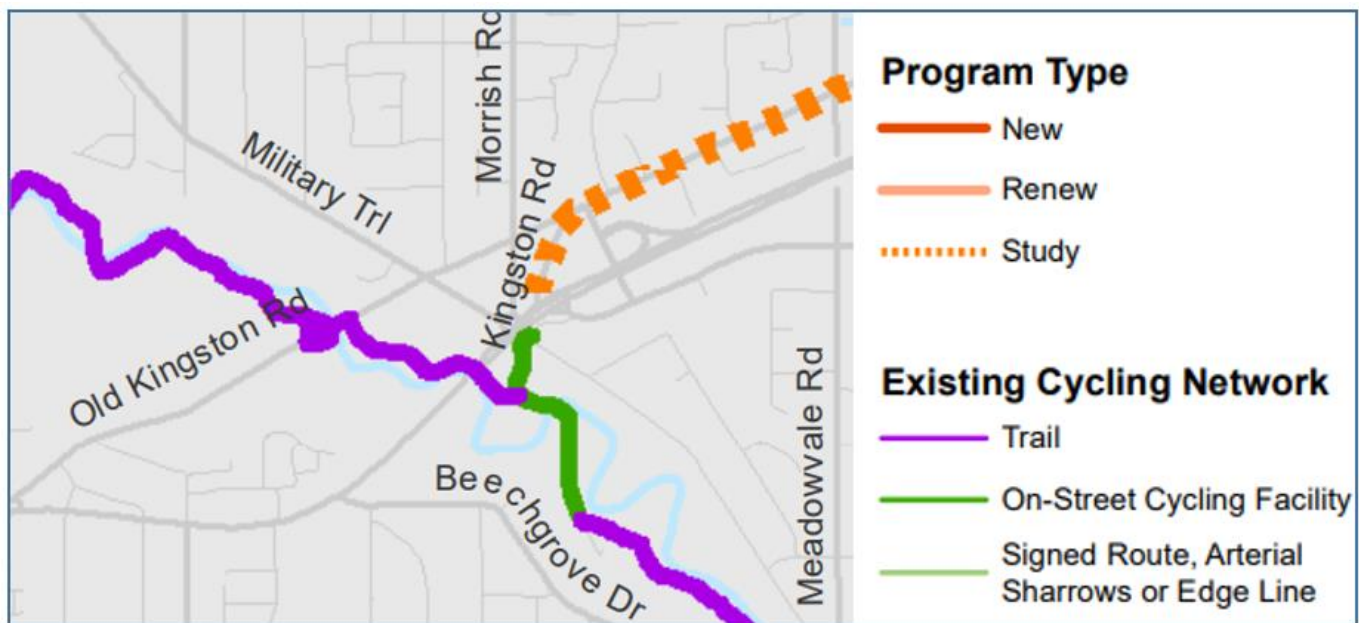
- Bicycle friendly streets
- Bicycle parking
- Cycling and transit
- Promotion
- Safety and Education
- Bikeway Network

The proposed bikeway network from the City of Toronto Bike Plan for the Highland Creek Village study area is shown in **Section 5.1.2.2**. This plan was replaced by the Cycling Network Plan.

3.2.7 Cycling Network Plan

On June 9, 2016, Toronto City Council approved a Cycling Network Plan⁷ to Connect, Grow and Renew infrastructure for Toronto's cycling routes over the next ten years. The Cycling Network Plan will serve as a comprehensive roadmap and work plan, outlining the City's planned investments in cycling infrastructure from 2016 to 2025. The plan identifies opportunities for cycling infrastructure investments in every part of Toronto. It includes recommendations for cycle tracks or bike lanes on fast, busy streets and recommendations for traffic calmed routes with cycling wayfinding on quiet streets. The Cycling Network Plan also includes recommendations for new boulevard trails, adjacent to fast busy streets where cycling may be less comfortable in the roadway. The Plan identifies areas where tunnels or bridges may be studied to cross major barriers.

Exhibit 3-2: Cycling Network Plan



7. The link to the City website Cycling Network Plan is as follows: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/cycling-in-toronto/cycle-track-projects/cycling-network-10-year-plan/>

3.2.8 Pedestrian Charter

The Pedestrian Charter was released in 2002 and outlines the principles and commitments for the City of Toronto to create an urban environment that encourages and supports walking. The Charter sets out six principles to promote walking as a safe and convenient mode of urban travel: accessibility, equity, health and well-being, environmental sustainability, personal and community safety, and community cohesion and vitality. It is recommended through the Pedestrian Charter that riding bicycles on sidewalks be restricted and enforced. This provides pedestrians with a walking environment within the public ROW and encourages people to walk for travel, exercise, and recreation.

3.2.9 Toronto Walking Strategy

The Toronto Walking Strategy (2009) aims to build a City that supports and encourages walking. The strategy envisions high quality walking environments where streets, parks, public spaces, and neighbourhoods are accessible, secure, vibrant, and enjoyable so that people choose to walk more often. The Walk Strategy was built along the following three guiding principles:

1. Universal Accessibility: All public and private places should be barrier-free
2. Safety: The safety of pedestrians takes precedence over all other modes of transportation
3. Design Excellence: High-quality design creates a positive experience for everyone

Key actions that were identified by the Walking Strategy include, promoting a culture of walking, integrating networks for walking (e.g., improving the sidewalk network, improving links to public transit and neighbourhoods), designing streets for pedestrians (e.g., improved streetscaping), and creating spaces and place for people (e.g., improved public realm).

“Areas that are not well designed for walking will be transformed, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, into places where people want to walk.”⁸

3.2.10 University of Toronto Scarborough Expansion

In response to a growing student population, the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus (UTSC) has expanded their facilities to a new North Campus, located north of Ellesmere Road at Military Trail (northwest of the HCV study area). The expansion plans included new academic, athletic and research facilities, and a new, central, multi-purpose public transportation

8. City of Toronto Walking Strategy (2009), pg. 3

hub located at the corner of Ellesmere Road and Military Trail, with plans to integrate with the previously proposed Scarborough East / Scarborough Malvern LRT line. The campus plans also call for a potential rerouting of Military Trail northward to create a pedestrian and student-friendly inner core, and to make possible a new pedestrian street and central hub for UTSC.

Construction on the Instructional Centre, located on the northwest corner of Ellesmere Road and Military Trail, began in September 2009. The building was open to students in Spring 2011 for classes. In addition to the new educational facilities, the Northern Campus expansion includes the building of a new Aquatics and Athletics Facility, which was built for the 2015 Pan American Games. The Pan Am Aquatics and Athletics Facility is located at the northeast corner of Morningside Avenue and Military Trail. The new building is over 360,000 square feet, the largest building at UTSC.

3.2.11 Highland Creek Area Community Secondary Plan (2006)

Secondary Plans establish area-specific policies to guide growth and development within a defined area of a municipality. Chapter Six of the City of Toronto OP includes Secondary Plans for thirty-one areas of focus in the City.

The HCV TMP study area is situated within the broader Highland Creek Secondary Plan area, which is outlined on **Exhibit 3-3**. Maintaining the existing character of the community is one of the guiding principles of the Highland Creek Secondary Plan.

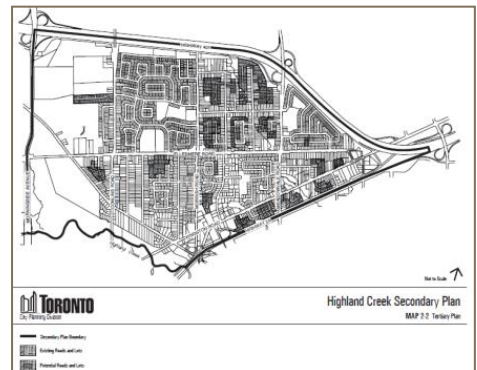
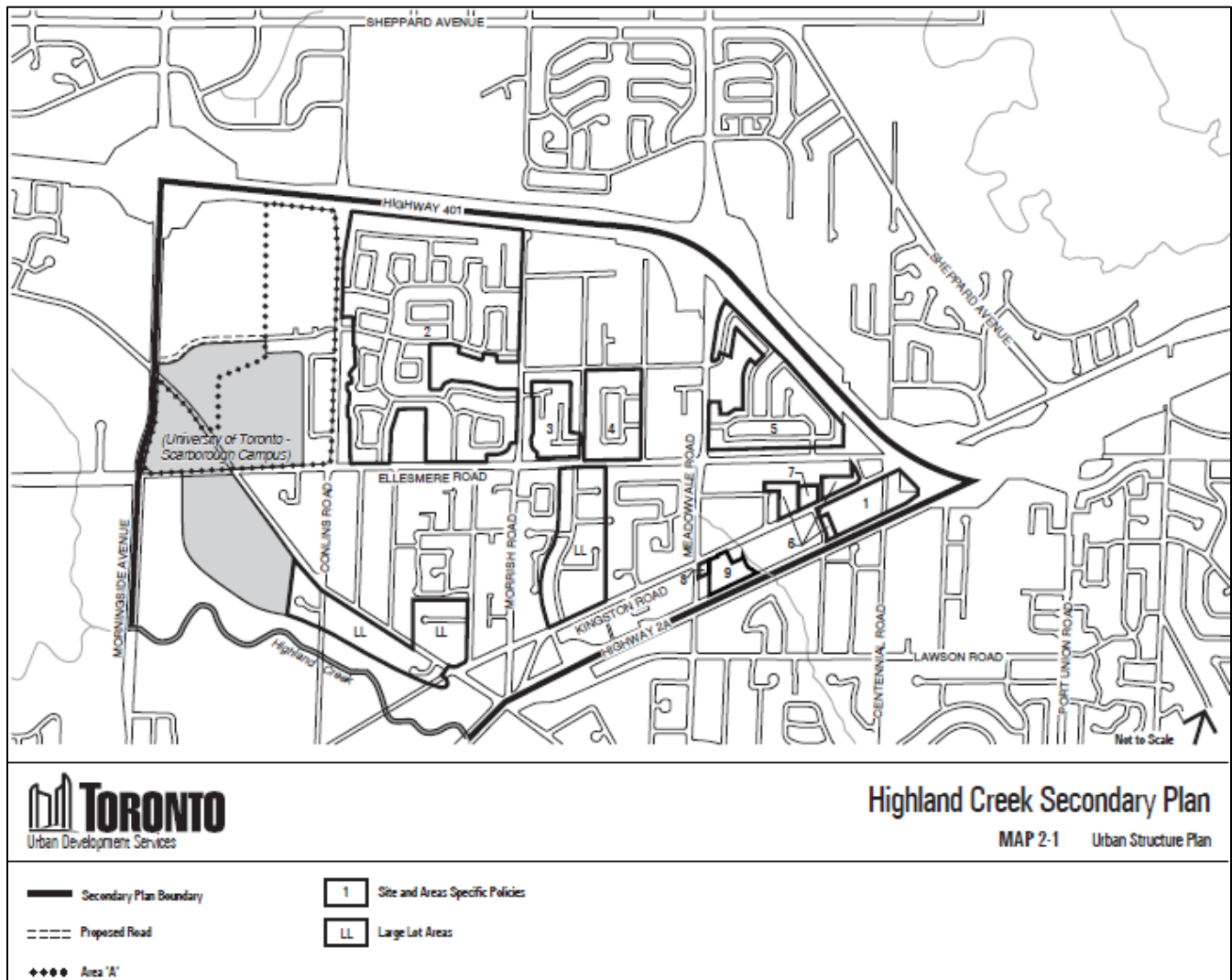


Exhibit 3-3: Highland Creek Secondary Plan Area


3.2.12 Highland Creek Village Area Study (2012)

The Highland Creek Village Area Study was completed in 2012 and established a vision and implementation strategy to guide future redevelopment activities within the Village area. Extensive community engagement activities were carried out as part of the Area Study. Public feedback related to transportation improvements in the area consisted of the following:

- Provide a safe, well-lit public realm with streetscape improvements
- Remove Highland Creek Overpass
- Make Morrish Road and Old Kingston Road the main intersection for the Village
- Add more public parking

- Consider improvements to on-street parking
- Improve pedestrian and cycling network
- Provide new frontage and access opportunities
- Increased traffic associated with new developments / redevelopments is a concern

The findings of the Area Study recommended expanding on the Highland Creek Community Secondary Plan recommendations, established development / redevelopment policies and objectives for the area, and identified area-specific policies.



Recommendations to the Zoning By-law were also made as part of the 2012 Area Study, including updated parking requirements, minimum / maximum building heights, building setbacks, transportation network adjustments, redesigned street sections and Urban Design Guidelines for the Village area.

Various other changes to the transportation environment were recommended to achieve the 2012 Area Study vision, including the potential configuration of area roadways, enhanced streetscape features to improve the pedestrian realm, reconfiguration of angled parking on Old Kingston Road to parallel parking and exploring on-street parking opportunities on existing and modified roadways in the area. The potential road configuration and recommended changes to the transportation network as defined in the 2012 Area Study are illustrated in **Exhibit 3-4**.

3.2.13 Highland Creek Village Urban Design Guidelines

The Highland Creek Village Urban Design Guidelines and Concept Plan was developed as part of the implementation strategy for the 2012 Area Study. The Urban Design Guidelines and Concept Plan provides guidance on the future design of the public realm (i.e., public spaces, public art, street signage, and streetscape) and site development (i.e., site organization, landscaping and lighting, and pedestrian connections).

Potential d Reconfiguration



Guidelines for the streetscapes along Old Kingston Road, Military Trail, Morrish Road, Kingston Road, Lawson Road, and Highway 2A are described and illustrated with a proposed cross-section that identifies changes to the ROW, including vehicle travel lanes, parking, and cycling lanes, accessible sidewalks, plantings, and street furniture. Finally, area specific guidelines are provided for the following three areas of the Village: Main Street, South Village, and East Village (as defined by the 2012 Area Study). The Concept Plan (**Exhibit 3-5**) illustrates the potential build-out and configuration of development in the area.

3.2.14 Complete Streets Guidelines for Toronto

The City of Toronto has recently completed their Complete Streets Guidelines. The guidelines were developed through staff, stakeholder, and public engagement to ensure that the City's streets serve the needs of all users and uses. This includes pedestrians of all ages and abilities, public transit users, cyclists, and motorists, as well as space allocation and green infrastructure.

At the heart of the process is the development of Complete Streets standards and guidelines that will shape street planning, design, and management in the City. The following Guiding Principles have been developed:

- **Streets for People**
 - Improve Safety & Accessibility
 - Give People Mobility Choices
 - Make Connected Networks
 - Promote Healthy and Active Living
- **Streets as Placemaking**
 - Respect Local Context
 - Create Vibrant and Attractive Public Spaces
 - Improve Environmental Sustainability
- **Streets for Prosperity**
 - Support Economic Vitality
 - Enhance Social Equity
 - Balance Flexibility & Cost-Effectiveness

Exhibit 3-5: Concept Plan from the Highland Creek Village Urban Design Guidelines Report



- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|--|
|  | Main Street |  | Highland Creek (Lawson Road) Parkette |
|  | South Village |  | Highland Creek Village Green |
|  | Future East Village |  | Potential future open space along Kingston Road/Highway 2A |
|  | Methodist Cemetery |  | Recommended public art location |
|  | St. Joseph Church |  | Access and/or view to ravine/park |
|  | Morrish Plaza | | |
|  | Highland Creek Ravine | | |

The Guidelines were developed in 2015 and 2016, in consultation with the public and stakeholders, followed by an implementation plan in 2017. This TMP, at the time of its preparation, employed draft Guidelines, as they were still being developed in co-ordination with the many divisions and agencies that are involved in the policy, planning, design, and management of streets.

3.2.15 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is Ontario's roadmap to become accessible by 2025. It includes accessibility standards regarding customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment. The AODA applies to all aspects of this project, including the interactions between the TAC and the public, this report, and the recommended infrastructure improvements.

Accessibility of the built environment is an important issue in Toronto. Ensuring that public transportation infrastructure can be used by everyone supports inclusion and the social and economic participation of all residents and visitors. In December 2012, the Province of Ontario proclaimed the Design of Public Spaces Standards, under Part IV.1 of Ontario Regulation 191/11 on the built environment. The Standard makes mandatory a number of guidelines in the existing 2004 City of Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines and modifies others. The regulation is law as of January 2013 and governs the provision of public infrastructure including sidewalks, walkways, stairs, curb ramps, tactile walking surfaces, pedestrian signals, and parking spaces. The standard requires that by January 1, 2016 the City of Toronto must comply for all newly constructed or redeveloped infrastructure.

3.3 Highland Creek Village Development Applications

The Highland Creek Village area is sparsely developed with one and two-storey commercial buildings, parking areas, and vacant lots. During the course of this TMP study, there have been a number of development proposals before the City of Toronto within the boundary of the TMP study area. The majority of the TMP recommendations will be secured as sites redevelop in the village.