

EAST BEAVER CREEK SECONDARY PLAN

Community Workshop
Reference Book

gladki
planning
associates

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Parcel

 SLR

Study Area

The Secondary Plan study area is approximately 40 hectares. It is defined by Norman Bethune Avenue/East Pearce Street to the north, Highway 7 to the south, a block west of Leslie Street to the west, and Highway 404 to the east.

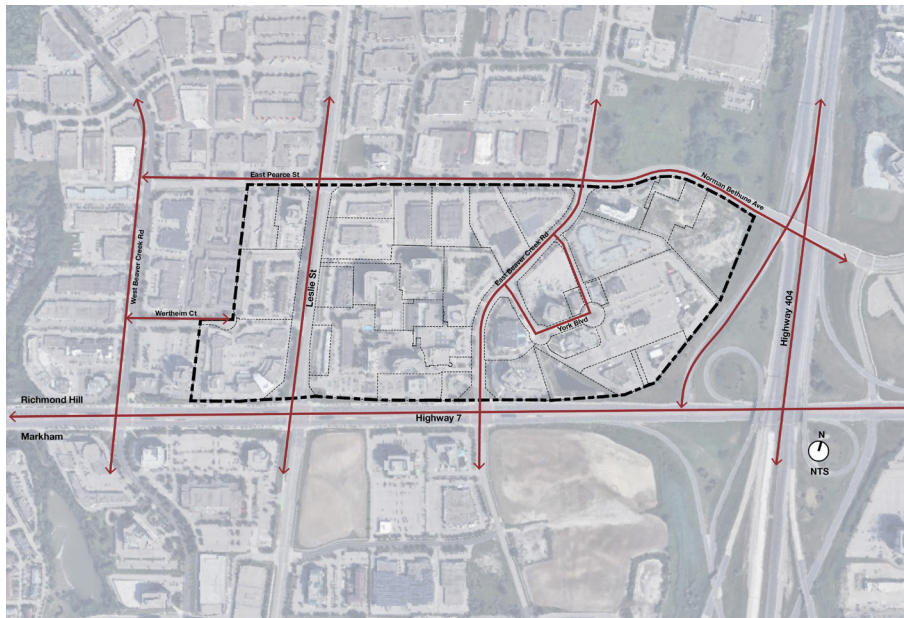


Figure 1. EBC Secondary Plan Boundary

- Study Area
- ↔ Existing Public Streets
- Existing Parcels



Existing Built Environment

This area consists of various low-rise plazas and standalone commercial buildings, mid-rise apartment buildings, office buildings, and warehouse/light industrial buildings. Most of these buildings are set back from the street and are surrounded by large surface parking lots. These buildings host businesses that are active and well-used by the community. There are no public parks and sidewalks are limited. The blocks are very large and designed for cars, making it hard to get around on foot or other modes of active transportation.

Becoming a Mixed-Use Centre

Historically, the study area was planned and designated as an employment area, suitable for manufacturing, warehousing and office uses. Over time, residential developments were approved and the employment uses shifted towards lighter industries and commercial uses. This history means the area is currently mixed-use but severely lacking in community-serving amenities such as schools, recreation centres, libraries, and social services. In 2022, York Region converted EBC from an employment area to a community area and the City of Richmond Hill identified it as Local Centre in its Official Plan, setting the stage for its continued evolution to a higher density mixed use area.

Study Overview and Process

The City of Richmond Hill is preparing this Secondary Plan for East Beaver Creek to help guide future growth and development within the study area.

What is a Secondary Plan?

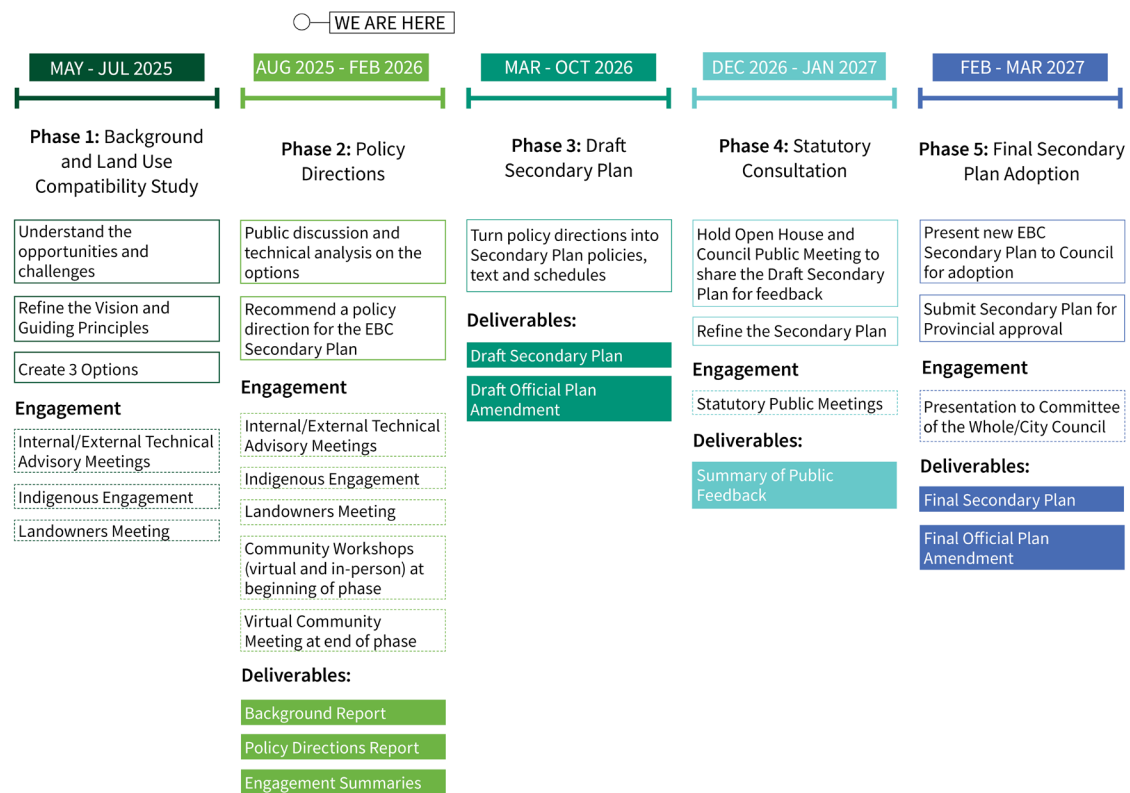
A Secondary Plan is a policy document, adopted by City Council, that will shape how a particular area of the city (in this case, EBC) grows and changes. It defines elements needed for successful development including new roads, active transportation routes, servicing infrastructure, parks and open space, buildings, and land uses. The City's Official Plan also touches on these things but the Secondary Plan will provide more detailed and specific policies for EBC.

Study Objectives

- Create a Secondary Plan for the East Beaver Creek & Highway 7 area.
- Study and learn about the area.
- Align with Provincial, Regional, and City policies.
- Reflect with the community to set a shared vision.
- Explore ways to achieve the vision.
- Develop policies to guide implementation.

Study Process*

The EBC Secondary Plan study began in May 2025 and is proceeding over five phases. The City and the study team will engage with the public, Indigenous nations, and other interested and affected parties in nearly every phase. The target for adoption of the Secondary Plan by Council is approximately March 2027.



*Timeline subject to change

Figure 2. East Beaver Creek Process

Opportunities and Challenges

There are many exciting opportunities for EBC as well as some challenges that will need to be overcome to create a complete community.

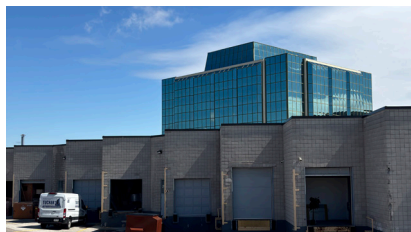
Opportunities



EBC is served by bus rapid transit along Highway 7, with another future rapid transit route planned for Leslie Street.



The presence of large surface parking lots offers short- and medium-term redevelopment opportunities without displacing current uses.



A mix of land uses, including residential, civic, office, light industry, retail, hotels, and service commercial spaces, already exists in the area.



EBC is home to a host of diverse commercial businesses, that are widely used by the community. These businesses serve the surrounding employment area, current residents and visitors, and add to the identity of the neighbourhood.

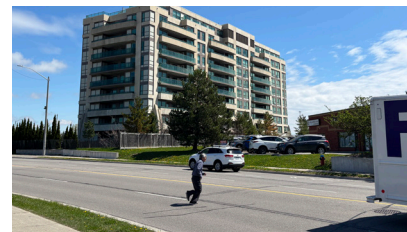
Challenges



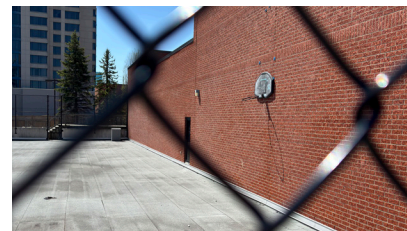
Site-specific issues, such as grading, soil and groundwater conditions, and multiple land ownerships may complicate redevelopment.



Overlaps in jurisdiction exist for transportation and servicing infrastructure: York Region and the City of Richmond Hill share responsibility for transportation, while the City of Markham and the City of Richmond Hill coordinate servicing in consultation with the Region.



Poor walkability results from few public streets, missing sidewalks, heavy traffic, barriers, and limited pedestrian crossings. Being auto-oriented, EBC was designed around large roads, oversized blocks, extensive surface parking, and limited sidewalks, making transit and active transportation less appealing.



A lack of residential amenities means there are no public community services or facilities in the area.

Vision and Guiding Principles

Based on early community conversations and changes over the intervening years, the Secondary Plan study now has an updated vision and guiding principles.

Vision

East Beaver Creek and Highway 7 will evolve over the long term into a **mixed-use complete community** where residents enjoy a high quality of life and can meet their daily needs locally or by a convenient transit trip. It will be an **urban place with a uniquely broad range of uses, served by rapid transit** along Highway 7 and, in the future, Leslie Street.

Over time, the area's residential population and non-residential uses will be **connected by a public realm network** of walkable streets, pedestrian and cycling connections, greenspace, and urban open spaces that provide **access to amenities**. The area's **civic presence** will make this a destination in Richmond Hill.



Vision and Guiding Principles

Based on feedback from those early conversations, The Secondary Plan study now has an updated vision and guiding principles. The proposed Vision is supported by nine guiding principles that describe strategies for how we will reach the vision.

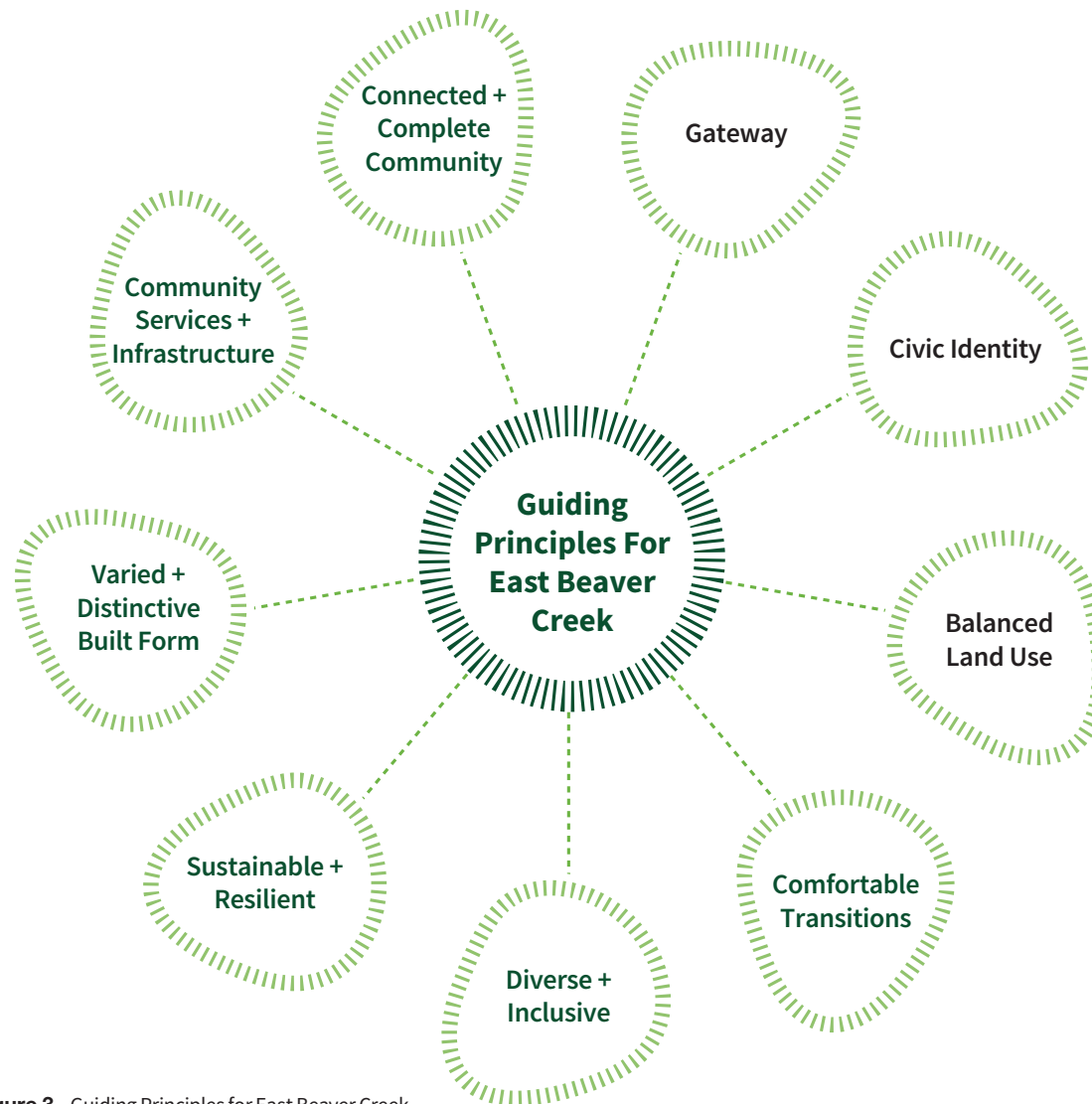
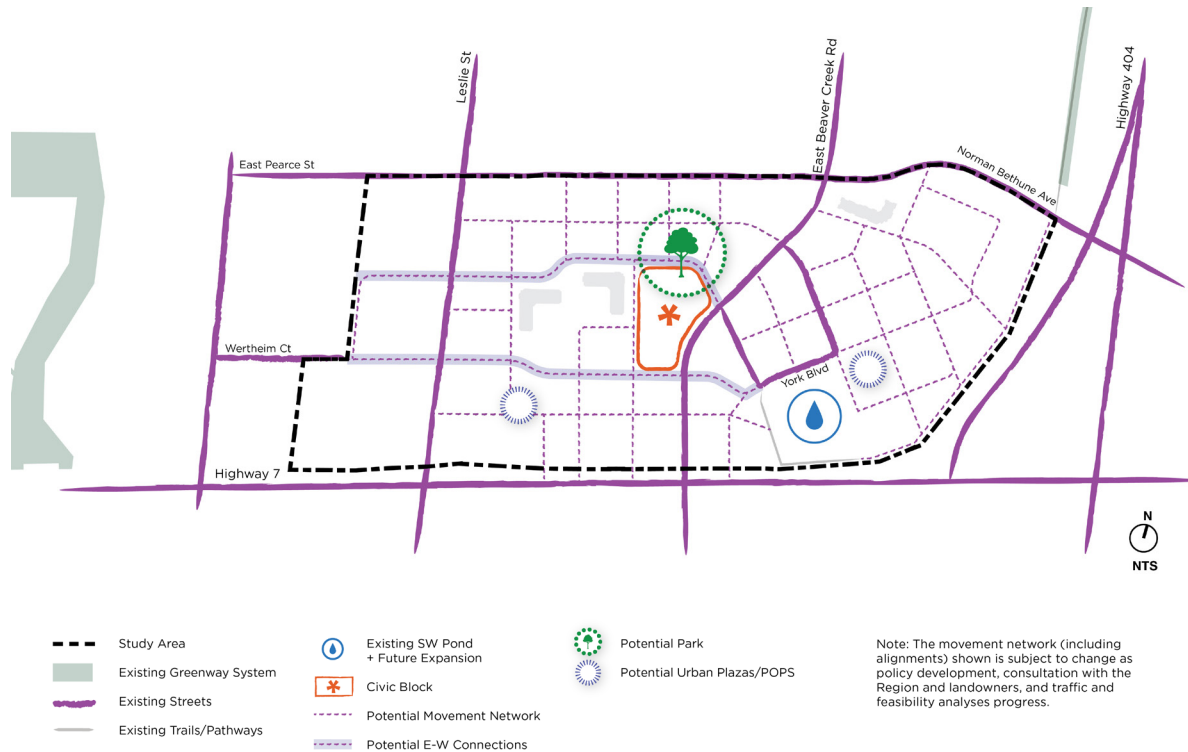


Figure 3. Guiding Principles for East Beaver Creek

Block Structure

The Block Structure is the foundation for a complete community. All other elements of the Secondary Plan will be organized upon this public realm network of walkable streets, pedestrian connections, active transportation routes, parks, and vibrant urban plazas.



Streets and Blocks

The proposed Block Structure features a more expansive network of connections. These connections can be public or private streets, mid-block connections, pathways, or trails become the foundation of a complete and walkable community. This fine grained network of connections will improve mobility for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

As a result of this tighter network, buildings should be positioned closer to the street, creating opportunities for active frontages and allowing public life to spill onto the public realm.

Parks and Open Spaces

To support a thriving and connected community in EBC, there is a need for a community park that provides opportunities for both active and passive recreation. A large park and a prominent civic space near the municipal offices could anchor public life in the area, while a series of smaller green spaces distributed throughout the neighbourhood would help foster a sense of place and strengthen social ties.

Expanded Stormwater Facility

An expanded stormwater pond will support development in the area, roughly doubling the size of the current pond. The pond will be landscaped to be functional, aesthetic, and to provide wildlife habitat.

Option 1: Lowest Density

Using the same Block Structure, we prepared three options to test a range of options for discussion. The first option results in a density of approximately 273 people plus jobs per hectare (PPJ/ha), and demonstrates one way that buildings and land use could potentially happen.

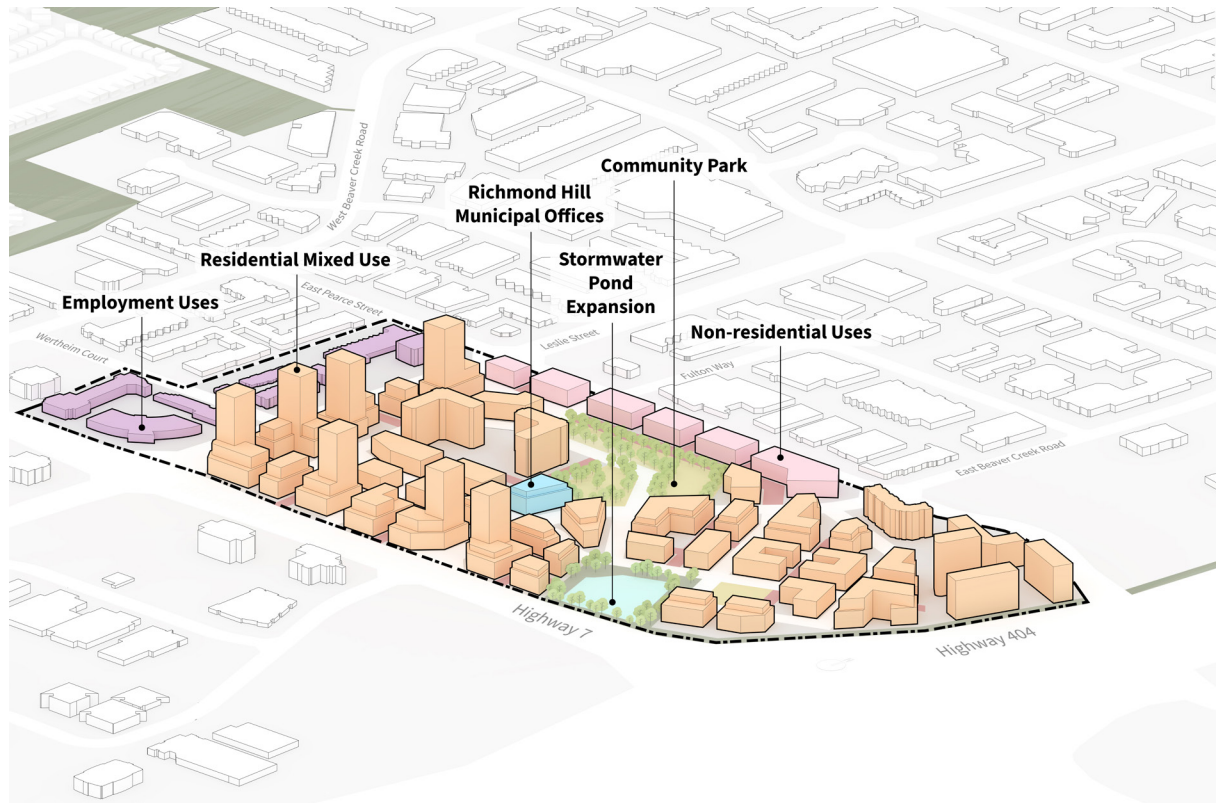
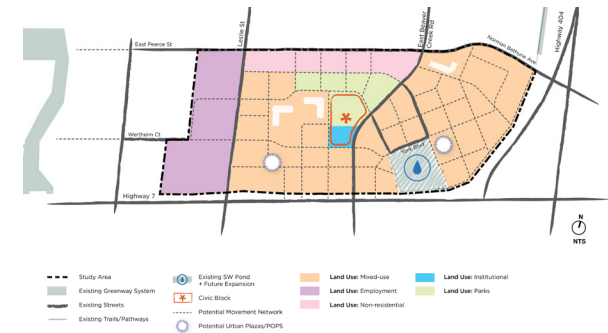


Figure 5. Option 1: Lowest Density

Land Use Distribution



Option 1 retains the existing employment uses to the west of Leslie Street. Non-residential uses along East Pearce Street are used as a buffer from existing employment uses to the north. The rest of the study area is categorized as mixed-use, with the institutional and open space uses concentrated at the centre.

Built Use Intensity Distribution

Option 1 locates greater built form intensity (taller buildings and higher density) along Highway 7 and the east side of Leslie Street. The tallest buildings are around 25 storeys and located close to existing and planned rapid transit stops. The heights decrease as they move away from transit nodes. The low-rise (1-4 storeys) are mostly within employment and non-residential areas, with the remaining buildings being mid-rise (5-8 storeys).

Option 2: Medium Density

The second option results in a density of approximately 328 PPJ, and demonstrates another, more intense, way for the area to develop. This differs from Option 1 with taller buildings and more people along Leslie Street and Highway 7.

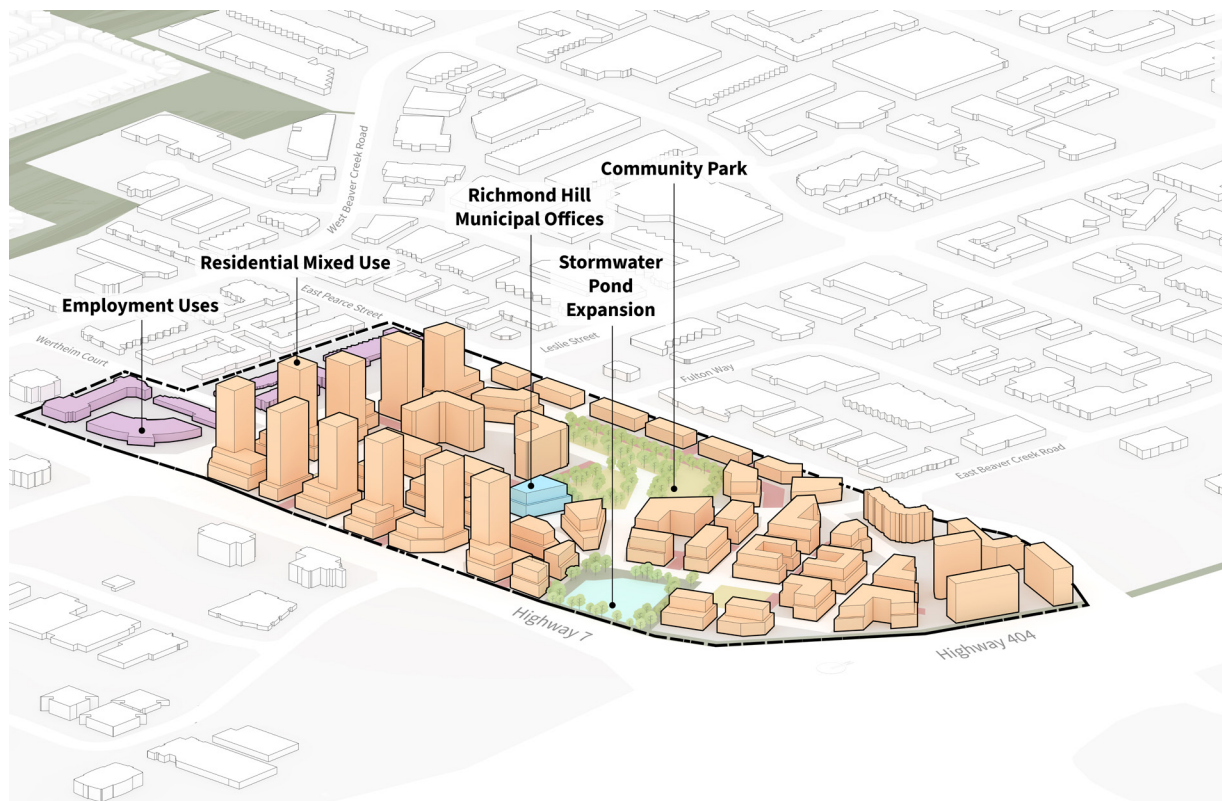
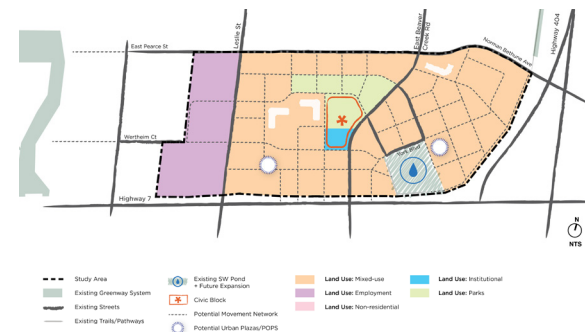


Figure 6. Option 2: Medium Density

Land Use Distribution



Option 2 retains the existing employment uses to the west of Leslie Street. The rest of the study area is categorized as mixed-use, with the institutional and open space uses concentrated at the centre. The built form south of Norman Bethune Ave. is set back to allow for a generous landscape buffer. In addition to creating a pleasant public realm, this would separate the residential uses in EBC from the employment uses in the north.

Built Use Intensity Distribution

Option 2 increases height and density along rapid transit routes, increasing the number of high-rise buildings (9+ storeys) along Highway 7 and Leslie Street. The tallest buildings are around 30 storeys. This option has many mid-rise buildings (5-8 storeys) with some low-rise buildings (1-4 storeys) within the employment area to the west of Leslie Street.

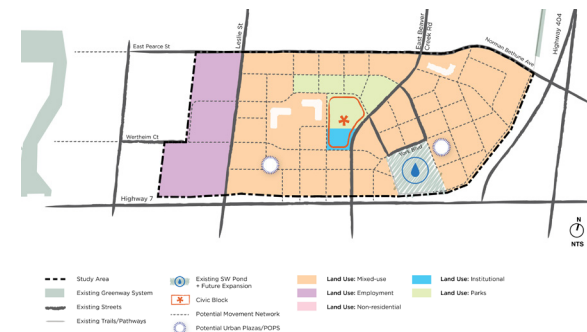
Option 3: Higher Density

The third option results in a density of approximately 444 PPJ, and demonstrates an additional increase in intensity. This differs from Option 2 with taller buildings throughout while focusing the tallest buildings close to transit stops and along Highway 404 where the impact of height is lessened.



Figure 7. Option 2: Higher Density

Land Use Distribution



Option 3 is identical to Option 2 in terms of land use mix. It retains the existing employment uses to the west of Leslie Street. The rest of the study area is categorized as mixed-use, with the institutional and open space uses concentrated at the centre. The built form south of Norman Bethune Ave. is set back to allow for a generous landscape buffer. In addition to creating a pleasant public realm, this would separate the residential uses in the south from the employment uses in the north.

Built Use Intensity Distribution

Option 3 provides the highest density and building heights, with the tallest buildings being around 35 storeys. The towers are positioned along the periphery and rapid transit routes to frame a more human scale with mid-rise buildings (5-8 storeys) located in central areas of EBC. Low-rise buildings (1-4 storeys) are only found in the employment area west of Leslie Street.

Options Comparison

Option 1: Lowest Density

273 People Plus Jobs Per Hectare



Density

Like other Local Centres in Richmond Hill

Key Facts

- # Units: **4,872**
- #People: **9,159**
- # Jobs: **1,839**
- Maximum Height: **25**

Intensification

Locates the greatest intensity of people and buildings along Highway 7 and Leslie Street.

Land Use Compatibility to the North

Buffer of Non-residential uses

Option 2: Medium Density

328 People Plus Jobs Per Hectare



Density

Responds to transit and land use context

Key Facts

- # Units: **6,112**
- #People: **11,490**
- # Jobs: **1,733**
- Maximum Height: **30**

Intensification

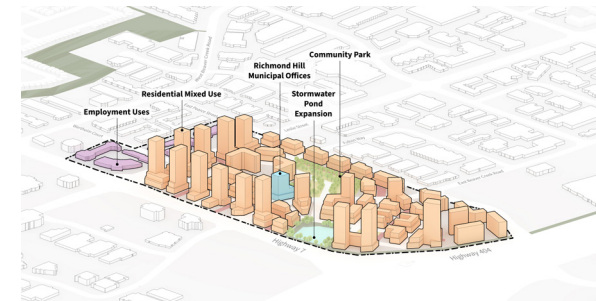
Differs from Option 1 with taller buildings and more people along Leslie Street and Highway 7.

Land Use Compatibility to the North

Landscape buffer + low-rise residential

Option 3: Higher Density

444 People Plus Jobs Per Hectare



Density

Approaching but not greater than Key Development Areas in Richmond Hill

Key Facts

- # Units: **8,647**
- #People: **16,257**
- # Jobs: **1,643**
- Maximum Height: **35**

Intensification

Differs from Option 2 with taller buildings throughout, while focusing the tallest buildings close to transit stops and along Highway 404.

Land Use Compatibility to the North

Landscape buffer + mid-rise residential

Next Steps

The creation of a Secondary Plan for the East Beaver Creek & Highway 7 area is, above all, a public conversation about the future of this community. We invite you to be involved throughout the study.

Feedback

Participate tonight in a small group discussion, complete a workbook, and/or fill out the online survey on the project webpage to share your feedback. All comments will be part of the project record (except for personal information) and will be considered as part of the process. Feedback is being collected until August 27th, 2025.

Policy Directions

Your feedback will be critical in informing high-level policy directions in the next phase. These policy directions will support a “preferred Option”, which may be a combination of the three Options presented tonight. There will be public engagement on policy directions in late 2025.

What We Heard

A What We Heard report will capture feedback from the two Community Workshops, the online survey, and other engagement with interested and affected parties. This report will be presented to Council in October (along with the Background Report) and will be posted on the project webpage.

Stay Up-to-Date

Visit the project webpage for more information and to keep updated.

www.richmondhill.ca/en/learn-more/eastbeaver-creek-secondary-plan



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