



## **GRAND Trunk Renewal**

How cities define desired outcomes for major sites and balance community benefit, feasibility, and risk.

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**City Council Workshop**  
**January 27, 2026**

# The OPPORTUNITY

Unlocking the GTR site as a public asset to leverage community benefit (based on priorities)



# Learning from Success Elsewhere



Wychwood Barns, Toronto



Guelph Market Square



Evergreen Brickworks, TO



UW Architecture School Cambridge

# Critical Questions!

**WHAT:** is the overall vision/outcome?

**WHO:** who are our partners, where is private investment come in?

**HOW:** do we move forward, in what phases and who is in lead?

**WHEN:** can we get started, what are the first steps, how long will this take?

# Understanding Key Terms

Highest and Best Use

Community Benefit

Return on Investment

RFP

REOI

# WHAT

## Defining what success looks like



## WHAT

# “Highest and Best Use”

“A property’s highest and best use is the use of land that provides the maximum net return in the foreseeable future, with consideration for all legal, physical, financial, and market constraints. Or simply put, **the reasonably probable use that results in the highest value**”

Versus appraisal or “As of Right” definition

“The reasonably **probable and legal use** of property, that is physically possible, appropriately supported, and financially feasible, and that results in the highest value”

**WHAT**

# Highest and Best Use” in draft Master Plan



# WHAT

# “Highest and Best Use”

## 1. Assessment

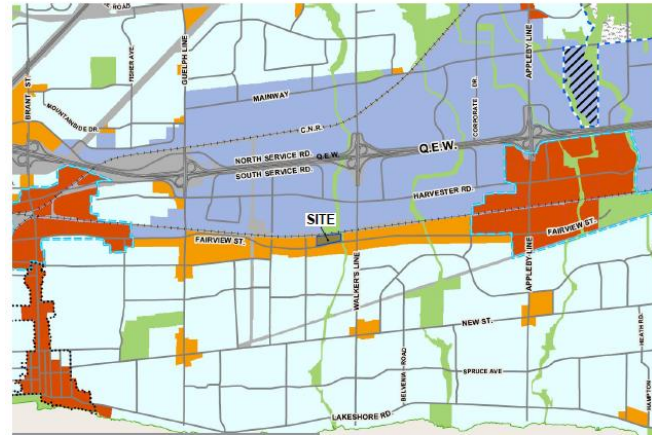


Figure 19: 5045 Fairview Preliminary Development Concept

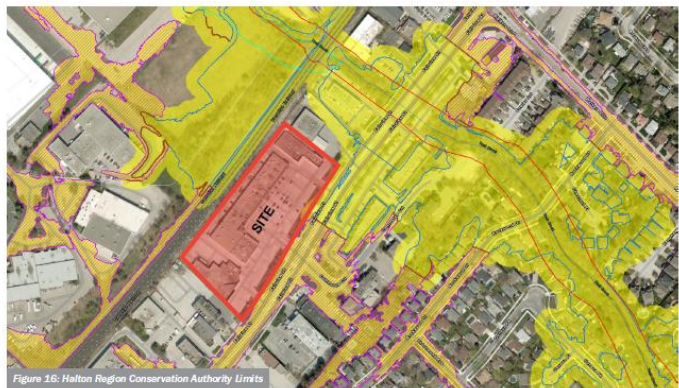
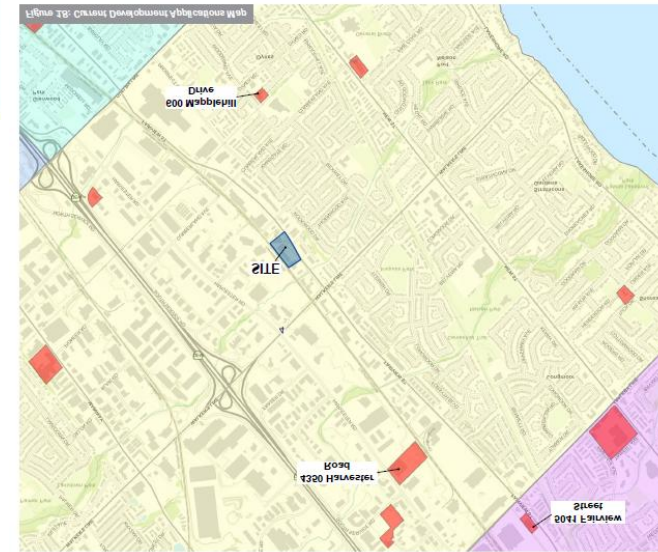
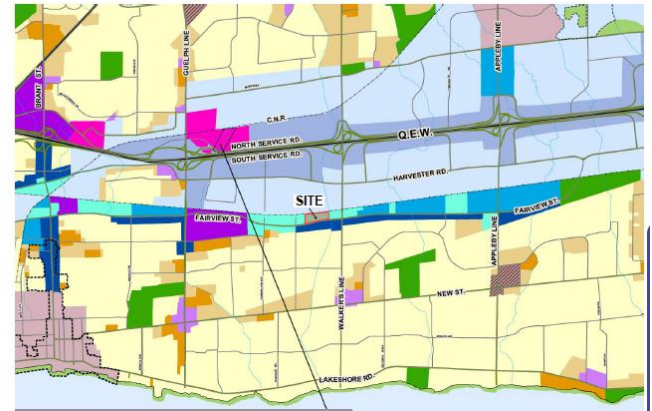


Figure 16: Halton Region Conservation Authority Limits



Context

Policy

Market

# WHAT

# “Highest and Best Use” other place

## 2. Options



Figure 23: Conceptual massing of Option 1 looking east

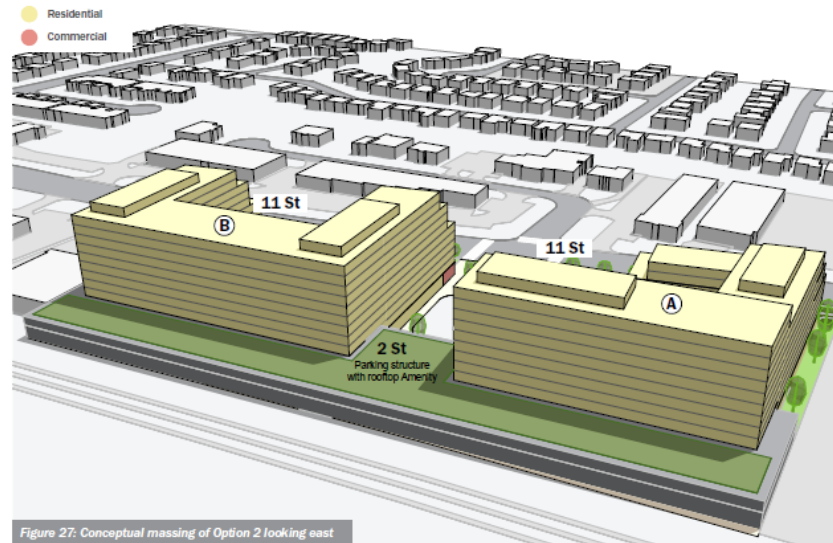


Figure 27: Conceptual massing of Option 2 looking east

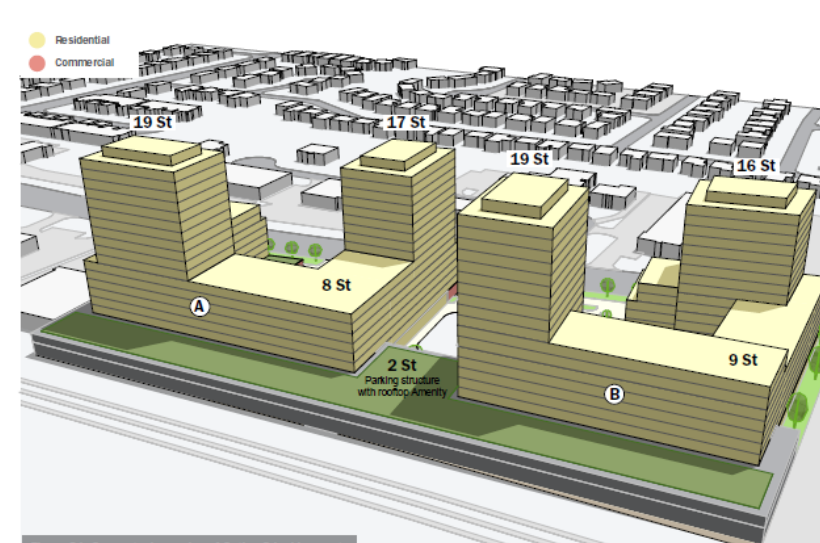


Figure 31: Conceptual massing of Option 3 looking east

# WHAT

## “Highest and Best Use”

3. Recommendations: greatest value that is approvable and can be achieved

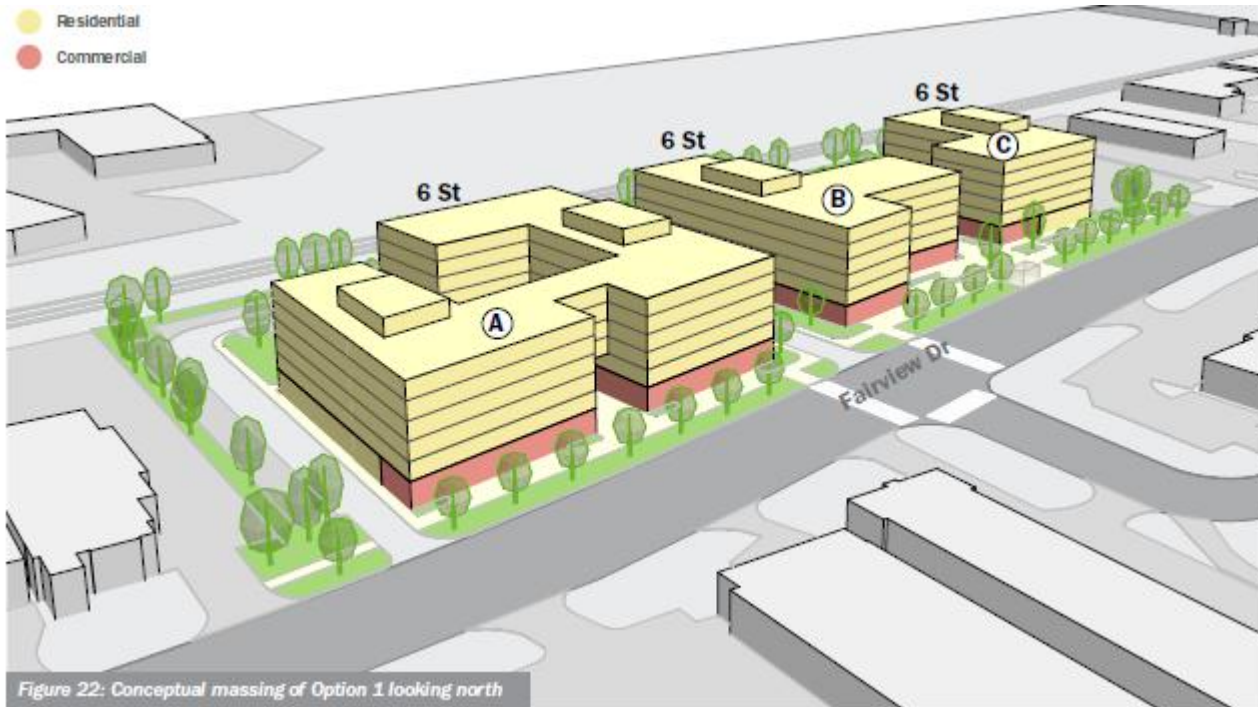


Figure 22: Conceptual massing of Option 1 looking north

	Gross Floor Area (GFA) <sup>1</sup>		Residential Units <sup>2</sup>	Parking Required <sup>3</sup>
	Commercial (m <sup>2</sup> /ft <sup>2</sup> )	Residential (m <sup>2</sup> /ft <sup>2</sup> )		
Building A	768 / 8,267	15,931 / 171,480	228	318
Building B	735 / 7,911	8,450 / 90,955	120	180
Building C	244 / 2,626	5,986 / 64,433	85	116
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,747 / 18,805</b>	<b>30,367 / 326,867</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>614</b>

Surface Parking Spots	Below Grade Parking Spots
145	342
<b>Total Parking</b>	
487	

Site Area (m <sup>2</sup> /ft <sup>2</sup> )	20,742 / 223,265
Total GFA (m <sup>2</sup> /ft <sup>2</sup> )	32,114 / 345,672
Density (FSI) <sup>4</sup>	1.55

#### Assumptions:

- Gross Floor Area (GFA) includes an assumed 15% reduction in net floor area over the Gross Building Area. GFA estimates in square feet may be +/- 5-ft as a result of rounding.
- Average unit size estimated at 70m<sup>2</sup> / GFA. Average unit sizes reflect built, approved and proposed development statistics in the immediate vicinity.
- Total number of required parking spaces include the minimum residential parking requirement (1.25 stalls/unit) and an estimated average total parking requirement (4 stalls / 100m<sup>2</sup> GFA). Overall average parking stall size assumed to be 35m<sup>2</sup> / GBA for structured above and below grade parking and 30m<sup>2</sup> / GBA for surface parking.
- Density calculated as Total GFA over Gross Site Area.
- Floor-to-floor heights assumed to be 4.5m at ground level and 3m above.



Figure 21: Option 1 conceptual site plan

## WHAT

# “Community Benefit”

Approaches and tools

“**Community Benefits**” refer to the social and economic outcomes that arise from public and private investments in infrastructure and development projects. They aim to ensure that these benefits are shared with the local community, promoting equity and improving the quality of life for residents.”

Community Benefit Charges (CBCs used to be s37)

“Community Benefits Agreements” are a proven approach to ensure the jobs and opportunities from new infrastructure and development benefit local communities and build community wealth. Such agreements ensure meaningful community participation which contributes to inclusive and sustainable communities and a stronger local economy.”

Toronto Community Benefits Network

# WHAT

## “Return on Investment”

“**Project Costs**” include: Capital (site prep, infrastructure, construction) + operating (program, maintenance)

“**Return on Investment**”: Project Costs balanced against financial and social impact over time (municipal taxes, (in terms of municipal taxes over time, activity in DT, meeting City priorities i.e. housing, catalytic spin offs (surrounding sites).

Public projects often consider ROI as the opportunity for public investment to leverage BOTH related private investment and ongoing public revenue, value of benefits

“**Reinvestment Frameworks**” – a tool or clear guiding document/strategy that integrates costs, phasing but also ROI along with an optimal overall development pattern (streets and development blocks with anticipated range in yield) and roles/actions NOT policy/regulation, fixed plans or outcomes.

**WHO**

# Many partners and a lot of Collaboration



# HOW

## Many Ways

### Starts with alignment of WHAT and WHO and defining responsibilities

- **Brickworks:** Evergreen led, City and community partners
- **Wychwood Barns:** led with Artscape and City
- **UW Cambridge:** co-led by UW Architecture and City
- **Guelph Market Square**– City led with businesses etc.
- **GTR:** full site or individual components? 5 projects: Parking, Community Facility, Housing, Superstructure – need to explore each without losing the overall vision

HOW

# Private Market Partners:

ROLES

Collaborators ..... Investors

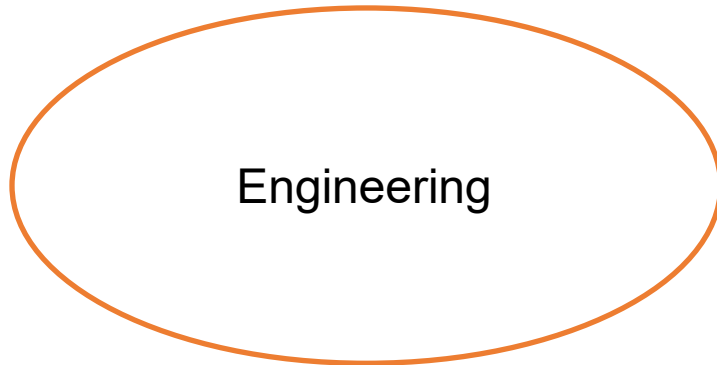
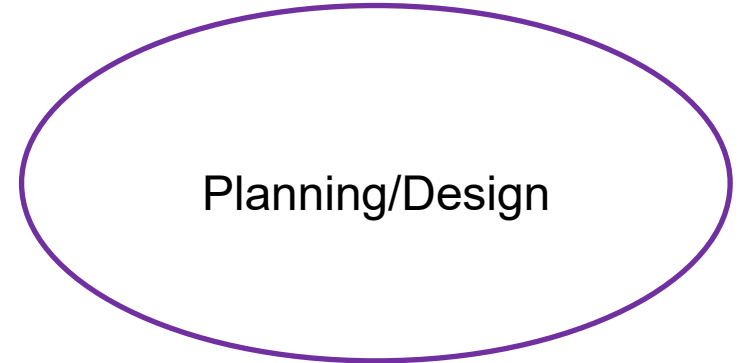
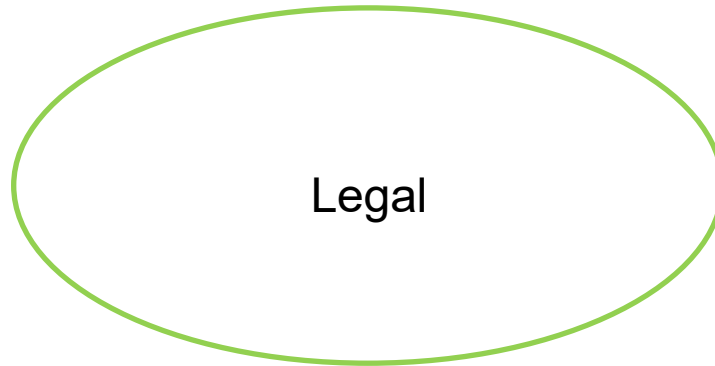
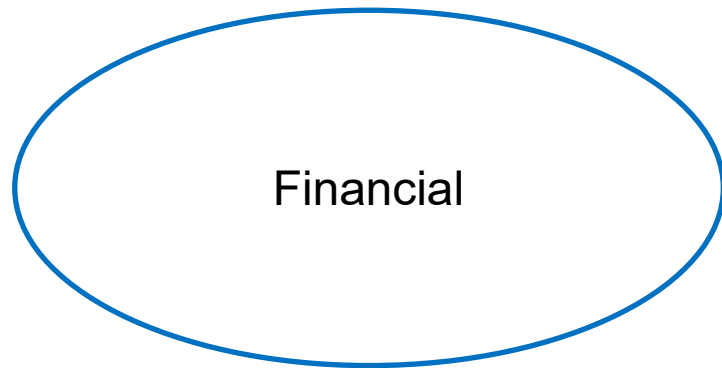


TOOLS

Market Sounding ..... REOI ..... RFP

**HOW**

# Skills and Capacity



A Team is needed and should be built with the needed expertise as an investment in the Project and Community (internal + external)

# WHEN

can we get started? what are the first steps? how long will this take?

NOW !

By establishing a clear  
“reinvestment framework”

## Approvals

Environmental  
Infrastructure/EA

## Partnerships

Government  
Development  
Core Partners

## Design (Phase 1)

concept  
detailed  
Construction drawings

## Site Improvements

environmental  
infrastructure

## Construction

## Occupation

- Multiple phases
- 5+ projects
- 2-3 years until shovels in ground for first project or phase
- 1-2 years of construction
- 5 years until doors open
- Total build out 10-15 years market depending



# GRAND Trunk Renewal

Thank you!

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Questions?