



MEMBER MOTION

Section 5.4.4(b) of Procedure By-law

Meeting:	Committee of the Whole	Council X
Meeting Date:	September 18, 2019	
Subject/Title:	1577 – 1621 Major Mackenzie Drive - Request for Employment Land Conversion	
Submitted by:	Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli	

Whereas, the Rice Group has submitted correspondence and master plan (copy attached) regarding 1577 – 1621 Major Mackenzie Drive - Request for Employment Land Conversion.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

That Council of the City of Richmond Hill has considered the Major Mackenzie & 404 Master Plan prepared for Rice Group by Studio TLA dated June 26, 2019 and approves in principle the addition of such uses to give effect to this plan; and

That staff are hereby directed to process an Official Plan Amendment, initiated by the landowner, in accordance with A Place to Grow (Growth Plan 2019) Policy 2.2.5(10) and a corresponding Zoning Bylaw Amendment to permit the additional uses and the proposed development. A Recommendation Report is due back before Council by the end of November 2019.

Moved by: Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Seconded by:



September 6, 2019

City of Richmond Hill,
225 East Beaver Creek Road
Richmond Hill On L4B 3P4

Attention: Members of Council

RE: **1577 – 1621 Major Mackenzie Drive**
Request for Employment Land Conversion

Dear Members of Council,

On June 27, 2019 we met with CAO Neil Garbe and Planning Commissioner Kelvin Kwan to review our development concept for the above noted lands titled ***Major Mackenzie & 404 Master Plan***. It is a timely, ambitious Mixed Use plan that will bring new jobs to the City, address the pressing social issues of affordable housing and rental accommodation, and help the City achieve its intensification targets mandated under the Growth Plan. As you will see in the attached materials there are also significant fiscal benefits to the City of Richmond Hill and Region of York.

Our meeting with Mr. Garbe and Mr. Kwan was very positive; we discussed the elements of the plan and the anticipated benefits and received an acknowledgement that our request would be included in a City wide conversion request report that would be presented to Council sometime in October. That report would identify the conversion requests that the City would support and the Region would be advised accordingly.

I was called into a meeting with Regional staff on Sep. 5, 2019 and was advised that they would not be recommending our property for conversion. In our 12 years of ownership of this property we have advanced many forward thinking development proposals and have had our fair share of disappointments. One thing hasn't changed, we never give up on delivering the highest and best use for this property and the City of Richmond Hill.

I am asking for your help at this time.

On a positive note, I am glad to inform you that the recently enacted Growth Plan 2019 gives the City of Richmond Hill the authority to approve this conversion request if it sees fit. I have attached a memo prepared by urbanMetrics dated Sep. 6, 2019 that reviews the Master Plan and provides an overview of the benefits and it's conformity to existing legislation. If you agree with it I would ask for two things to help us move forward:

1. A Council approval in principle of the plan and its merits, and
2. A direction to Staff to expedite a landowner initiated Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw Amendment

With this certainty we can embark on the application processing and are confident that the intended outcome is achievable in law. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Yours Truly



John McGovern

Senior Vice President, Policy and Planning

CC: Mr. Michael Rice, President



Memo

To:	John McGovern – Rice Commercial Group
From:	Doug Annand – urbanMetrics Chris White – urbanMetrics
Date:	September 6, 2019
Re:	Rice Commercial Group – Major Mackenzie & Highway 404 Richmond Hill – Employment Conversion Application Brief

We have completed a thorough review of the **Major Mackenzie & 404 Master Plan** prepared for the Rice Group by Studio TLA, dated June 26, 2019. We are advised that a meeting with the City of Richmond Hill CAO and Commissioner of Planning was held June 27, 2019 to review the contents of this plan. We offer the following observations and opinions.

This brief has been prepared to summarize the benefits that will be generated for the City of Richmond Hill through the partial conversion of Rice Commercial Group's lands—located on the south-west corner of the intersection of Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 404—to add residential uses as a permitted use. The current concept plan prepared by Studio TLA (attached as Appendix A) indicates a mixed-use development that differs substantially from the June 2012 approved Site Plan (attached as Appendix B), which is comprised entirely of retail/service commercial uses. This brief also reviews and provides an opinion on conformity with the key and relevant policies of a Place to Grow (the Growth Plan, 2019).

The following provides a brief overview as to our preliminary research findings.

1.0 Policy Context

To support this partial employment land conversion, which would include residential uses as part of the revised mixed-use concept, it is necessary to address Policy 2.2.5.10 of the in-force Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 (being A Place to Grow). This policy allows the City of Richmond Hill to permit the conversion of certain employment lands (such as the Rice lands) prior to the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review. That review might take a long time and undoubtedly

involves region-wide considerations. The Rice lands are among the few employment lands which are exempt from that more lengthy and cumbersome process.

Policy 2.2.5.10 states: *Notwithstanding Policy 2.2.5.9, until the next comprehensive municipal comprehensive review, lands within existing employment areas may be converted to a designation that permits non-employment uses, provided the conversion would: a) satisfy the requirements of policy 2.2.5.9 a), d), and e), which state:*

- a) There is need for the conversion;*
- d) The proposed uses would not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area or the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this plan, as well as the other policies of this plan; and*
- e) There are existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities to accommodate the proposed uses.*

There are two additional criteria in Policy 2.2.5.10 that must also be met, which include:

- a) Maintain a significant number of jobs on those lands through the establishment of development criteria; and*
- b) Not include any part of an employment area identified as a provincially significant employment zone.*

2.0 Research Findings

The various policy tests outlined in the previous section are addressed below:

Policy 2.2.5.9 a)

- With the demise of many potential retail anchors and the current state of the retail industry in general, the development of the Rice lands entirely for retail commercial uses is far less feasible;
- Consequently, there is need for the conversion to include a mix of uses if the site is to develop and generate permanent jobs;
- Based on the new concept plan, which includes retail, office and hotel uses in addition to residential, the number of permanent jobs generated by the development increases from 1,300 based on the 2012 Site Plan to 1,850 jobs based on the June 2019 Site Plan;

- We understand that—similar to other communities across the GTA—York Region is currently faced with an ongoing shortage of affordable housing. In fact, **Housing York Inc.**, (the Regions primary affordable housing provider) notes that the waitlist for social housing has doubled over the last decade, with approximately 10,000 households still waiting. They also note that the private sector is not meeting current needs with respect to market rental residences and other forms of affordable housing.
- Rice on the other hand is committed to delivering a significant portion of the proposed residential units on the subject lands as affordable, helping to immediately address this deficit. At an assumed 20% of the total residential units proposed on the site, for example, the project could contribute an additional 400+ affordable units to the regional supply (i.e., among the single largest contributors across the Region). We also understand that Rice has met with Mr. Rick Farrell, General Manager, Housing York Inc. and is willing to provide a block of units to assist them with their mandate;
- With the expected aging of the Richmond Hill and Region of York population, Rice is also committed to delivering new assisted living opportunities as part of their project (e.g., a nursing home / retirement residence / extended care facility), that can house this growing segment of the population.
- Increasing supply and providing affordable housing is the underpinning of the More Homes, More Choices Act 2019 and for the reasons set out above there is a need for this conversion.

Policy 2.2.5.9 d)

- The Rice lands are separated from surrounding employment lands by the valley lands to the west and south that isolate these lands from the balance of the Headford Business Park, Highway 404 to the east, and Major Mackenzie Drive to the north. In addition, office and hotel uses that are planned for the site are to be located south of Major Mackenzie Drive, consistent with the existing and potential future employment uses located in the Barker Business Park, north of Major Mackenzie Drive;
- Consequently, the proposed conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area and will in fact assist with the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in the plan.
- The proposed mixed-use concept increases the density in terms of jobs and residents per hectare from 65 based on the 2012 Site Plan to 273 based on the Studio TLA Master Plan. For the reasons stated above policy 2.2.5.9 d) is satisfied.

Policy 2.2.5.9 e)

- We understand, based on input from other professional disciplines, that adequate existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities will exist to accommodate the mix of uses proposed. Specifically, on Major Mackenzie across the frontage of the property there is a Regional trunk watermain and through the property by easement runs a Regional trunk sanitary sewer. An approved Draft Plan of Subdivision for this property has identified a right of way for the future extension of Vogell Road and the creation of two development blocks along with a significant open space Natural Heritage block.

Policy 2.2.5.10 a)

- As indicated above, the proposed mixed-use concept plan on the Rice Lands will generate an increase in the number of permanent jobs on site, and to ensure that these jobs are created, development criteria will be established through the processing of the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning Bylaw Amendment should the Council of the City of Richmond Hill approve this conversion in principle.

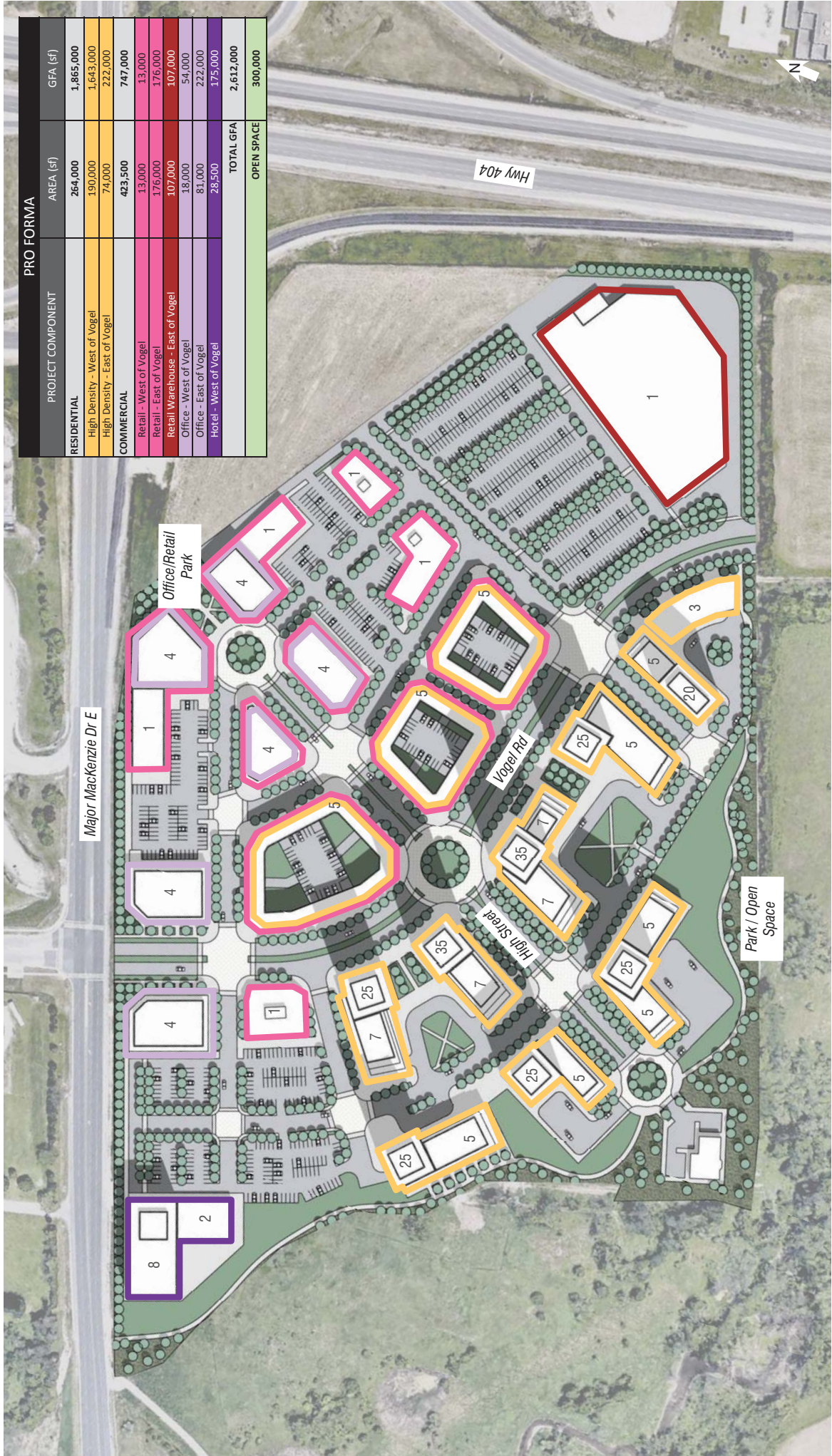
Policy 2.2.5.10 b)

- The Rice lands are not located in a provincially significant employment zone, as demonstrated in Appendix C.

In closing, we have provided a Fiscal Impact Assessment comparison between the 2012 Site Plan and the Studio TLA Master Plan for discussion purposes only and included it as Appendix D. It demonstrates a very significant financial benefit to the City of Richmond Hill by this mixed-use development.

Appendix A **Proposed Development Concept**

Site Plan



PRO FORMA		
PROJECT COMPONENT	AREA (sf)	GFA (sf)
RESIDENTIAL		
High Density - West of Vogel	264,000	1,865,000
High Density - East of Vogel	190,000	1,643,000
	74,000	222,000
COMMERCIAL		
Retail - West of Vogel	423,500	747,000
Retail - East of Vogel	13,000	13,000
Retail Warehouse - East of Vogel	176,000	176,000
Office - West of Vogel	107,000	107,000
Office - East of Vogel	18,000	54,000
Hotel - West of Vogel	81,000	222,000
Hotel - East of Vogel	28,500	175,000
TOTAL GFA		2,612,000
OPEN SPACE		300,000

Appendix B **Approved Development Concept**

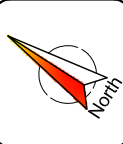
SITE SUMMARY

ENTIRE SITE AREA	±52.26 ACRES
BLOCK A AREA	±6.41 ACRES
BLOCK B AREA	±10.42 ACRES
BLOCK C AREA	±3.78 ACRES
BLOCK D AREA	±11.88 ACRES
BLOCK E AREA	±10.85 ACRES
VALLEY LAND & BUFFER AREA	±5.64 ACRES
R.O.W. AREA	±3.28 ACRES
BLOCK A	
RETAIL A1	±6,000 S.F.
RETAIL A2	±6,130 S.F.
RETAIL A3	±7,500 S.F.
RETAIL A4	±12,220 S.F.
RETAIL A5	±8,400 S.F.
RETAIL A6	±7,500 S.F.
RETAIL A7	±47,750 S.F.
TOTAL RETAIL	398 CARS
PARKING PROVIDED	8.34 / 1000 S.F.
BLOCK B	
SITE AREA	±10.42 ACRES
RETAIL B1	±129,504 S.F.
RETAIL B2	±20,500 S.F.
TOTAL RETAIL	±150,004 S.F.
PARKING PROVIDED	608 CARS
	4.11 / 1000 S.F.
BLOCK C	
SITE AREA	±3.78 ACRES
RETAIL C1	±12,359 S.F.
CHUCKEHEESE	±15,400 S.F.
RETAIL C3	±7,600 S.F.
TOTAL RETAIL	±35,259 S.F.
PARKING PROVIDED	150 CARS
	4.25 / 1000 S.F.
TOTAL BLOCK D & E	
TOTAL SITE AREA	±22.73 ACRES
TOTAL RETAIL	±321,900 S.F.
TOTAL PARKING	1508 CARS
	4.68 / 1000 S.F.

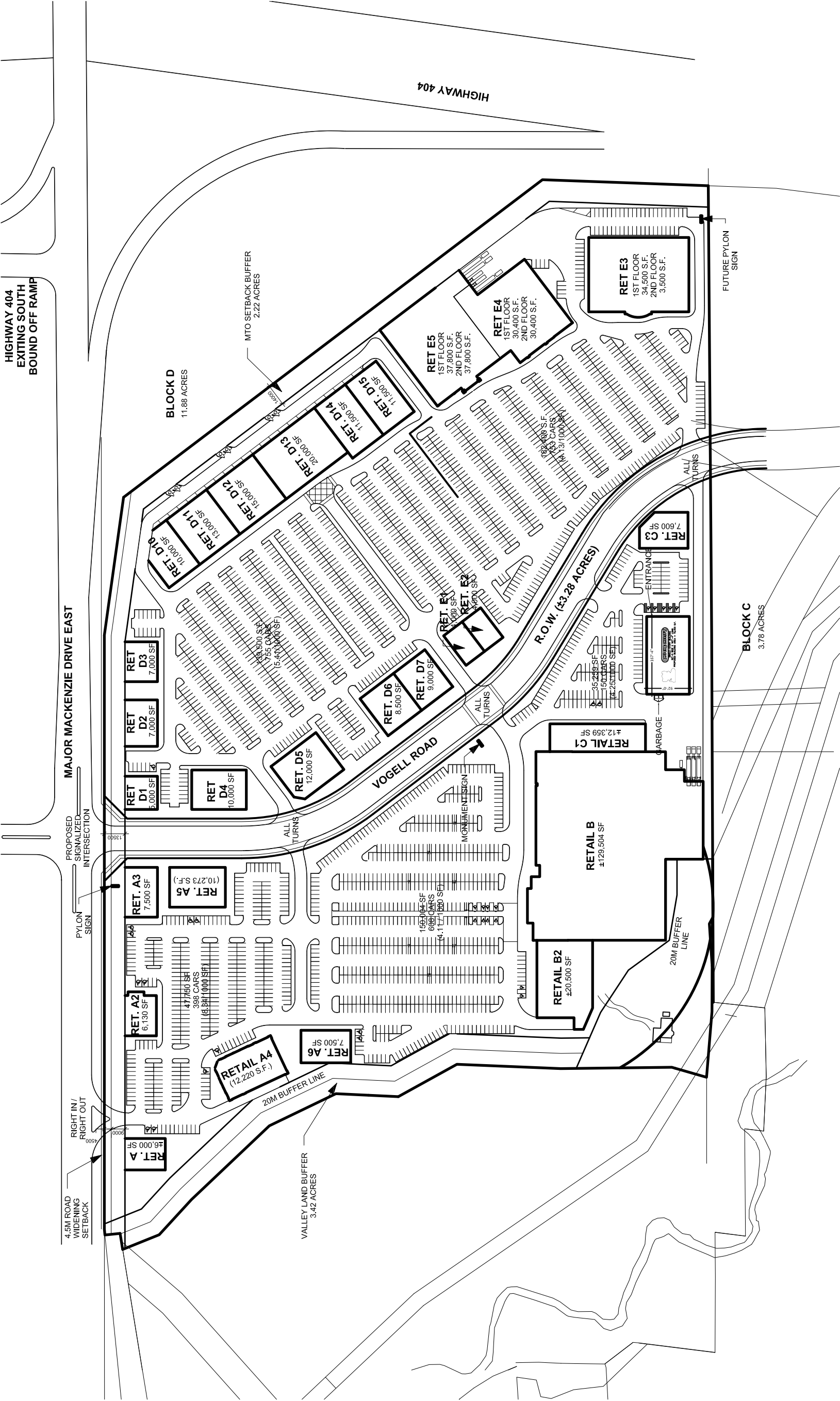
No. REVISION DATE

MACKENZIE COMMONS

DATE: June 19th 2012
SCALE: 1:2500 (11 x 17)
DRAWN BY: ZACHARY STOKES



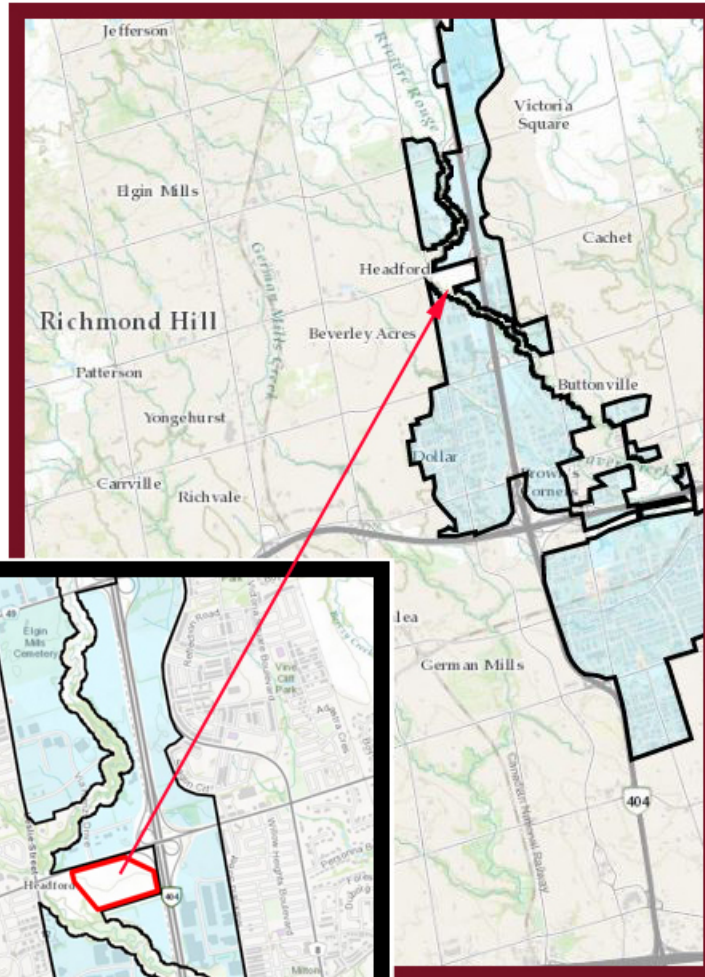
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MC-A1 - 001



Appendix C **Proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zones (Richmond Hill)**



Richmond Hill



Exploded
View

Appendix D Fiscal Benefits Analysis

The following summary table compares the key employment-related and fiscal benefits associated with the two development scenarios identified for the subject lands. The 2019 “Mixed Use” concept is based on the latest development plans for the site (per Appendix A), whereas the “Retail” concept is based on the approved site plan from June 2012 (Appendix B).

	Retail (June 2012 Site Plan)	Mixed Use (June 2019 Site Plan)
Permanent On-Site Jobs (FTE's)	1,300	1,850
Residential Units / Population	0	2,000 / 3,600
Density (Residents + Jobs / hectare)	65	273
Total Assessed Value	\$167M	\$1B+
Annual Property Tax Revenues (Richmond Hill component)	\$408K	\$2.1M
Annual Property Tax Revenues (York Region component)	\$719K	\$3.8M
Total Annual Property Tax Revenues (incl. Education)	\$2.7M	\$8.8M
Development Charges (Richmond Hill component)	\$4.4M	\$23.9M
Development Charges (York Region component)	\$29.2M	\$82.6M
Total Development Charges (incl. Education)	\$34.1M	\$120.0M
Building Permit Fees (Richmond Hill only)	\$7.3M	\$48.0M

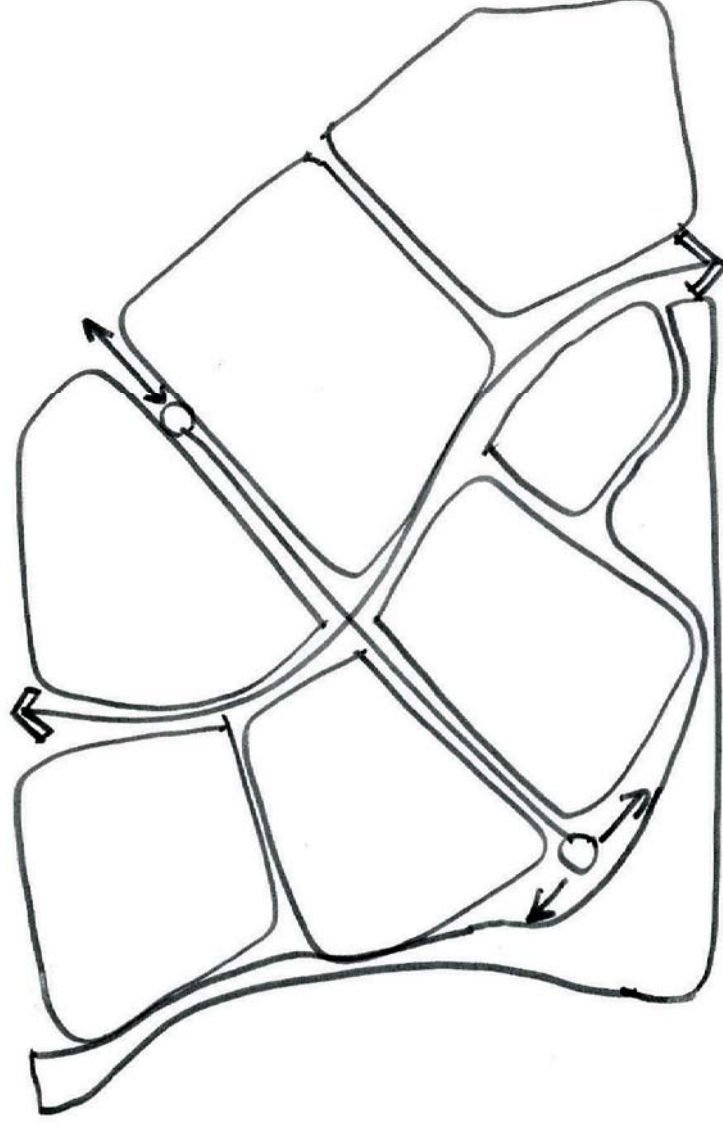
Major Mackenzie & 404 Master Plan

Major Mackenzie & 404 Master Plan

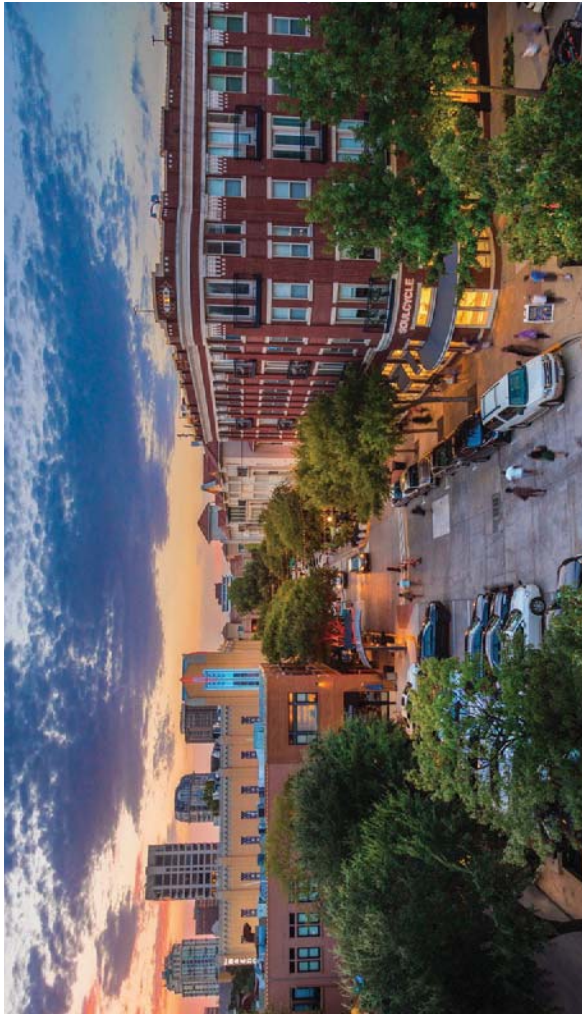
The site is organized by a cross axial alignment providing a visual and physical connection between the commercial core of the site and residential component. This axial street is envisioned as a park street with wide setback and landscape median terminating at one end at a park/open space area and a office core at the other. The mix of uses has been distributed to maximize phasing potential with clusters of uses defined primarily by private and public streets, parkways, plazas and pedestrian connections. At the heart, is a mixed-use office environment surrounded by supporting retail and commercial uses connected via an enhanced pedestrian environment.

The western perimeter is bounded by a park space area that connects to the preserved open space and forms a buffer to the development that will support a high-density residential component made up of condominiums and stacked flats with a possibility for senior's housing and assisted living facilities. The project entries are anchored by primarily retail uses with a highway commercial/hotel component to the north and a big box component to the south.

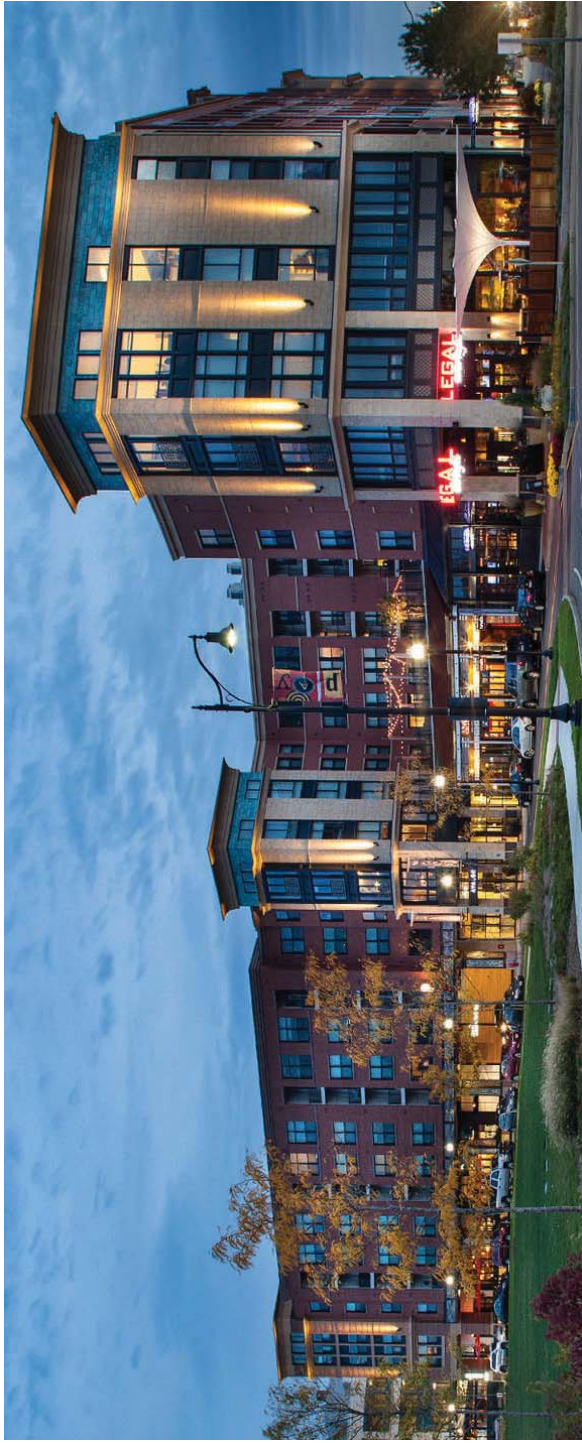
Visibility to the property from the highway has been maximized to allow views into the site and it is supported with larger building massings at its core surrounded by lower buildings at the periphery. Field parking has been distributed to suit retail/commercial uses, and three above ground parking garages have been wrapped in residential suites with retail along the bottom. Underground parking will serve the higher-density residential uses.



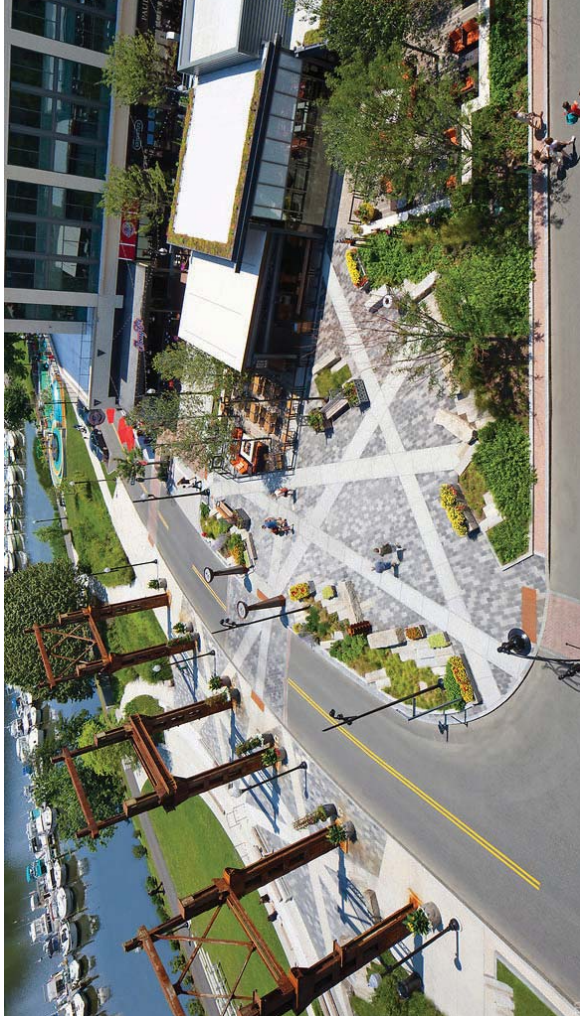
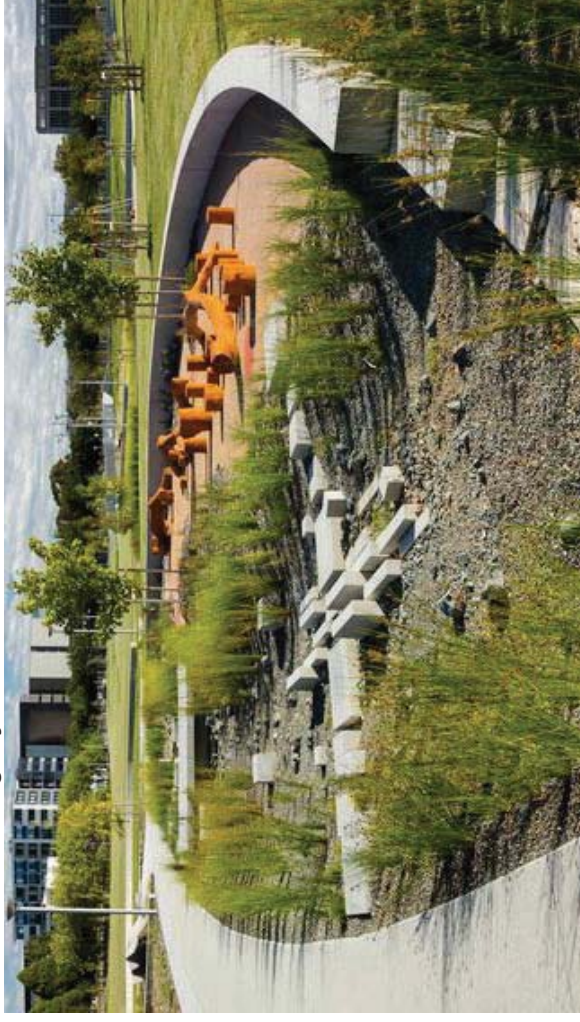
Precedent Imagery



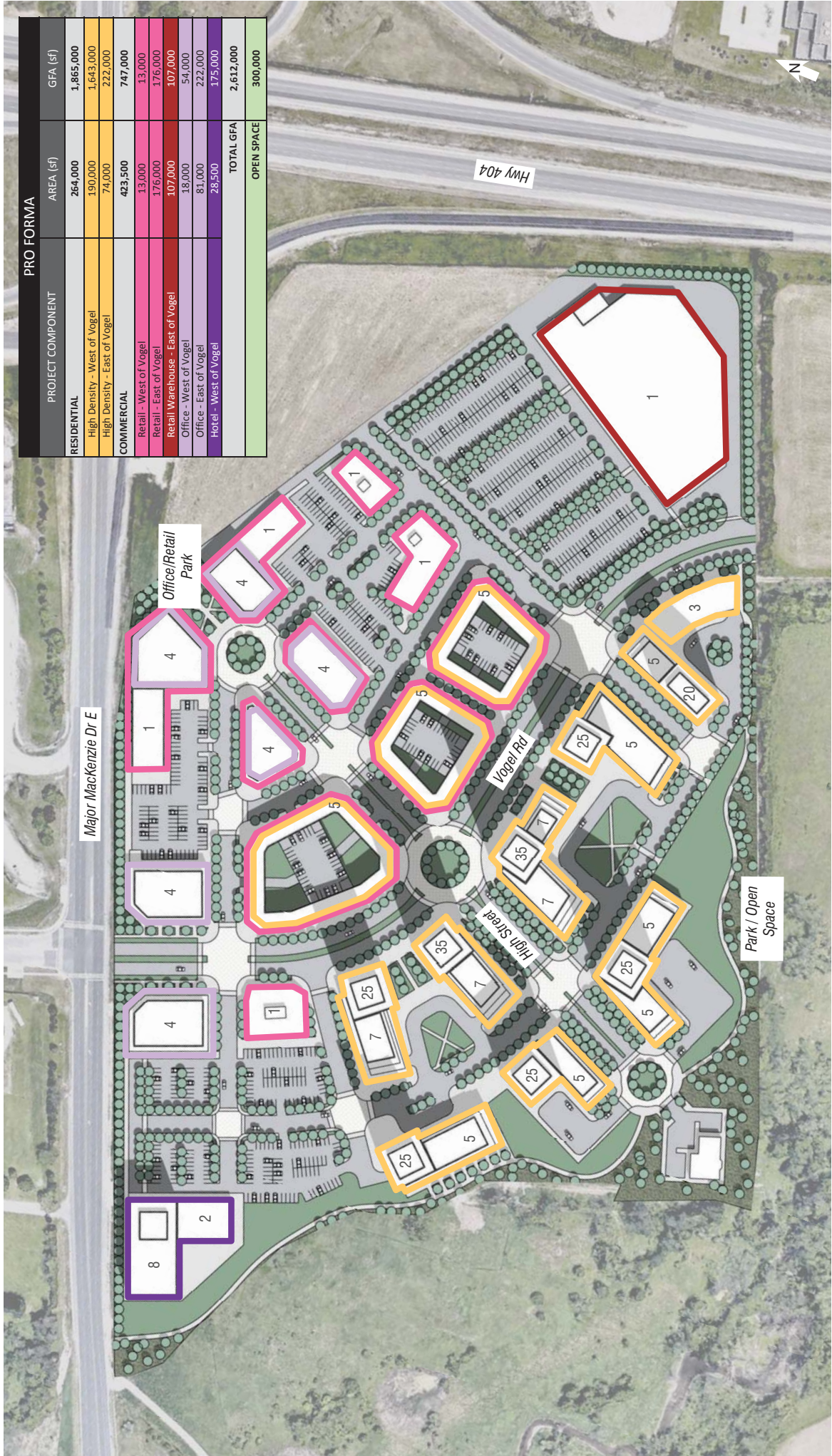
Precedent Imagery



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Built Form | Looking West



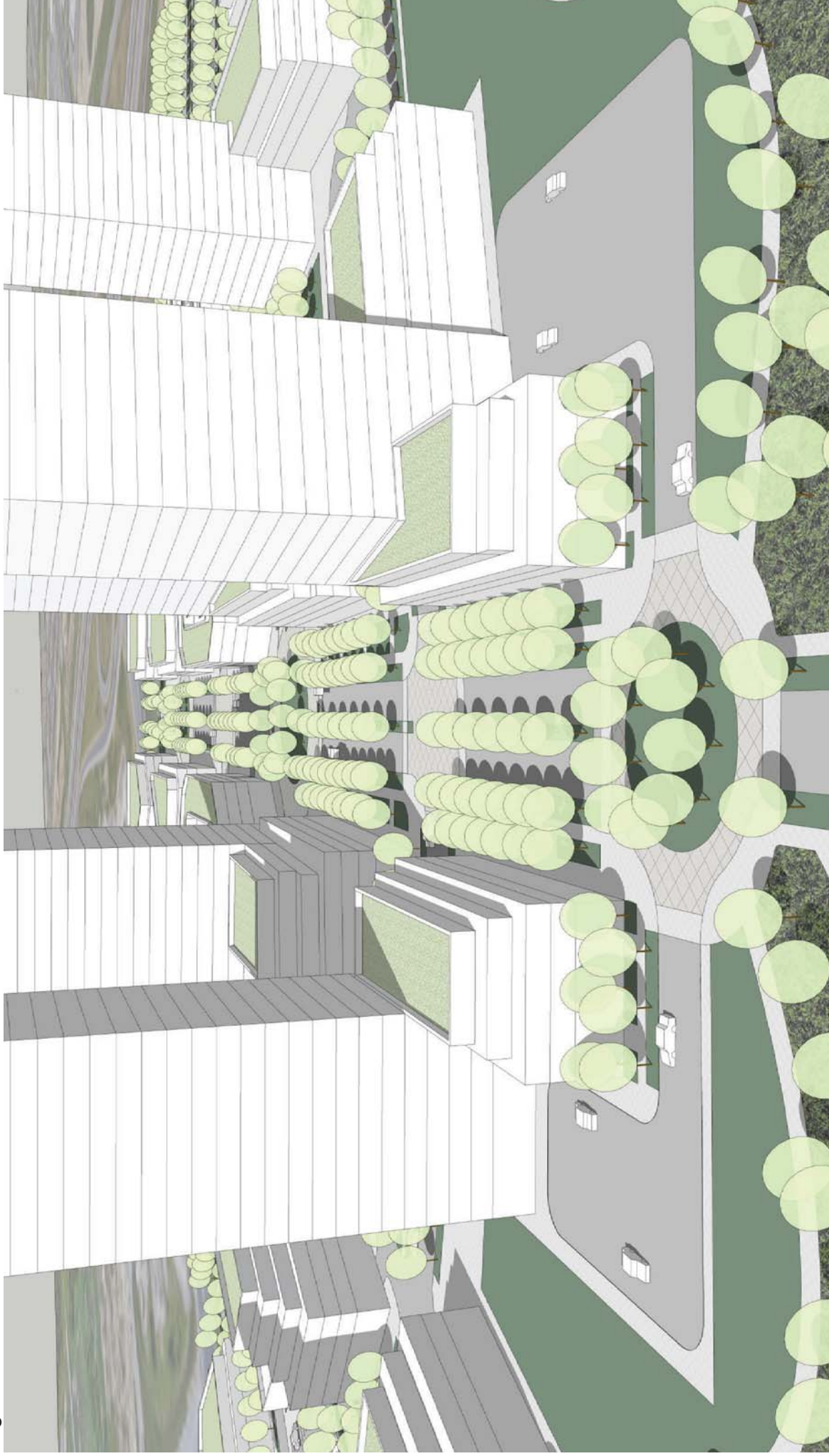
Built Form | Looking East



Connection to Open Space



High Street



Office-Retail Park

