

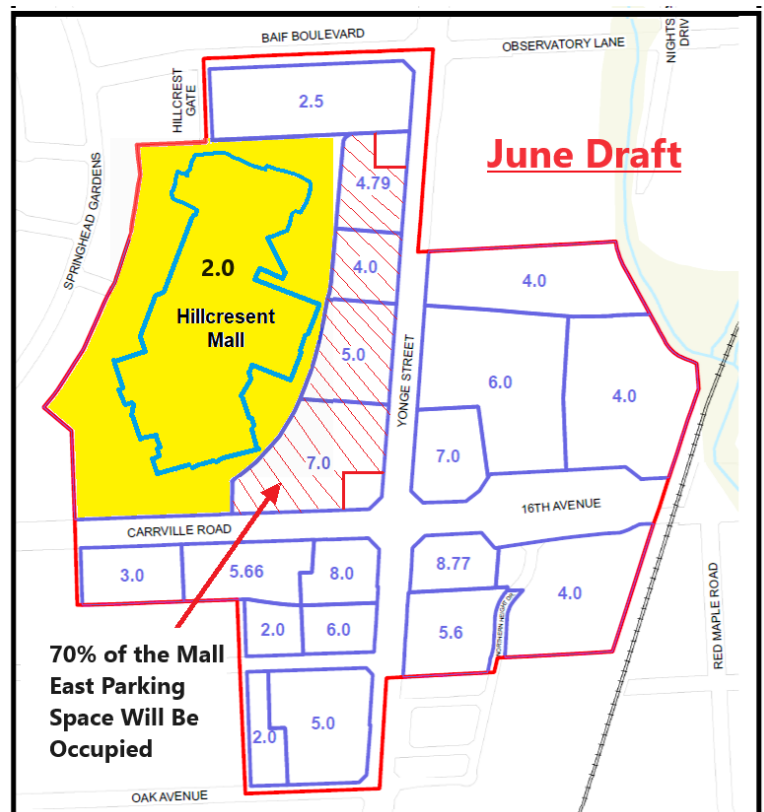
Yonge/16th KDA Final Draft Review – Oct 31, 2023

Members of Council,

Regarding the proposed OPA 18.5 Yonge/16th KDA plan, I would like to highlight some key concerns and compare them to the June 2023 draft:

June 2023 Draft:

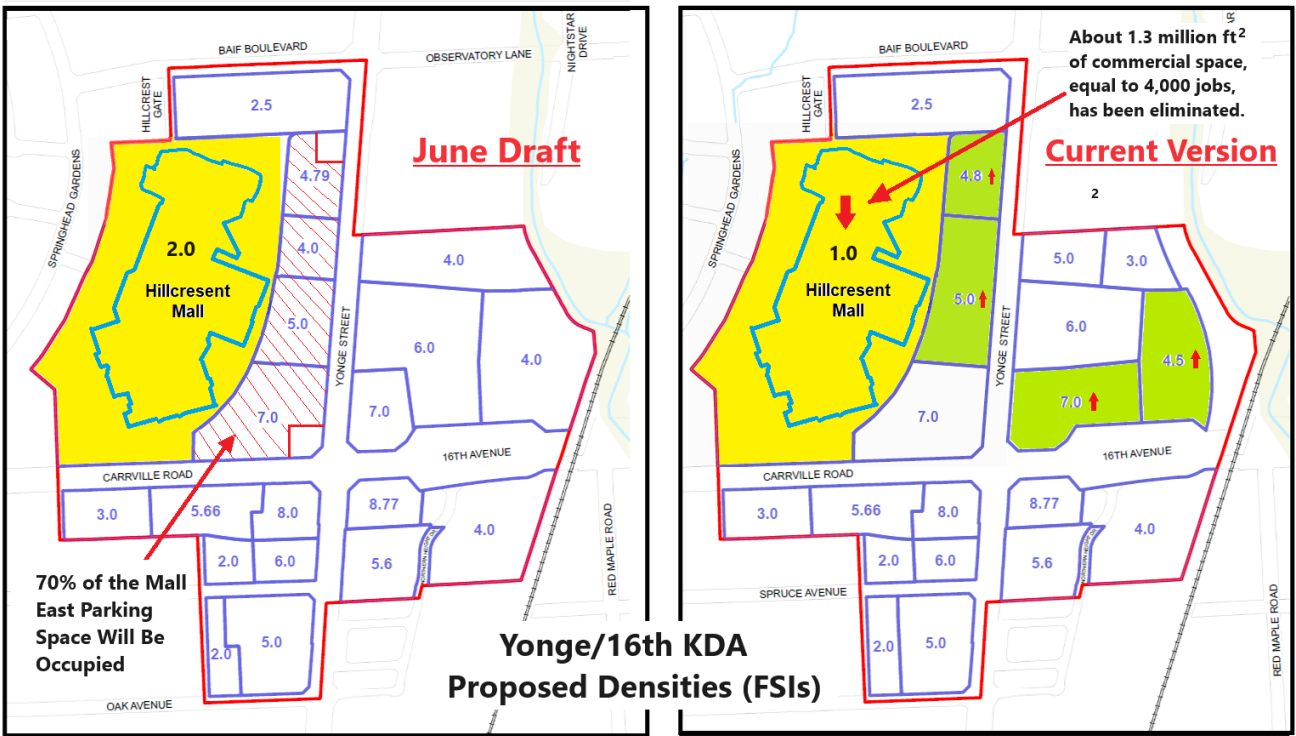
(1) **Who Shapes Our Community: City or Developers?** My primary concern remains the exceptionally high densities (FSIs) imposed, taken directly from developers' proposals. For example, consider the southeast corner of 9251 Yonge Street in 2020, where the developer requested an FSI of 8.77 and proposed two towering buildings, 38 and 41 stories high. The previous council, often perceived as pro-developer, objected to this proposal, and similar objections arose for most other aggressive developer applications. The approval of these proposals now raises questions about the authorizing bodies. This situation mirrors what happened with the Yonge/Bernard KDA Revision Plan, where the city approved even more than what developers had initially asked for.



- (2) **Employment Ratio Concern:** An alarming issue pertains to the low Employment-to-Residence Ratio in this predominantly commercial area, with only 8,600 jobs projected against 23,000 residents. This discrepancy implies a potential job deficit of approximately 3,000.
- (3) **Traffic and Safety Concern:** The addition of 10,000 more residents within a 100-meter radius of the Yonge/16th intersection is disconcerting. This expansion has the potential to exacerbate an already problematic scenario, as it currently ranks as the number one Motorcycle Collision Injury Site in York Region over the past decade, as reported by the York Region Traveller Safety Report.
- (4) **Significant Parking Reduction Concern:** The substantial removal of 70% of parking spaces on the east side of the mall raises a significant concern. This change, particularly during weekends and holidays, may have an adverse impact on shoppers and their overall experience.

Final Draft to Be Reviewed:

(1) **Significant Employment Space Reduction Concern:** None of the above concerns have been addressed in the final draft. **What's even more surprising is the substantial reduction in employment space within the Hillcrest Mall area, where the density has been halved from 2.0 to 1.0. Approximately 1.3 million square feet of commercial space, equivalent to around 4,000 jobs, has been eliminated. This revision mirrors exactly what Doug Ford did in the Yonge/407 EMZO – reducing employment space by half in favor of developers to increase residential units for profit.** It is widely acknowledged that Richmond Hill has been characterized as a "Sleep Town." I believe all council members and the planning team are aware of this characterization, so why are we following the same path that Doug Ford took for our city? It defies common sense.



(2) **Financial Impact Concern:** Financially, it has been established that an increase in high-rise residents leads to a larger deficit in the city's revenue. This, in turn, necessitates either a reduction in city services or an increase in the tax burden on residents. Why are we cutting employment opportunities in this predominantly commercial area, making an already deteriorated financial situation in Richmond Hill even worse?

It is evident that if without significant revision, this last piece of large commercial area in Richmond Hill will face a fate similar to the Richmond Hill Center (RHC) – **Turn a Union Station North to a Sleepy Town Expansion.**

I urge all of the council members to carefully consider these concerns and their potential impact on our community's future.

Regards,
John Li