

Toronto's Golden Mile Urban Redevelopment Project: Intensifying Social Exclusions or Increasing Opportunity?

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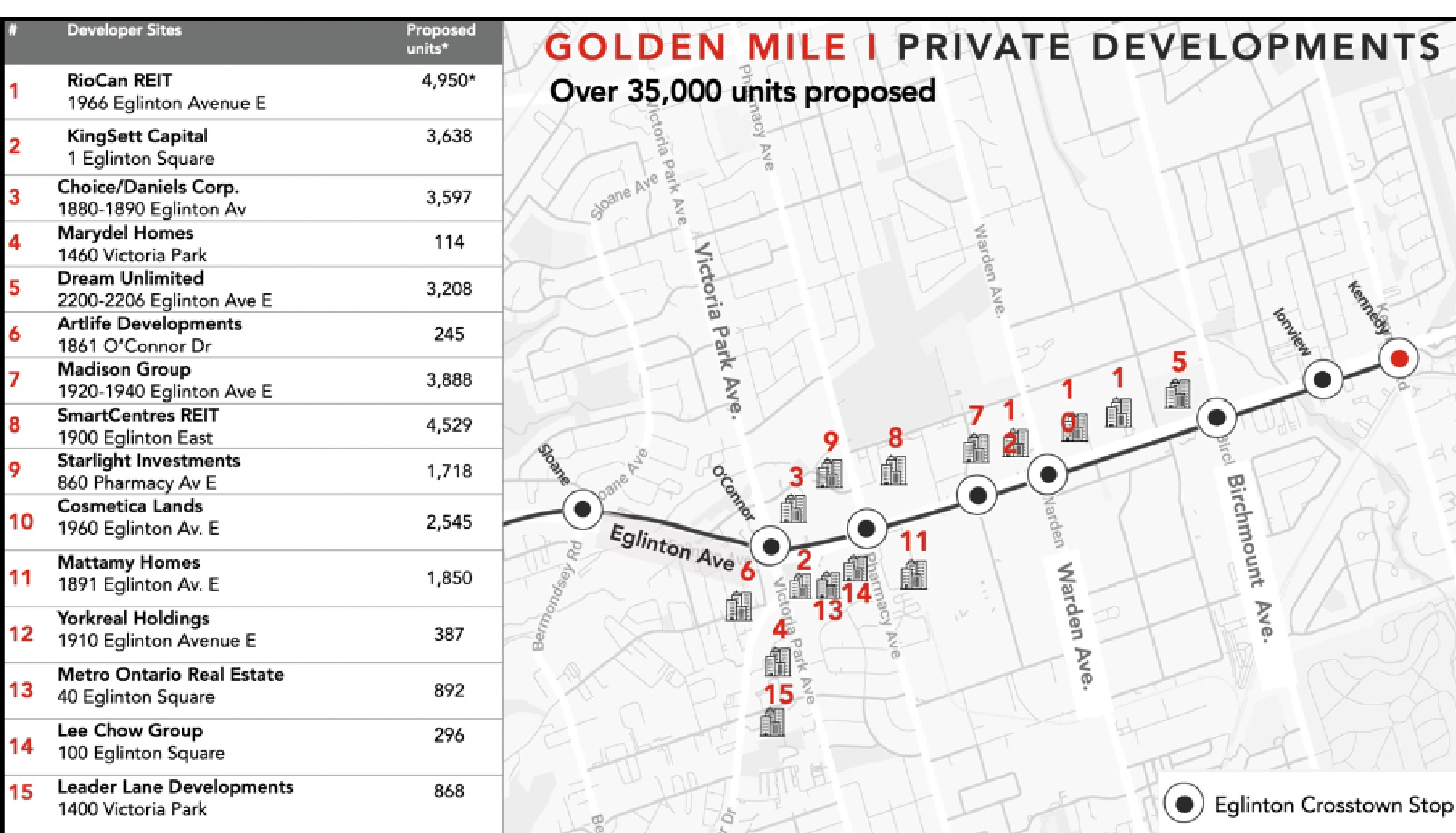
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Context

The Golden Mile, a historically working-class, light-industrial neighbourhood on the outskirts of Toronto is poised to undergo a large-scale neighbourhood-level redevelopment

Tied to the impending opening of Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit Line, this redevelopment project is set to see 15 commercial real estate firms build 76 new mid-high rise buildings, which are expected to house well over 45,000 new residents

Construction is set to start as early as end of 2024



What is Post-Industrial Urban Redevelopment

Post-Industrial Urban Redevelopment is the revitalization of former industrial spaces in disuse, abandonment or disrepair. The development of these lower-income areas has the potential to drive an influx of more affluent residents, which can push out the existing community through rental appreciation

Methodology

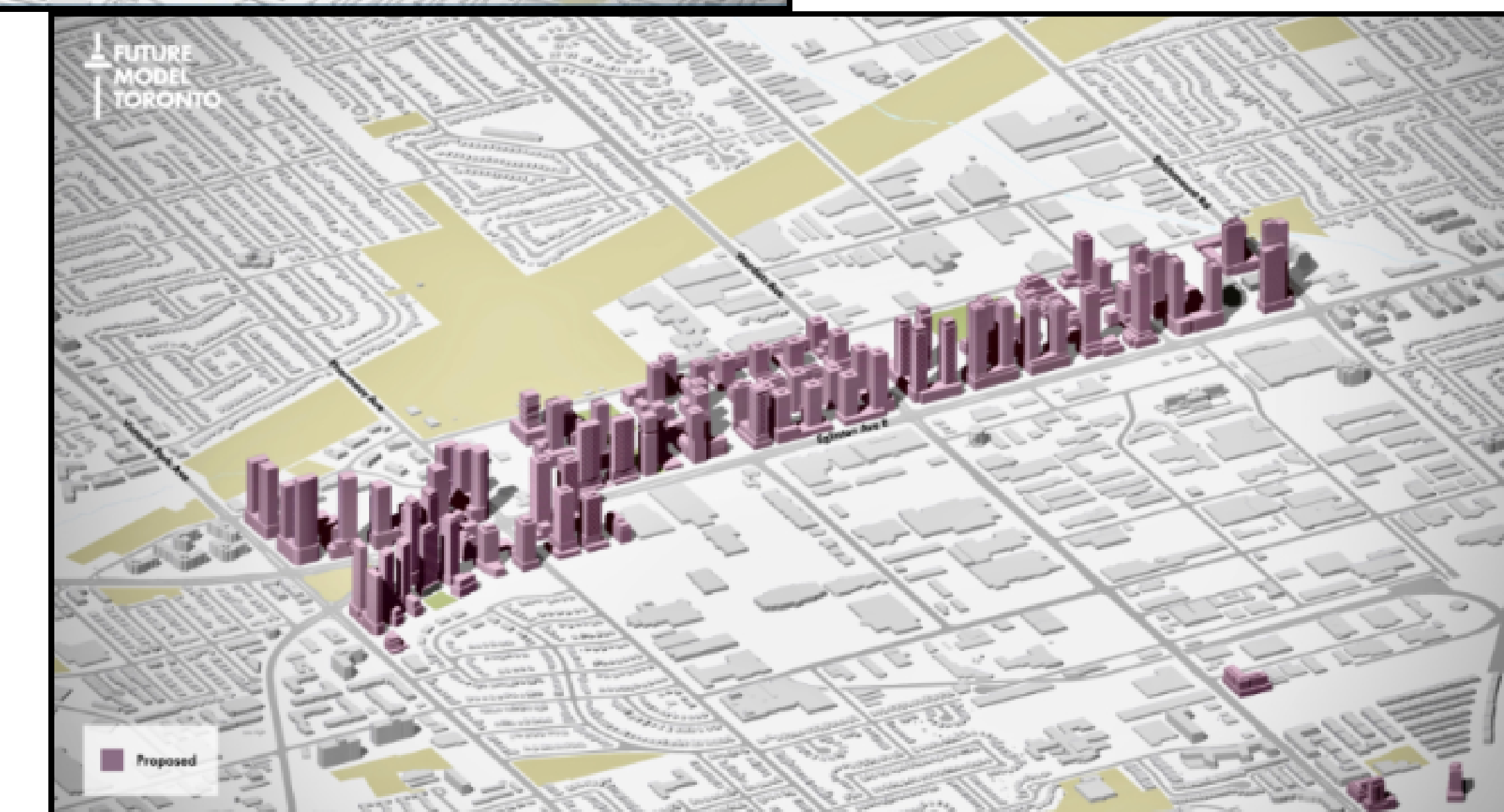
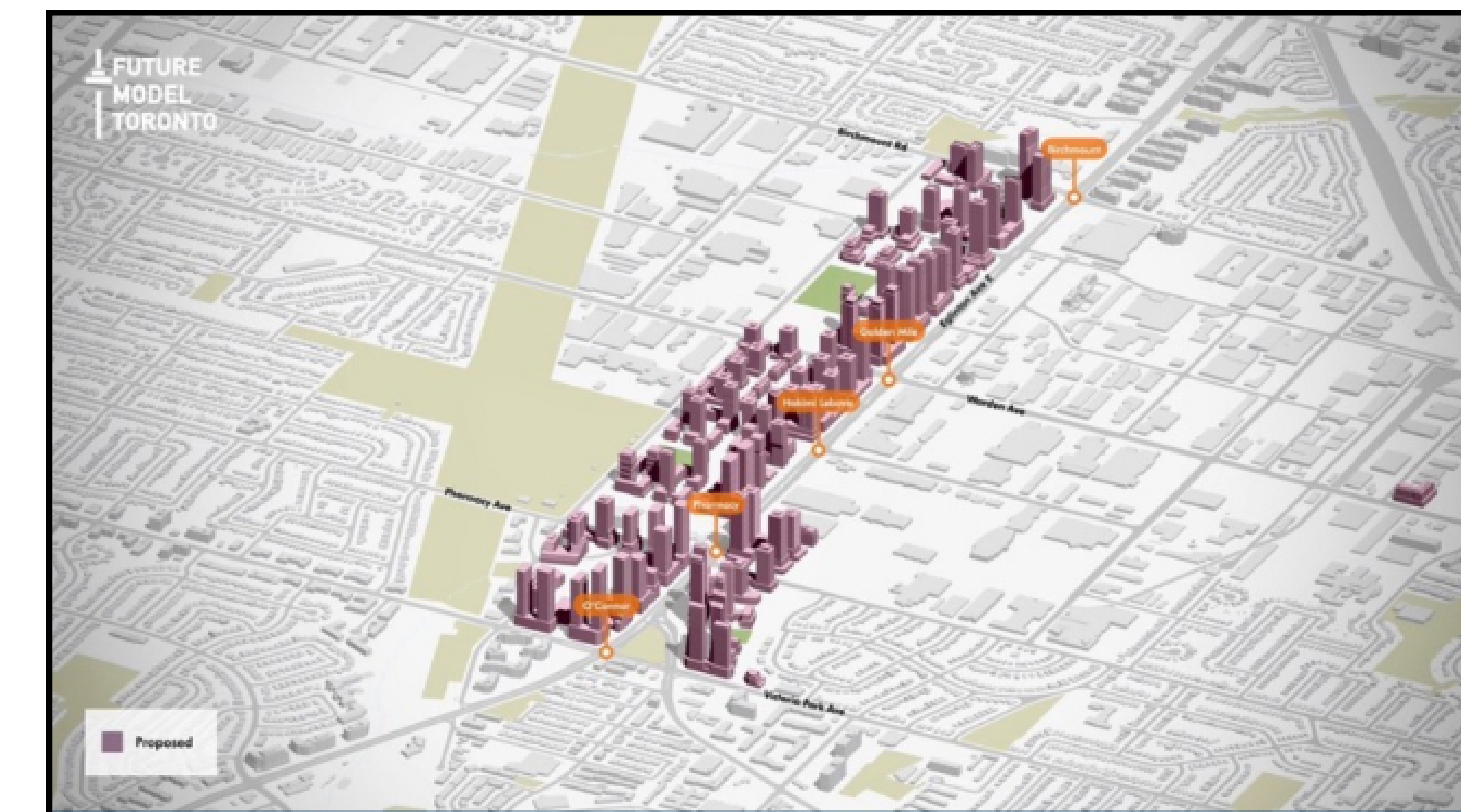
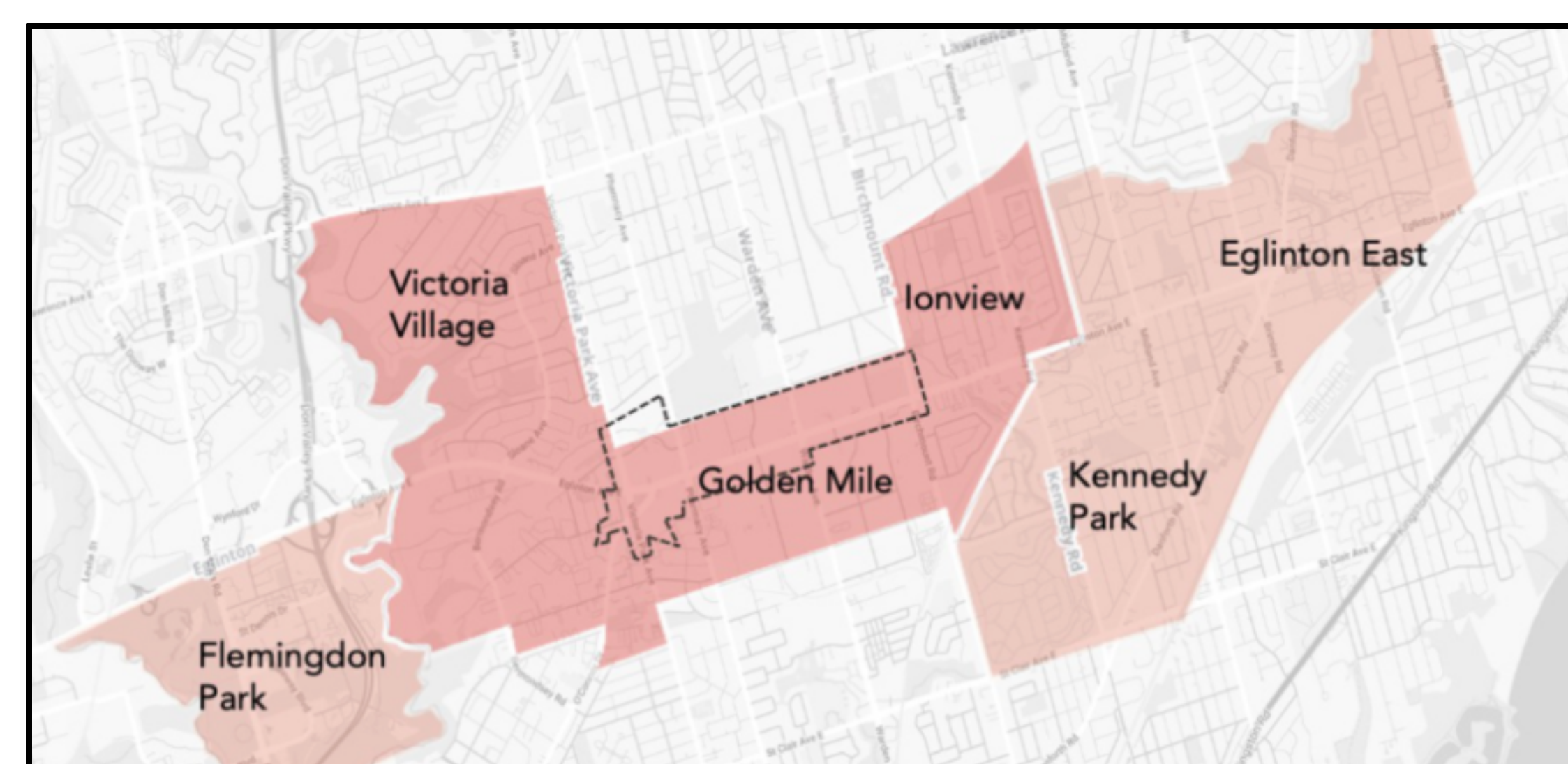
Qualitative analysis of the perceptions of five distinct Golden Mile stakeholders, including residents, local businesses, local agencies, government and private developers, through both primary field-research, including focus groups and informal interviews, as well as secondary media discourse analysis.

A subset of the questions asked in focus groups and informal interviews

1. Do you support the redevelopment of the Golden Mile?
2. How do you expect it to impact you?
3. How do you expect it to impact the Golden Mile community holistically? What do you think the impact will be on housing? On jobs?
4. Who will benefit from these opportunities in the community and who risks being left behind? Can you be specific on some of the populations and segments you expect to be impacted?
5. What could be done to make this project more inclusive?

Questions asked to determine how personal characteristics shape one's perception of the Golden Mile's redevelopment

1. How long have you been in the Golden Mile Neighbourhood
2. Do you rent or own your home/business?
3. What is your household income?
4. What is your employment status?
5. What is your family status?



Community Perceptions and Expectations

Government

- Actors stress importance of affordable housing, but fail to engage with tangible pathways to its introduction in the neighborhood

Private Developers

- Addressing criticisms of exclusive growth through the prioritization of public private partnerships

Community Agencies

- Vulnerable and at-risk of being out of work, with the dispersal of clientele.

Local Residents

- Fear of rental appreciation
- Fear of loss of sense of community
- Recent upsurge in discriminatory treatment by landlords
- Desired Modernization and beautification of neighbourhood

Local Businesses

- Sentiment of vulnerability to arrival of established brands
- Fear of loss of existing customer-base
- Fear of construction's impact on storefront foot traffic

Research Aim and Questions

1. What are the competing perspectives and narratives over the Golden Mile's impending drastic transformation?
2. What are the factors that influence one's perspective of the Golden Mile urban redevelopment project?

With the aim of shedding light on community perceptions of the project to drive more inclusive urban planning policy prior to construction