

3. Minimum building heights of 8 metres or 2 storeys;
4. Buildings located adjacent to properties designated as Neighbourhoods in the Official Plan to be subject to a 45 degree angular plane measured from the property line;
5. Buildings to be setback a minimum of 7.5 metres from the rear property line;
6. A 1.5 metre landscaped buffer strip along the rear property line;
7. Buildings to be setback a minimum of 2 metres from the Lawrence Avenue East, Birchmont Road, Victoria Park Avenue, Pharmacy Avenue and Warden Avenue;
8. Buildings to be located within a 2 metre “build-to” zone, beyond the front yard setback;
9. Building face to extend along a minimum of 70 percent of the frontage of each lot over 30 metres wide along Lawrence Avenue East and a minimum of 60 percent of the frontage of each lot that is 30 metres wide or less;
10. Any buildings above 20 metres to be subject to a step-back of 2 metres from the front building face;
11. Minimum facing distance of 15 metres for all buildings with walls that contain principal windows; and
12. Mechanical penthouse to be step back 6 metres from the front of the building and to cover no more than 50 percent of the roof area and extend to a height of no more than 6 metres.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the following transportation improvements be implemented along Lawrence Avenue East in the Study Area (see Figure 6.1 Street Section on page 58):

1. Locate additional signalized intersections at Elinor Avenue and Tower Drive;
2. Maintain 26 metre pavement width and curb but revise traffic lanes to create a central left-turn lane or planted median, and two through traffic lanes, a curb lane and a signed bike lane in each direction;
3. Reduce through traffic lanes to 3.2 metres;
4. Reduce curb lane to 3.3 metres which can function as a bus and/or HOV lane in future;
5. Locate signed bike lane, next to curb, at 1.7 metres wide;
6. Provide a landscaped centre median whenever possible, which should be expanded over time as driveways can be consolidated. At intersections, a 3.0 metre wide left turn lane and a minimum 1.0 metre wide concrete median island should be provided mid block. The landscaped median should be at least 3.2 metres wide;
7. Encourage the consolidation of driveways as redevelopment occurs, towards achieving a standard of no less than a distance of 80 metres between driveways;
8. Increase the number of transit stops to provide greater convenience for transit users;

9. Review parking requirements for uses along Lawrence Avenue East with a view to reducing these requirements as part of a strategy to encourage greater transit use;
10. In reviewing applications for redevelopment, encourage owners to locate parking facilities below grade, wherever feasible;
11. If surface parking is to be provided, encourage such parking to be located at the rear of buildings or incorporated into the architectural design of buildings, wherever feasible; and
12. Encourage the provision of car-share facilities located within developments with a corresponding reduction of parking requirements equal to approximately ten required parking spaces for every one car share space.

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

It is recommended that the following streetscape improvements be implemented in the Study Area (see Figure 7.3, Typical Street Section on page 67):

1. Minimum 2.0 metre wide sidewalks;
2. Minimum 2.5 metre wide boulevard strip between curb and sidewalk to contain street trees planting and street furniture;
3. Street tree planting in continuous soil trenches of sufficient width and depth, as required by the City's Urban Forestry Department. Street tree trenches should be long enough to contain at least two trees. The surface of the tree trench should be permeable and consist of low maintenance ground cover and/or permeable paving;
4. Pedestrian scale street lighting fixtures, attached to existing street lighting standards, combined with additional light standards between existing standards, to improve light levels on sidewalks;
5. All light standards and utility poles to be designed to carry banners and flower baskets;
6. Benches at intersections and transit stops, with additional benches on north side of Lawrence Avenue East between Pharmacy Avenue and Warden Avenue;
7. Information kiosks at major intersections and key locations;
8. Bicycle racks and storage lockers near transit stops, intersections and strip plazas;
9. Recycling and trash bins at transit stops and intersections and elsewhere, as required;
10. Special streetscape treatment at intersections, as illustrated in Figure 7.2, Typical Treatment of Major Intersections on page 66;
11. Landscaped medians to be located wherever possible where centre left-turn lanes are not required. Medians to be a minimum of 3.0 metres wide and have low maintenance and drought-resistant planting and landscaping;

12. Landscape screening to be provided at the street edge of properties with front yard parking lots. Screening to consist of dense vegetation with a minimum height of 1.2 metres and may also include decorative elements such as hanging flower baskets. Design, installation and maintenance to be co-ordinated in association with local BIAs; and
13. Streetscape elements to be extended along Victoria Park, Pharmacy, Warden, Birchmount, both north and south of Lawrence Avenue and where appropriate along other local side streets.

Parks and Open Space Improvements:

It is recommended that the following Parks and Open Space Improvements be implemented in the Study Area:

1. A new public park at the Hydro Corridor on the north side of Lawrence Avenue East;
2. A new multi-use pathway and trail on either side of Lawrence Avenue East along the Hydro Corridor to connect with existing open spaces and trails in the community;
3. A potential new multi-use pathway along the north-south rail line easement east of Ellington Drive;
4. As development proceeds, staff should explore opportunities to locate publicly accessible park space in the Study Area to be achieved as part of the development approval process;

5. A potential new pocket park at the south-east corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Ellington Drive, incorporating the creek; and
6. New urban spaces such as seating areas and alcoves off the sidewalk, entrance plazas for buildings, wider publicly accessible front yards at transit stops and intersections secured as part of the development process for new development or additions to existing development.

Built Form Guidelines

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the Zoning Bylaw, as a further interpretation of the bylaw. They are meant to offer a reference point for new development, while allowing flexibility in design to achieve a high level of design excellence and diversity in built form (see Section 5.0, Policy and Zoning Bylaw Recommendations and figure 5.3).

Mid-rise Buildings (Up to 8 Storeys)

Mid-rise buildings should express a clear distinction amongst three components: base, middle, and top as follows:

Building Base (at-grade):

- Commercial at-grade with a minimum ceiling height of 4.5 metres; and
- Ground floor should maximize clear glazing along its Lawrence Avenue frontage.

Building Middle:

- Consists of the 2nd to 6th floors at a maximum height of 20 metres, and forms the main part of the street-wall; and
- Should generally contain different materials and fenestration treatment from the base.

Building Top:

- Including the 7th and 8th floors to a total height of 27 metres, should be stepped back 2 metres. This will lower the visual impact of the streetwall at the sidewalk level; and
- In addition to its setback, should incorporate the mechanical penthouse into its design.

Tall Buildings

Tall buildings should have regard for the City's Tall Buildings Guidelines and be designed as point towers with a maximum footprint limited by the zoning bylaw to 800 square metres, to create a slim silhouette and minimize shadows. Tall buildings at major intersections will provide opportunities for landmarks and view terminations and should:

- Have a high quality of design; and
- Acknowledge their location and role through design features, façade treatment, materials, and in the silhouette created by their rooflines.

Ground Floor and Ground Level Treatment

The following elements summarize the recommended approach for the ground floor and the adjacent areas to the ground floors of buildings:

- Special treatment for ground floor, including weather protection elements such as awnings and front yard street-related activities such as patios;
- The ground floor treatment should be extended around the corner from Lawrence Avenue East to the side streets at major intersections such as Victoria Park, Pharmacy, Warden, and Birchmount.
- Pedestrian-orientated signage;
- Streetscape improvements along the public right-of-way adjacent to the property in accordance with

the Streetscape Recommendations;

- Creating a landscape screen between existing front yard parking lots and the sidewalk; and in accordance with the Streetscape Recommendations;
- Consolidation of driveways where feasible or appropriate in accordance with Transportation Recommendations; and
- Underground parking where feasible (see Transportation Recommendations).

Landscaping at Rear of Development Parcels

New development should include landscape treatment consisting of a screen of trees and/or shrubs along the rear property lines of sites fronting onto Lawrence Avenue East and backing onto low density residential properties.

Renovation/Addition/Conversion of Existing Buildings

Redevelopment along Lawrence Avenue will take many forms. While most of the guidelines have been prepared for new development, many existing sites and buildings may undergo minor change, such as renovation, conversion and addition. It is recommended that the guidelines for redevelopment be applied to renovations, conversions and addition, where applicable, and that minimum and maximum building heights for mid-rise buildings apply to additions (see Zoning Bylaw Recommendations);

NEXT STEPS

The transformation of Lawrence Avenue from its current condition to a more pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive, mixed-use "Avenue" will likely take many years. The redevelopment of sites will be a gradual and incremental process, based on many factors, including land ownership patterns, market demand and economic cycles.

It is recommended that the City prepare a multi-year phasing plan in order to undertake the following initiatives:

- Narrowing traffic lanes;
- Re-striping the existing public right-of-way to add a bicycle lane in both directions;
- Adding planted medians;
- Widening sidewalks;
- Adding landscaping including street trees in the public right-of-way; and
- Installing pedestrian scale lighting.

It is further recommended that the City work with the local BIA and property owners along Lawrence Avenue East in the Study Area to:

- Reclaim encroachments of the public right-of-way;
- Consolidate driveways, where appropriate and feasible;
- Encourage the planting of trees in private realm along the property line;
- Encourage landscaping in front of surface parking areas along the street; and
- Implement a co-ordinated streetscape and signage program with the local BIA.

Although several of the initiatives listed as “Next Steps” will take a multi-year co-ordinated program to achieve a perceivable impact along the Study Area, there are some initiatives that have already started, or can be initiated relatively quickly to achieve success in a relatively short time frame. These initiatives have been identified as Priority Projects and include the following:

- Create new signalized intersections at Elinor Avenue and at Tower Drive;
- Create a new parkette at the Hydro Corridor;
- Initiate a street tree planting program; and
- Work with the BIA to identify and secure funding for a location for a demonstration pilot project (for example, a one block section between Pharmacy Avenue and Warden Avenue) to include many of the improvements proposed for the public and private realms including: landscape screening of parking lots; removing encroachments onto the public right-of-way, and initiating recommended streetscape improvements.



1.0 STUDY BACKGROUND

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.2 STUDY PROCESS

1.0 STUDY BACKGROUND

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Lawrence Avenue East from Victoria Park Avenue to east of Birchmount Road has been identified as an *Avenue* in the City of Toronto Official Plan (see Figure 1.0 Study Area). The Plan describes *Avenues* as important corridors along major streets which offer opportunities for reinvestment for new housing and employment and an improved public realm. The Plan acknowledges that reurbanization will be an incremental process, and that a high quality, pedestrian-focused, transit-supportive public realm is an important aspect of creating successful *Avenues*.

The purpose of the study is to determine:

- A policy framework and a set of recommended changes to the Zoning Bylaw for the area;
- A set of Urban Design Guidelines to address public realm improvements and guide development on privately owned lands;
- Criteria for introducing mixed-use mid-rise and tall buildings;
- Proposals for creating public open space and improving existing parks; and

- Recommendations for optimizing the use of the road allowance and enhancing transit, walking and cycling.

1.2 STUDY PROCESS

The Lawrence Avenue East Study Area was based on an extensive consultation process with City staff and stakeholders, structured around a series of meetings and workshops.

A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) was formed to guide the study and assist with identifying issues and generating development options. The LAC consisted of City staff and neighbourhood stakeholders. A series of community meetings and workshops were also held in the area to discuss preferred solutions.

The study was conducted in the following three phases:

- **Phase 1: Background Research and Analysis**
Phase 1 consisted of investigating relevant background data, reviewing the planning policy context, and developing an understanding of the Study Area and



Figure 1.0: Study Area Map

its surroundings. An inventory of site conditions and a review of constraints and opportunities were completed through a series of techniques, including mapping, analysis of precedents, photography and three-dimensional computer modeling of the existing built form character of the Study Area.

The background analysis of the Study Area was presented at a LAC meeting on May 1, 2007. An analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Study Area was presented at a LAC meeting on May 14, 2007.

The first public meeting consisted of a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) workshop held on May 29, 2007. The outcome was a set of draft planning principles derived from the opportunities identified at the workshop. These were used to guide the discussions at the second public meeting, the Design Charrette. A summary of the SWOT workshop is provided in Section 4.

■ Phase 2: Design Exploration

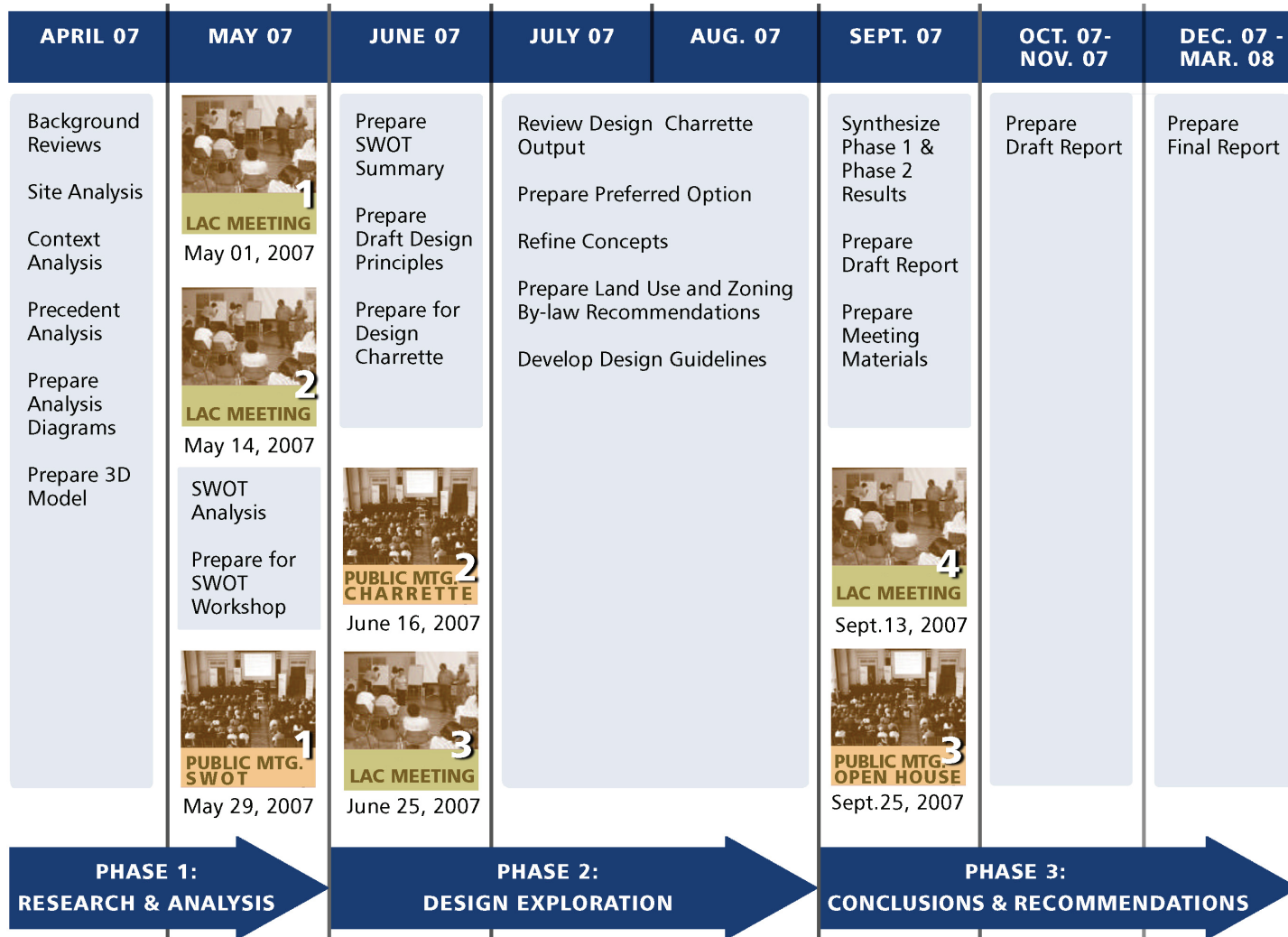
A Design Charrette was held on June 16, 2007 to explore various design and development options for the Study Area. The Charrette was organized around the issues and opportunities identified in Phase 1 through the SWOT workshop and focused on the following topics: built form, streetscape, open space and transportation improvements. Built form options were studied

through the use of three-dimensional physical models and blocks that could be configured by participants to explore various alternative scenarios. A summary of the Charrette is contained in Appendix B.

■ Phase 3: Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations phase consolidated the insights and outcomes from the Design Charrette and the analysis carried out by the consultant team to create a preferred development framework for the Study Area. The result was a set of recommendations for achieving the development framework, including preliminary urban design guidelines. Draft versions of the recommendations and Urban Design Guidelines were presented at a LAC meeting on September 13, 2007, and again at a public open house on September 25, 2007. These were subsequently refined, based on feedback generated at the meetings, discussions with staff and further analysis. A description of the recommendations and urban design guidelines is contained in Sections 5 through 8.

A chart illustrating the study process can be found in Figure 1.1, Study Process.



“Avenue Studies will involve extensive public and stakeholder consultation in order to determine the appropriate scale and intensity of development to be reflected in the zoning for the Mixed Use Areas along the Avenue.”

-- Toronto Official Plan

Figure 1.1: Study Process



- 2.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT, 2005 (PPS)
- 2.2 PLACES TO GROW
- 2.3 TORONTO OFFICIAL PLAN
- 2.4 EXISTING ZONING BylawS
- 2.5 CITY OF TORONTO BIKE PLAN

“Ontario’s long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns. Efficient land use and development patterns support strong, livable and healthy communities, protect the environment and public health and safety, and facilitate economic growth.”

-- Provincial Policy Statement, 2005

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Redevelopment along Lawrence Avenue East between Victoria Park Avenue and Birchmount Road is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Official Plan of the City of Toronto. The following sections briefly summarize this policy context as it applies to Lawrence Avenue East.

2.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT, 2005

The PPS establishes the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land in Ontario. The PPS acknowledges that Ontario’s long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being is conditional on the ability to wisely manage change and promote efficient land use and development patterns. Section 1.0, Building Strong Communities, outlines the policies which will shape growth in Ontario. Key points include:

- Growth will be focused on *settlement areas*, either through *intensification* and *redevelopment*, or if necessary, by developing designated growth areas;
- The emphasis of the PPS is clearly the promotion of intensification and redevelopment as the preferable means to manage growth. Planning authorities are to promote the reuse of existing building stock, the redevelopment of brown-fields, and the creation of compact urban form to these ends;
- Growth should feature densities and a mix of land uses that efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and

support the use of alternative transportation modes and public transit;

- Planning authorities are to promote a range of housing types and densities, while establishing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households;
- Public streets, spaces and facilities should be planned to be safe and meet the needs of pedestrians and other non-motorized movement;
- A land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimizes the length and number of vehicle trips and supports the development of viable choices and plans for public transit. Transportation and land use considerations shall be integrated into all stages of the planning process;
- The preservation and reuse of abandoned corridors for purposes that maintain the corridor’s integrity and continuous linear characteristics should be encouraged wherever feasible; and
- Land use patterns should minimize the negative impacts on air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency. To these ends, land use and development patterns should promote compact urban form, a structure of nodes and corridors, promote the use of public transit, improve the mix of employment and housing to decrease transportation congestion, and promote design which maximizes the use of alternative or renewable energy and the mitigating effects of vegetation.

The proposed policy framework to guide redevelopment along Lawrence Avenue East must be consistent with the PPS's vision of growth management in Ontario. It should provide an example of the kind of intensification and redevelopment envisioned under this planning regime.

2.2 PLACES TO GROW: GROWTH PLAN FOR THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE

Established under the Places to Grow Act (Bill 136), the objectives of the Growth Plan are to effectively manage growth and develop stronger communities in the Province of Ontario. The Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is identified as one of the fastest growing regions in North America. The Growth Plan aims to create the conditions that will allow the region to experience the benefits of growth, while avoiding its possible negative aspects.

Urban sprawl is identified as a development pattern that will hurt the GGH's competitiveness in the long-term. As an alternative to sprawl, the Plan outlines a growth management regime, with emphasis on intensification and the efficient use of infrastructure. In the context of the City of Toronto, the key elements include:

- Directing a significant portion of new growth to the existing built-up area through intensification;
- Better use of infrastructure through compact urban form;

- Reducing dependence on the automobile through the development of mixed-use, transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly urban environments;
- Using transit infrastructure to shape growth, and planning for high residential and employment densities that ensure the efficiency and viability of existing and planned transit service levels;
- Providing convenient access to intra- and inter-city transit; and
- Planning and investing for a balance of jobs and housing in communities with a diverse mix of land uses, a range and mix of employment and housing types, high quality public open space and easy access to local stores and services.

In Schedule 4 of the Growth Plan, the entire City of Toronto, including this stretch of Lawrence Avenue East, is shown as an existing *Built up Area* which is considered the primary location for intensification. The plan also recognizes that *urban growth centres*, *intensification corridors* and major transit station areas will be the key focus for development to accommodate intensification.

Intensification corridors are defined in the Plan as areas "along major roads, arterials or *higher order transit corridors* that have the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed-use development consistent with planned transit service levels." By virtue of its designation as an Avenue in the City of Toronto Official Plan,

“The revitalization of urban growth centres is particularly important, not only because they can accommodate additional people and jobs, but because they will increasingly be regional focal points. They are meeting places, locations for cultural facilities, public institutions, major services, and transit hubs”

-- Places to Grow, 2006

the City has signaled that it considers Lawrence Avenue an *Intensification Corridor*, for the purposes of the Growth Plan.

2.3 OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE CITY OF TORONTO

Adopted by City Council in November 2002, the majority of the new Official Plan for the amalgamated City of Toronto was largely brought into effect on issuance of an order by the Ontario Municipal Board on July 6, 2006. The following polices are relevant to guide development for Lawrence Avenue East.

Shaping the City

The strategic direction for growth management underlying the new plan is reurbanization. The focus of this approach is to improve and make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, while being consistent with the planned urban structure and land use designations. The Official Plan makes efforts to link land use and transportation planning in order to decrease car dependency while increasing transit use. The Official Plan indicates that the majority of growth will be directed to *Centres, Avenues, Employment Districts* and the *Downtown*. These Centres and corridors will be connected by an integrated regional transportation system whose hallmark is fast and efficient public transit. The stable residential neighbourhoods that make up the majority of the City, including the properties that abut those properties fronting on either side of Lawrence Avenue East in the Study Area (with the exception of the *Employment Lands* west of Birch-

mount), are expected to see slower growth. Section 2.1 *Structuring Growth in the City: Integrating Land Use and Transportation, Policy 2* details the objectives of directing growth in this manner:

Growth will be directed to the Centres, Avenues, Employment Districts and the Downtown as shown on Figure 2.1 in order to:

- a) Use municipal land, infrastructure and services efficiently;
- b) Concentrate jobs and people in areas well served by surface transit and rapid transit stations;
- c) Create assessment growth and contribute to the City's fiscal health;
- d) Promote mixed-use development to increase opportunities for living close to work and to encourage walking and cycling for local trips;
- e) Offer opportunities for people of all means to be affordably housed;
- f) Facilitate social interaction, public safety and cultural and economic activity;
- g) Improve air quality, energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- h) Improve surface and groundwater quality and restore the hydrological function and habitat of streams and wetlands; and
- i) Protect neighbourhoods, green spaces and natural heritage features and functions from the effects of nearby development.