

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SCARBOROUGH CENTRE > PUBLIC SPACE + STREETScape MASTER PLAN

THE CHALLENGE

Scarborough Centre has many of the ingredient parts for a successful and meaningful Centre—a significant resident and employment population; ready access to higher order transit; a focal civic presence; retail, institutional, entertainment and recreational facilities, natural heritage; both green and urban open space—yet it remains a fragmented and confusing suburban place.

As Scarborough Centre evolves from a suburban, auto-scaled destination centre towards a more heterogeneous and complex urban place, greater planning and design emphasis must be placed on the collective and contributory dimensions of building development and a richer, more comfortable and convenient public realm.

The suburban model of independent, single-purpose buildings set in a diffuse landscape of the automobile, must give way to the landscape (or townscape) of the pedestrian—urban streets and urban “rooms” that are framed by the buildings that face and sustain these spaces.

Beyond the issue of a neglected public realm, the problems seem to be ones of scale, connectedness and cohesion (or lack thereof). The resolution of these issues will require an approach that is bold in concept and multi-layered and finely-grained in its implementation.

THE URBAN DESIGN APPROACH

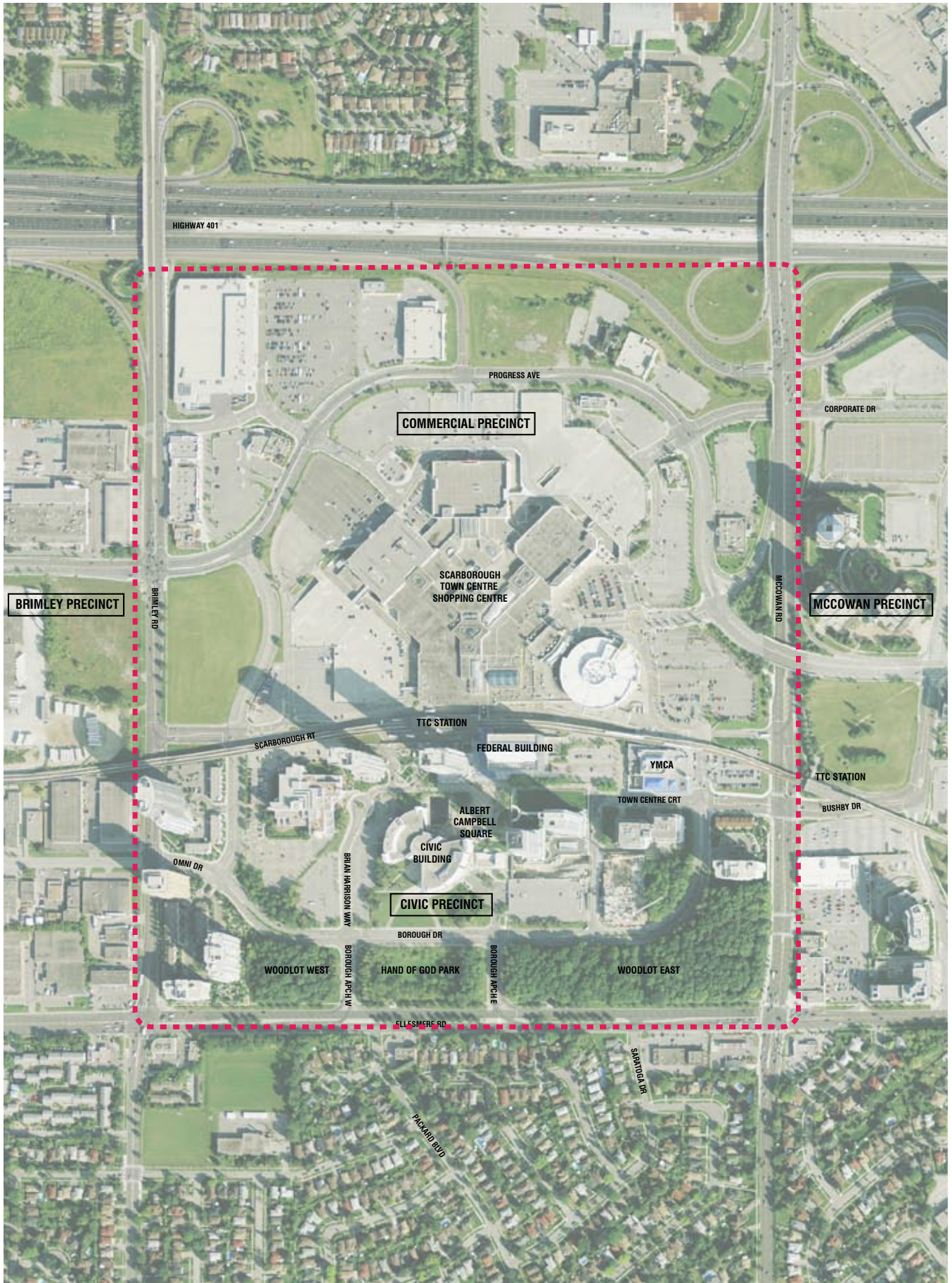
The project approach in developing a public space master plan and implementation strategy concentrates on shaping outdoor public spaces to bring a strong sense of central place, particular to Scarborough. This can be accomplished by creating a pedestrian scaled grain of streets and blocks, a connected sequence of legible urban spaces, and a cohesive streetscape and landscape palette of materials and details.

PROJECT SETTING

The Scarborough Centre study area is bordered by Highway 401 and Ellesmere Road, Brimley Road and McCowan Road. An extensive woodlot defines the southern boundary of the study area along Ellesmere Road and McCowan Road.

The Brimley Road and McCowan Road corridors are major vehicular routes to and from the 401. Brimley Road includes a number of potential redevelopment sites that will influence the scale and character of the public realm in the near to mid-range future. McCowan Road currently has two grade separations at Corporate Drive and Progress Avenue that complicate pedestrian connections. Ellesmere Road has a different character on each side, with the fenced and walled rear yards of residential properties on the south. To the north are the Civic Precinct open spaces and woodlots and a multiple residential development at the corner of Brimley and Ellesmere Roads.

The Scarborough Civic Centre building and the Scarborough Town Centre mall are the two dominant and enduring landmarks. In recent years, The Civic Precinct has grown considerably, primarily with residential development consisting of tall buildings with podium retail and townhouse forms. The Commercial Precinct, with the exception of early expansion of the Mall, recent development of the cinema complex, and stand-alone retail/restaurant buildings along Progress Avenue, remains similar to its initial format.



The Scarborough Centre Public Space Study Area

THE PLANNING CONTEXT

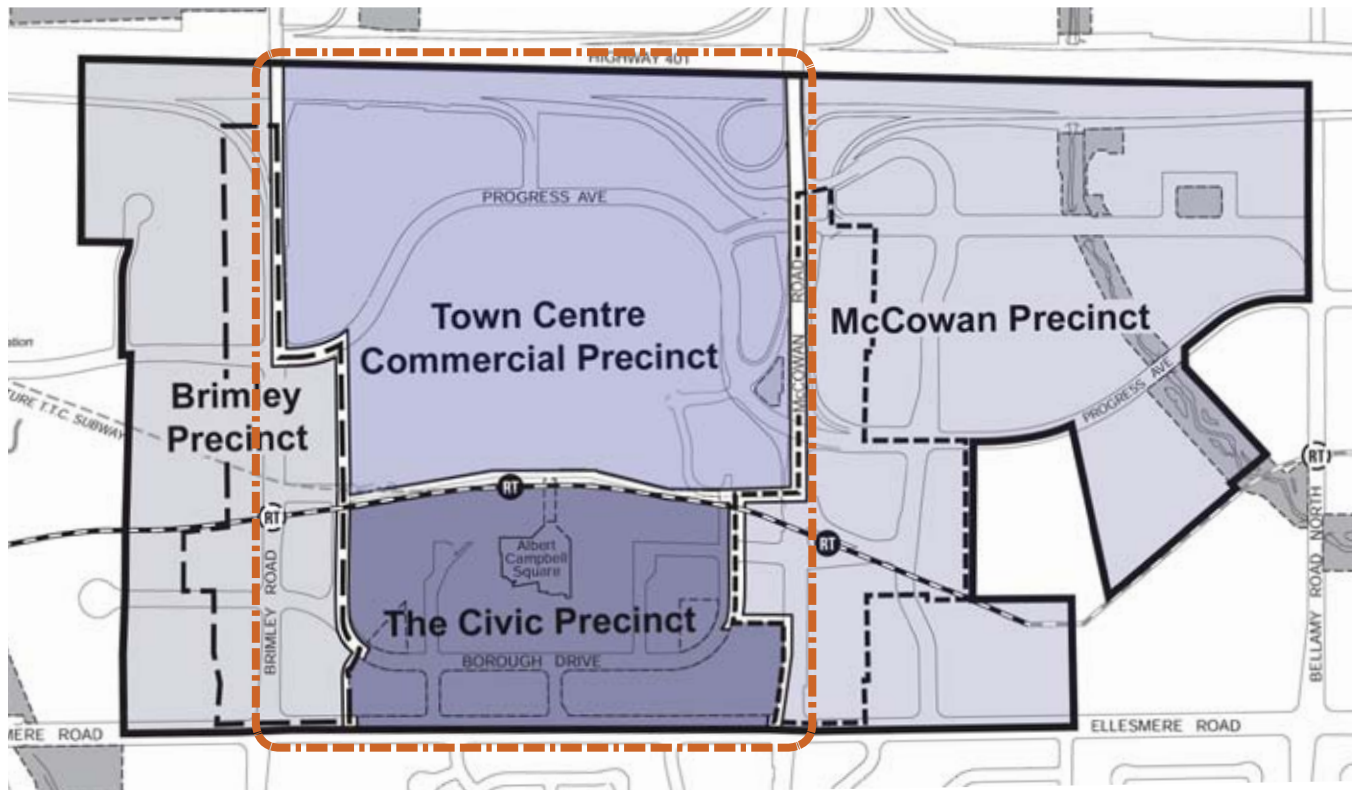
Within the overall context of the City of Toronto's Official Plan which defines Scarborough Centre as one of Toronto's four centres, this Public Space Plan takes its policy direction from and expands upon, the Scarborough Centre Secondary Plan (2008) and the Civic Precinct Implementation Plan (2009).

Scarborough Centre Secondary Plan

The Secondary Plan identifies an overall planning direction for the Centre that includes a broad mix of retail, government, institutional, cultural, employment and residential uses.

For the purposes of planning, the Centre is divided into four land use Precincts. All of the Precincts permit a mix of land uses although each Precinct has specific policy directives and emphases in terms of land use, physical character, streetscape and built-form objectives.

2008 Scarborough Centre Secondary Plan
- Map 5.2 Precincts
(with the Public Space and Streetscape
Plan study boundary in orange)



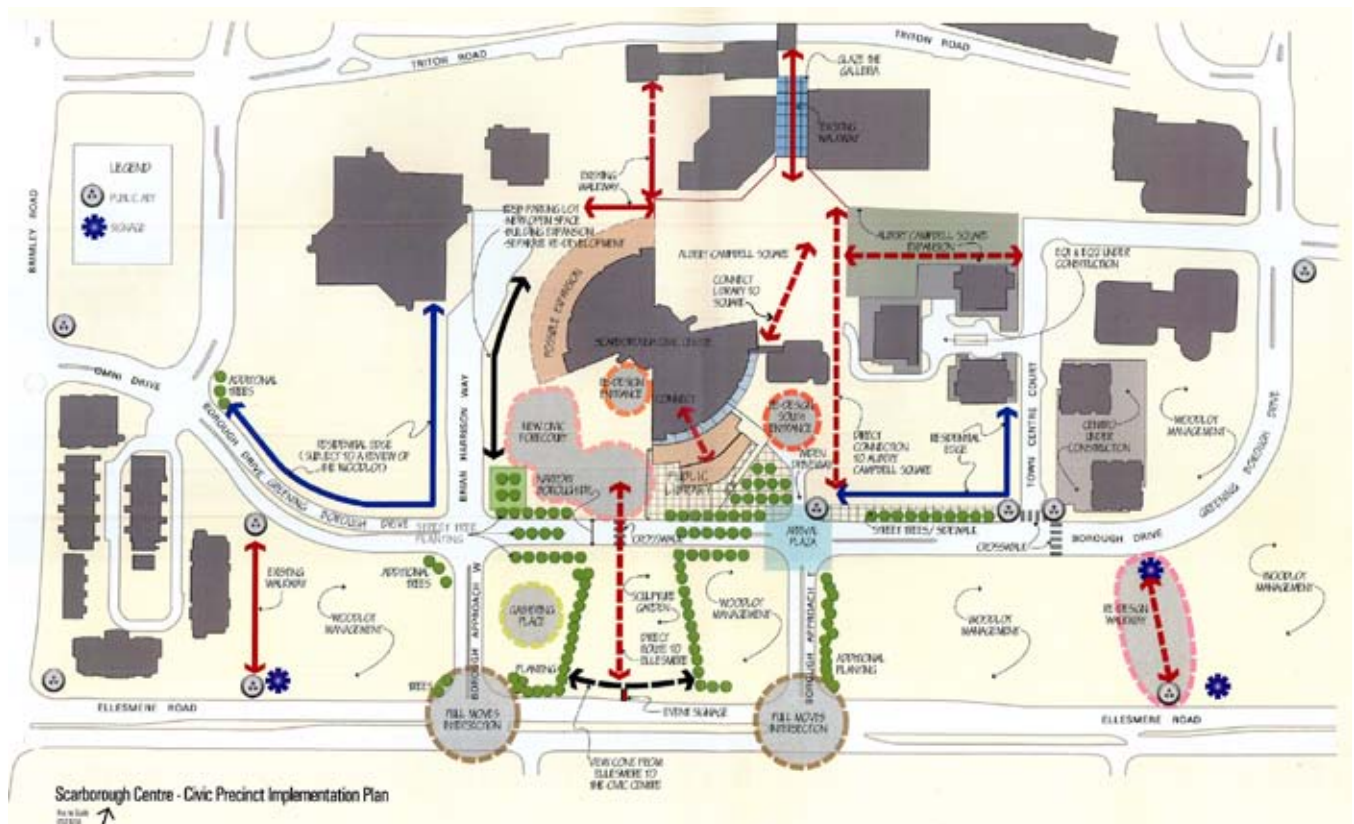
Civic Precinct Implementation Plan

The following is a summary of the components of the Implementation Plan (adopted by Council 2010), which is intended to serve as a guide for the implementation of the vision of the Secondary Plan.

The Implementation Plan illustrates elements on or adjacent to the Civic Centre property, which will help guide the growth of the overall precinct. It illustrates the principles and goals of the Secondary Plan and seeks to ensure a high quality of architecture of spaces and buildings that enhance the civic/public and urban realms, and accelerate the revitalization of the Civic Precinct as the focal point in Scarborough Centre.

The impetus for the preparation of this plan stemmed from a variety of proposed projects and initiatives within the Civic Precinct. The principal projects were the Toronto Public Library (TPL) Board's proposed 15,000 sq.ft. (now 14,500 sq.ft.) branch library to the south side of the Civic Centre, the possible redevelopment of the Civic Centre staff parking deck site and the Toronto Parking Authority's (TPA) planned construction of a municipal parking facility.

2010 Civic Precinct Implementation Plan



REPORT ORGANIZATION

This Plan report is organized into six chapters:

1. INTRODUCTION

2. PLANNING FRAMEWORK: reviews the planning history that has shaped Scarborough Centre, and presents the current planning framework for this public space study;

3. PRINCIPLES, GUIDELINES, AND STANDARDS: describes the overall intent of the public space framework, articulates the overall vision for the physical form and character of the public realm, and addresses in more specific detail the public realm guidelines for the streets, parks and urban squares, green spaces, and redevelopment sites;

4. DEMONSTRATION PLAN: illustrates—through the use of plan, section, and digital 3-dimensional models—one possible mid-range scenario that follows the design principles, guidelines, and standards. The projects are described in detail with supporting character precedent images;

5. PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS: further clarifies the design intent for the streets and public spaces, to define character, materials, and techniques appropriate to the Centre, and to assist the City's implementation of the immediate and near-term priority projects; and

6. IMPLEMENTATION: Identifies strategies and discrete tasks—identified as either a project or action—that the City will carry out to implement the public realm vision.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

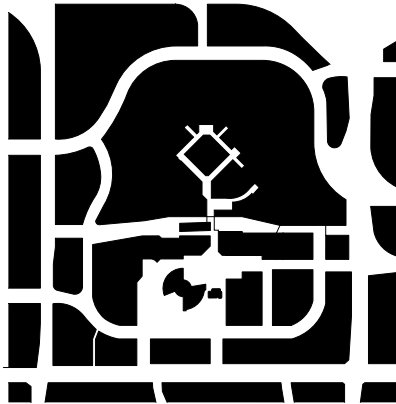
The proposed Urban Design Framework provides an unambiguous pattern of (private) development blocks connected by an armature of unencumbered public streets, spaces and pathways that are scaled to pedestrian activity and movement and offer a multiplicity of alternative walking routes.

Once approved, the principles and urban design plan—in combination with guidelines and standards for built form and the public realm—will support ongoing implementation, provide a broad perspective for guiding incremental change and present the metrics for assessing development proposals as they come forward.

The following summary of the 22 principles addresses the larger Precinct level framework, built form, public realm framework, and the identity of the place. A detailed discussion of the guidelines and standards is found in Chapter 3.

1 / The Streets and Blocks Plan

Principle: Develop a pedestrian-scaled pattern of streets and blocks that can be extended into the entire Scarborough Centre.



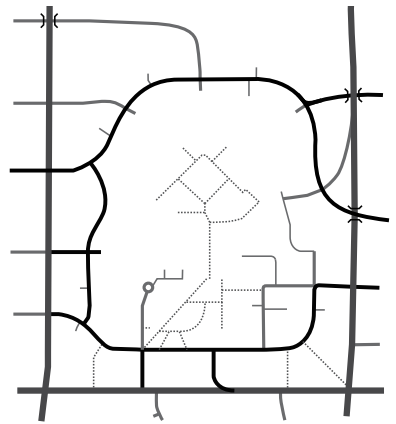
Existing Streets and Blocks



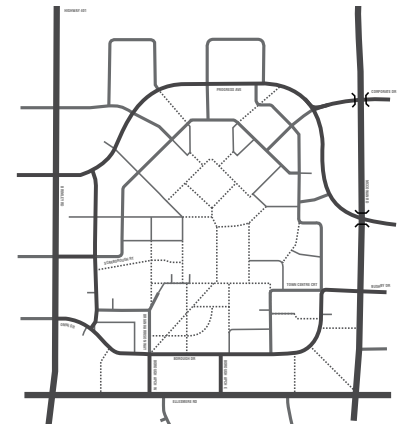
Proposed Streets and Blocks

2 / Streets and Walkways Network

Principle: Plan a fine-grained network of streets, pathways and mid-block routes that can evolve into a pedestrian-scaled terrain offering a multiplicity of routes for all street users.



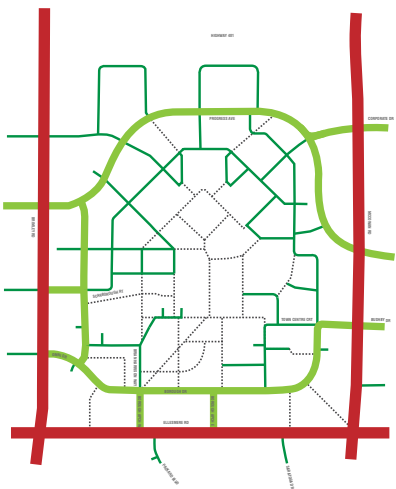
Existing Streets and Paths



Proposed Streets and Walkways Network: Long-Range

3 / Street Hierarchy

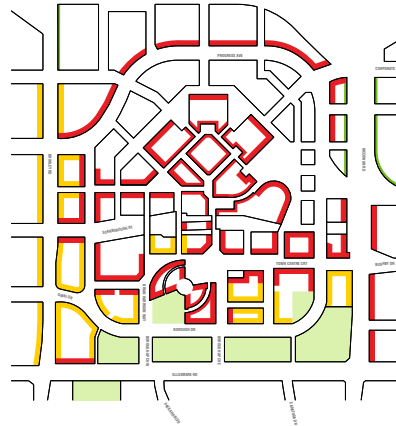
Principle. Develop a hierarchy of streets based not only on the roles of each type of street within a transportation network, but on its status as an address street, importance for pedestrian circulation and the range and type of frontage uses.



Proposed Streets Hierarchy: Long-Range

4 / Frontages and Grade-related Uses

Principle. Buildings should have continuous frontages of grade-related uses with direct access from public sidewalks.



Proposed Mid-Range Frontages - Residential (yellow). Commercial/ Retail/Live-Work/Institutional (red) and Landscape Setbacks (green)

5 / Urban Space-Making

Principle. The buildings, woodlots, street trees and other elements of the Centre should be combined to shape and articulate a coherent sequence of public urban spaces.



Proposed principal outdoor spaces: mid-range

6 / Vehicular Circulation and Access

Principle. Minimize the impact on the public pedestrian realm of vehicular circulation and access routes to parking and servicing.

7 / Sustainability

Principle. The public realm for Scarborough Centre should contribute to a sustainable and healthy environment that optimizes active transportation, the re-use of existing materials,

manages storm water, improves the urban forest canopy, reduces energy consumption and increases biodiversity.

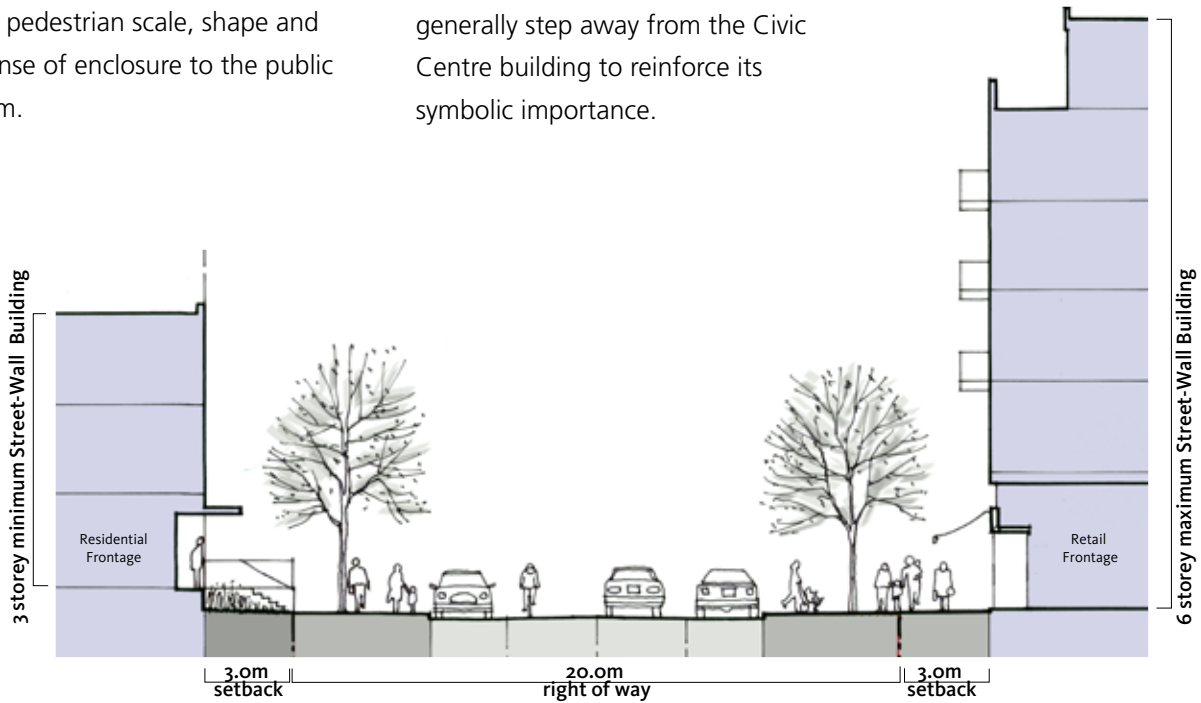
BUILT FORM

8 / Street Wall Buildings

Principle. Mid-rise or podium buildings should be a large part of all new development, lining the streets and other public spaces to give pedestrian scale, shape and a sense of enclosure to the public realm.

9 / Tall Buildings

Principle. Tall buildings should be located to minimize their visual and micro-climatic impact on the public realm. Building heights should generally step away from the Civic Centre building to reinforce its symbolic importance.

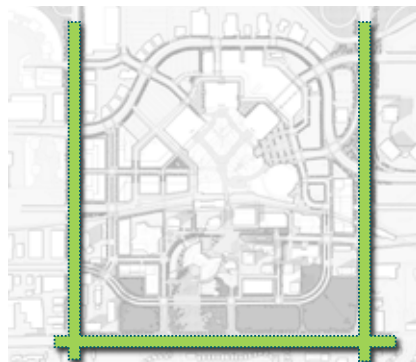


Typical Mid-Rise Street Wall Buildings and Podiums for Tall Buildings

THE PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

10 / Arterial Corridors

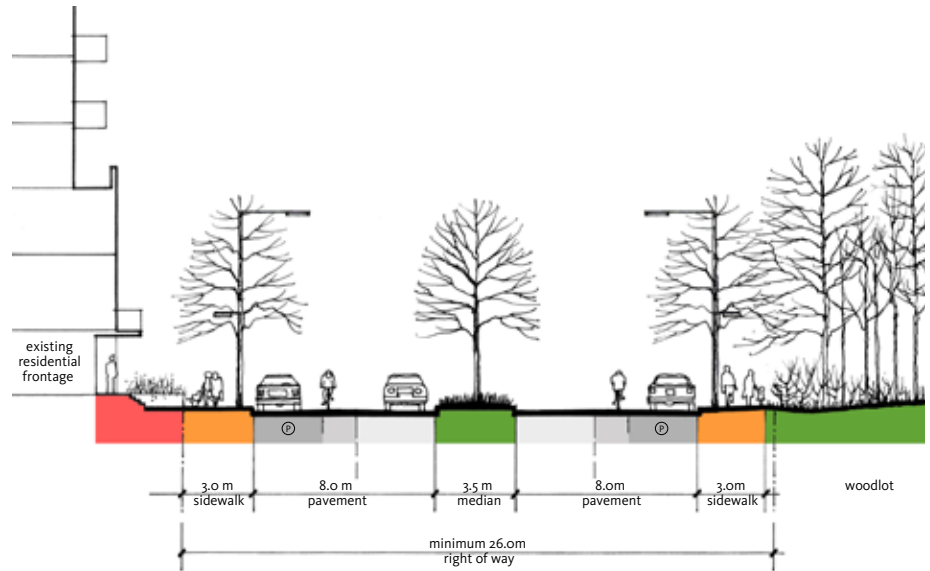
Principle. The arterial streets should be designed as generously landscaped avenues that balance the accommodation, safety and amenity for the various corridor users.



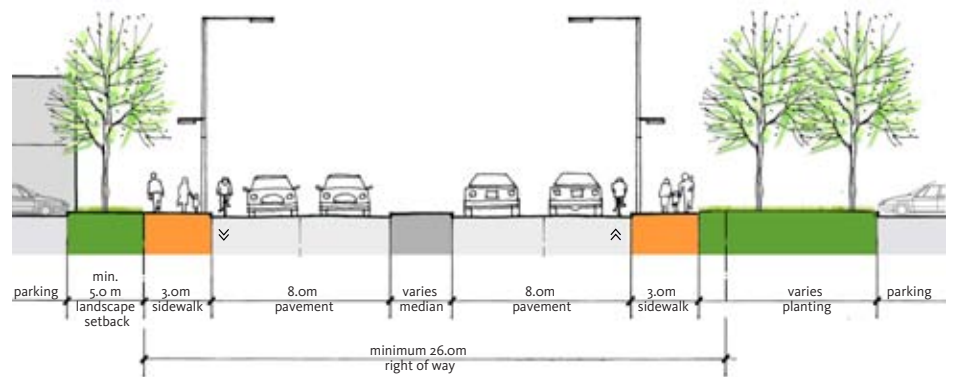
The Arterial Corridors

11 / The Main Streets: Borough Drive and Progress Avenue

Principle. Progress Avenue and Borough Drive should be designed as the main streets of the Centre and the principal address of major institutional, commercial and civic uses.



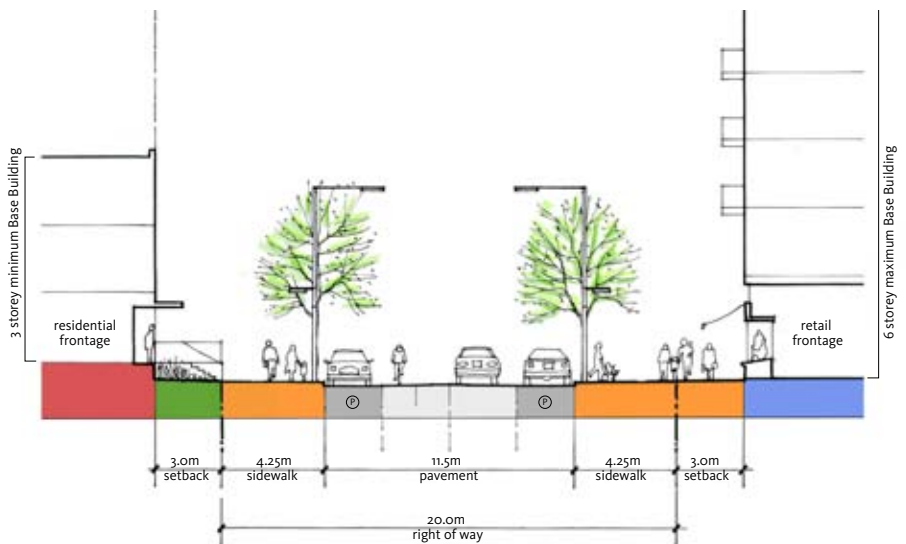
Borough Drive: Typical Section



Progress Avenue: Typical Section

12 / The Local Streets and Lanes

Principle. Local streets and lanes should be designed as key public spaces and should help form a fine-grained, continuous, neighbourhood scale network that is connected with the main streets, arterial corridors, and streets in the adjacent precincts and residential areas.



Local Street: Typical Section

13 / Walkways

Principle. Walkways should be designed to provide safe, legible and accessible pedestrian routes through public spaces and connect to the larger street network.

14 / Increased Accessibility to Albert Campbell Square

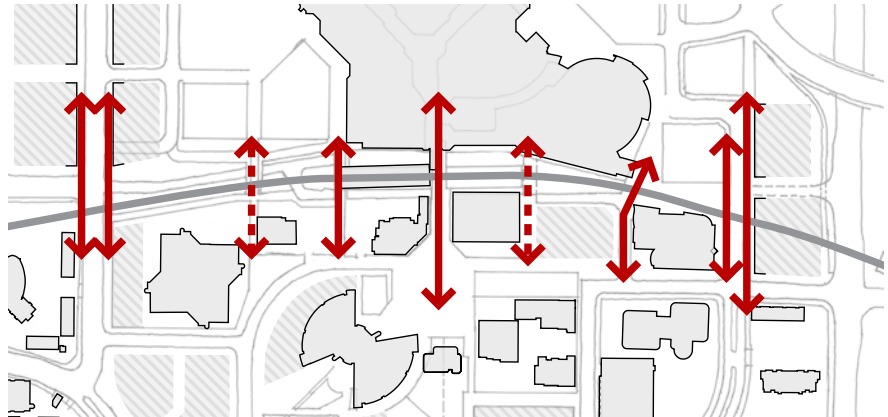
Principle. New streets and walkways should be designed to improve pedestrian connectivity and accessibility to Albert Campbell Square, the Centre’s primary urban public space.

15 / Extending the Mall Outdoors

Principle. Create new outdoor pedestrian walkways and public spaces associated with the entrances of the Scarborough Town Centre shopping mall to extend the interior pedestrian network and contribute to the greater exterior public space system.

16 / Bridging the Transit Divide

Principle. A series of new public routes—streets, bridges, and walkways--should be created across the Triton Road transit corridor and beneath the TTC elevated transit tracks to increase pedestrian movement and accessibility between the Civic and Commercial Precincts.



Crossings of the transit barriers to enhance pedestrian connectivity

17 / Public Parks and Urban Squares

Principle. The public spaces of Scarborough Centre should be high quality environments that support a wide variety of roles, allow for a variety of pedestrian uses, and are distinct yet visually connected through the consistent use of contemporary materials and details.

18 / Woodlots

Principle. The woodlots in Scarborough Centre are a unique and important ecological resource and should be protected, expanded, properly enhanced, and managed where appropriate.

IDENTITY OF THIS PLACE

19 / The Civic Centerpiece

Principle. The Scarborough Civic Centre is a Heritage Designated Property and any changes to its landscape setting should preserve the integrity of this symbolically important local landmark as well as respect the known design intentions of the Architect of the Civic Centre with regard to building expansion.

20 / Materials and Furnishings

Principle. Employ a common palette of materials and furnishings in the public realm to contribute to the identity and place making of the Centre.

21 / Public Art

Principle. Public art should contribute to the overall cultural vitality of Scarborough Centre, be complementary to specific qualities of sites and help to articulate the sequence of public spaces.

22 / Wayfinding

Principle. The form and articulation of the public spaces in Scarborough Centre should be the primary means of wayfinding supported by a signage system.

**SCARBOROUGH CENTRE
PUBLIC REALM AND STREETScape
DEMONSTRATION PLAN**

A Demonstration Plan illustrates one way in which the Scarborough Centre Public Space Plan could be implemented in the mid-range time frame. The Public Space Plan does not require landowners to develop their lands precisely as illustrated in the Demonstration Plan but it does provide guidance for the coordinated development of the public realm. The purpose of the Demonstration Plan is to:

- Demonstrate how the Centre could be developed over time.
- Illustrate how the principles, guidelines, and standards can be achieved.
- Provide a means for establishing and monitoring progress.



KEY COMPONENTS OF THE DEMONSTRATION PLAN



EXISTING CONDITION

In this auto-dominated territory, many of the current buildings sit within the space of their individual sites and contribute little to the pedestrian realm.



BUILDINGS THAT DEFINE SPACE

Every building should help to meaningfully shape the pedestrian realm. New buildings should relate to their primary address streets with grade related uses. Parking and services should be accessed off a secondary street or rear lane. This in turn will promote and support a more cohesive and legible sequence of public spaces.



PLACEMENT OF TALL BUILDINGS

Although not the focus nor responsibility of this planning effort, tall buildings will contribute to the overall image of the Centre. They should be located in a suitable manner to minimize shadows on the public realm and reduce visual impact on the silhouette of the Civic Centre building.

THE CIVIC PRECINCT





THE COMMERCIAL PRECINCT





TYPE 1 STREETScape

View of a typical Type 2 streetscape finish, illustrated here along the central portion of Borough Drive in front of future development possible for the Municipal Parking Deck site.

Details include concrete unit paving, double row of trees, the custom Scarborough Bench, and Scarborough Centre street lighting. The Type 1 streetscape is recommended for Borough Drive between Brian Harrison Way and Town Centre Court.







TYPE 2 STREETScape

View of a typical Type 2 streetscape finish along a new or existing street, illustrated here with grade related residential frontage and a basic site cast concrete sidewalk with raised open planter and the Scarborough Centre lighting. The Type 2 streetscape is the primary finish throughout the majority of the Centre.

