

4.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter describes existing conditions for each component of the environment along St. Clair and in the primary/secondary study areas, as appropriate.

4.1 Land Use

The St. Clair Avenue corridor is a community with a mix of employment, residential, and commercial uses. The City of Toronto Official Plan's Urban Structure map shows the land uses for the study area in **Figure 4.1.1**. Further identification of neighbourhood characteristics and land uses was undertaken to fully understand the character of this corridor, identified in **Figure 4.1.2**. The changing character of the different neighbourhoods is described below.

In the east, between Yonge Street and Avenue Road, high-rise office and residential uses dominate, making this the densest portion of the study area. Limited access to St. Clair exists for most of these properties.

From Avenue Road to Lyndhurst Avenue, just east of Bathurst Street, residential uses in transition to higher density can be found. There is a mix of older residential condominiums, apartments and houses, and institutions such as schools and churches. This area includes Winston Churchill Park and the ravine system.

The section from Bathurst Street to Oakwood Avenue is a diverse commercial/residential "main street" area with many restaurants. Some auto-oriented businesses exist in this area, such as auto repair businesses, a gas station, and a fast food restaurant. Two blocks south of St. Clair, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, planning is ongoing for the adaptive reuse of the former TTC streetcar carbarns and adjacent lands to a space for community activities.

A homogeneous street front of small businesses and restaurants exists between Oakwood Avenue and Lansdowne Avenue, which continues this "main-street" environment. The section from Lansdowne Avenue to Old Weston Road is more auto-oriented, with strip retail uses and associated small parking lots.

From Old Weston Road to Gunns Road the land uses are more industrial with some newly developed big box commercial sites. There is significantly more off-street parking, mainly in private retail lots. There are new residential developments in this area on the north side of St. Clair.



Source: Urban Development Services, City of Toronto



LEGEND

-  Avenues
-  Centres
-  Employment Districts



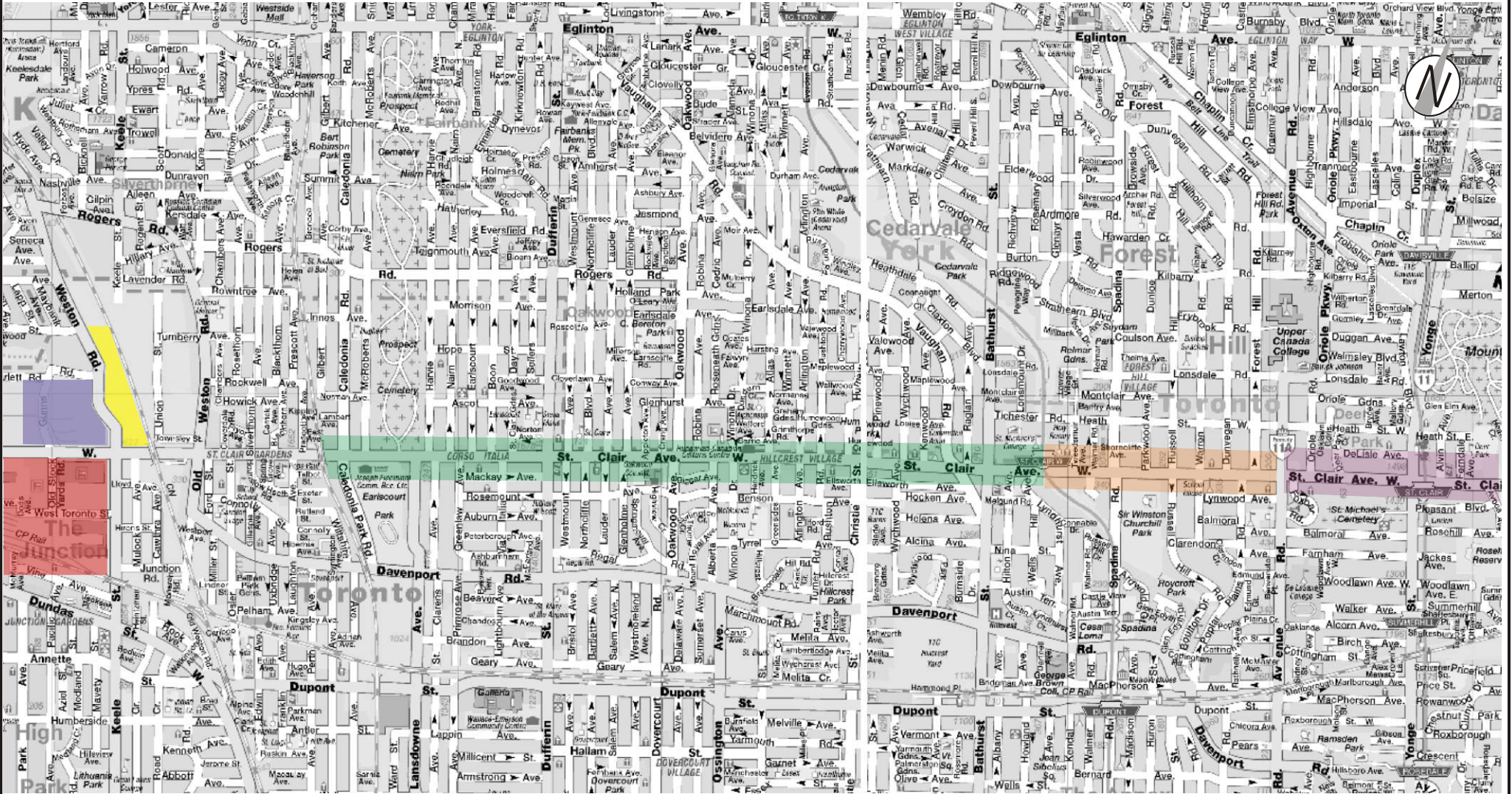
-  Downtown & Central Waterfront
-  Green Space Systems

FIGURE 4.1.1
Toronto Official Plan Urban Structure

St. Clair Avenue West Transit Improvements Class Environmental Assessment



LEGEND



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- Industrial
- Newly Developing Residential
- Big Box Commercial
- Main Street Commercial/Residential
- Residential in Transition to Higher Density
- High-Rise Office/Residential

FIGURE 4.1.2
Land Use on St. Clair Avenue West

On the grid of local streets intersecting with St. Clair, the land use is uniformly residential, low to medium density in the form of single-detached, and semi-detached houses. The housing stock dates from the early to mid 20th Century, and many of the houses do not have multiple on-site parking spaces. These residents depend on on-street parking for all or part of their parking needs.

Railway corridors cross St. Clair at two points in the primary study area – between Weston Road and Old Weston Road, and between Laughton Avenue and Caledonia Park Road. At both of these locations, the crossings are overpasses. These railway crossings create visual barriers and break up the corridor into discrete communities.

4.2 Population and Households

Information was collected from Statistics Canada to describe the population and households in the study area. Some of this information is described by sub-areas within the primary study area. The east-west limits along St. Clair are shown in **Figure 4.2.1**. The north-south limits are 250 metres north and south of St. Clair Avenue.

A breakdown of the population by age in 2001 is shown in **Figure 4.2.2**. Within the study area, those aged less than 15 years constitute approximately 14 percent, while about 15 percent were aged 65 and older. Sub-area 2 (the largest area) had the highest population, and sub-area 1 had the second highest. Sub-area 4 had the third highest population, but had the greatest proportion of its population 65 years of age or older at 22 percent. Sub-area 2 had the highest number of people aged 65 years and older, although they comprised only 12 percent of the total population in that sub-area. Sub-area 1 had the greatest number of children under the age of 15, comprising 19 percent of the population for that sub-area.

The four areas differ in terms of ethnic background as well. Sub-areas 1 and 2 include a significant population with both Italian and Portuguese ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of the population with an Italian or Portuguese ethnic background was 46 percent in sub-area 1 and 30 percent in sub-area 2. Sub-areas 3 and 4 include significant population with ethnic background from Great Britain (English, Irish, or Scottish). The percentage of population with English, Irish, or Scottish ethnic backgrounds was 51 percent in sub-area 3 and 78 percent in sub-area 4.