



REPORT FOR ACTION

ConsumersNext: Planning for People and Business at Sheppard and Victoria Park - Proposals Report

Date: May 15, 2017

To: Planning and Growth Management Committee

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division

Wards: Wards 33 and 40

SUMMARY

The Consumers Road Business Park is home to over 18,000 workers and is the largest concentration of office employment in Toronto outside of the downtown core. On the arterial fringes of the business park, development pressure has seen an emerging mixed use character along Sheppard Avenue East with 4,500 residential units and 55,000 square metres of non-residential floor area occupied, under construction, approved or under review. In June 2015, the City of Toronto launched ConsumersNext - a multi-faceted, interdivisional study examining ways to manage anticipated growth while improving the Consumers Road Business Park and area around Sheppard and Victoria Park Avenues.

The first three phases of the ConsumersNext study are complete and addressed a number of city building issues through three component studies: a Planning Study which included Transportation and Servicing Master Plans, an Economic Potential Study, and the Community Services and Facilities Study. Study analysis and stakeholder input led to a preferred development alternative envisioning a modern, vibrant business park that is an attractive transit oriented location for employment investment and well-connected to a walkable, mixed use community along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue. The preferred development alternative has the potential to accommodate an additional 13,500 jobs and 11,800 residents within the study area over the next 20 to 25 years.

This Proposals Report recommends preparation of a Secondary Plan to achieve this vision for the area. This report outlines policy directions based on the preferred development alternative framed by the three guiding principles - Define and Enhance Livability, Connect and Move, and Support and Promote Business. Secondary Plan policies will seek to manage anticipated growth in employment and residential populations, identify improvements to benefit workers and residents, and support the long term of health of the business park. A summary of these policy directions can be found in Attachment 2.

It is critical that the business park remains successful for Toronto to maintain a diversity of employment uses in different locations across the city. To that end, this report also recommends that the City host a second Business Forum with landowners, tenants and workers within the business park to advance two key recommendations of the Economic Potential Study. The first is how to facilitate or incentivise building improvements to Class "B" and "C" office space to encourage growth in employment within the existing building stock in the near term. The second initiative involves advancing the establishment of a business association within the business park to advocate on behalf of business interests, but also create collaboration between businesses on branding and transportation matters that are at issue for this important office cluster.

In the fourth and final phase of ConsumersNext, City Planning will prepare a Secondary Plan based on the outcomes of the Planning Study and further consultations with divisional partners and the public. Early implementation measures are also identified in this report. The policy directions for the study area contained in this report form a context for the review of development applications and should inform municipal capital projects within the future Secondary Plan area including road resurfacing and public realm upgrades. Through the implementation of ConsumersNext, City staff will work collaboratively to advance these issues alongside the development of a Secondary Plan and key supporting documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division recommends that City Council:

1. Request the City Planning Division to undertake stakeholder and public consultation on the policy directions outlined in this report and summarized in Attachment 2 to inform the development of the Secondary Plan for the ConsumersNext Planning Study Area;
2. Request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division to bring forward a draft Secondary Plan and supporting implementation strategies for the ConsumersNext Planning Study Area, based on the recommendations contained in Attachments 3, 4 and 5, informed by the consultations in Recommendation 1, by the first quarter of 2018;
3. Direct that any Official Plan amendment and rezoning applications in the future Secondary Plan Area for ConsumersNext be considered and reviewed in the context of the Public Realm, Built Form, Transportation and Community Services and Facilities recommendations outlined in Attachment 3;
4. Request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division to host a Business Forum with office tenants, landowners, business owners and other key stakeholders within the Consumers Road Business Park to consult on:
 - a) the opportunity to establish a business association for the Consumers Road Business Park to advocate for business needs and co-ordinate issues on

branding and transportation and create an identity for marketing and real estate purposes; and

b) the potential for an incentive program for tenant improvements to Class "B" and "C" office buildings in the future Secondary Plan area.

5. Request that the Toronto Catholic District School Board consult with the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, the Executive Director, Corporate Finance and the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, on the practice of levying of Education Development Charges on non-residential development in advance of the school board's next update to its Education Development Charges By-law, 2013-No. 178, which expires in June 2018.

6. Direct the appropriate City staff to submit the Transportation Master Plan and Infrastructure Master Plan to the appropriate Provincial Ministry for public review in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process.

7. Direct City Planning, Transportation Services and Engineering and Construction Services staff to ensure the proper co-ordination is undertaken to implement streetscape improvements developed through the ConsumersNext Planning Study through municipal capital works on public streets in the future Secondary Plan area.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

ConsumersNext

At its meeting of January 20, 2016, the Planning and Growth Management Committee received for information a report summarizing the results of Phase 1 of the ConsumersNext study. The decision of Committee can be found at the following link: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PG9.1>

Official Plan Review

At its meeting on December 16-18, 2013, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 231 (OPA 231). OPA 231 brought forward amendments to the Official Plan for economic health and employment lands policies, land use designations and Site and Area Specific policies. Through the adoption of OPA 231, the lands within the study area predominantly fronting along the south side of Sheppard Avenue East and the west side of Victoria Park Avenue were redesignated to *Mixed Use Areas*. The remaining lands within the Consumers Road Business Park were redesignated to *General Employment Areas*. Site and Area Specific Policy 386 (SASP 386) was also brought forward for the lands providing additional direction for future change and directs

that an implementation plan be brought forward as Official Plan policy. This generated the need for a detailed study of the subject lands known as ConsumersNext.

On July 9, 2014, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) approved OPA 231, with minor modifications. The Minister's decision was subsequently appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

The decision history on OPA 231 and the MMAH decision can be accessed at the following links:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.PG28.2>

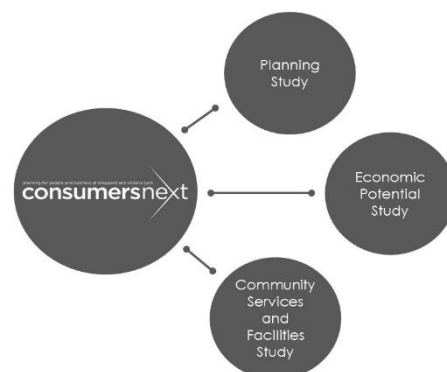
<http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/City%20Planning/SIPA/Files/pdf/O/ministers%20decision%20on%20opa%20231.pdf>

On June 22, 2015 and December 20, 2016, the OMB issued orders partially approving OPA 231 including the land use changes referenced above. However, SASP 386 did not form part of those partial approvals and thus is not yet in force on the subject lands.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

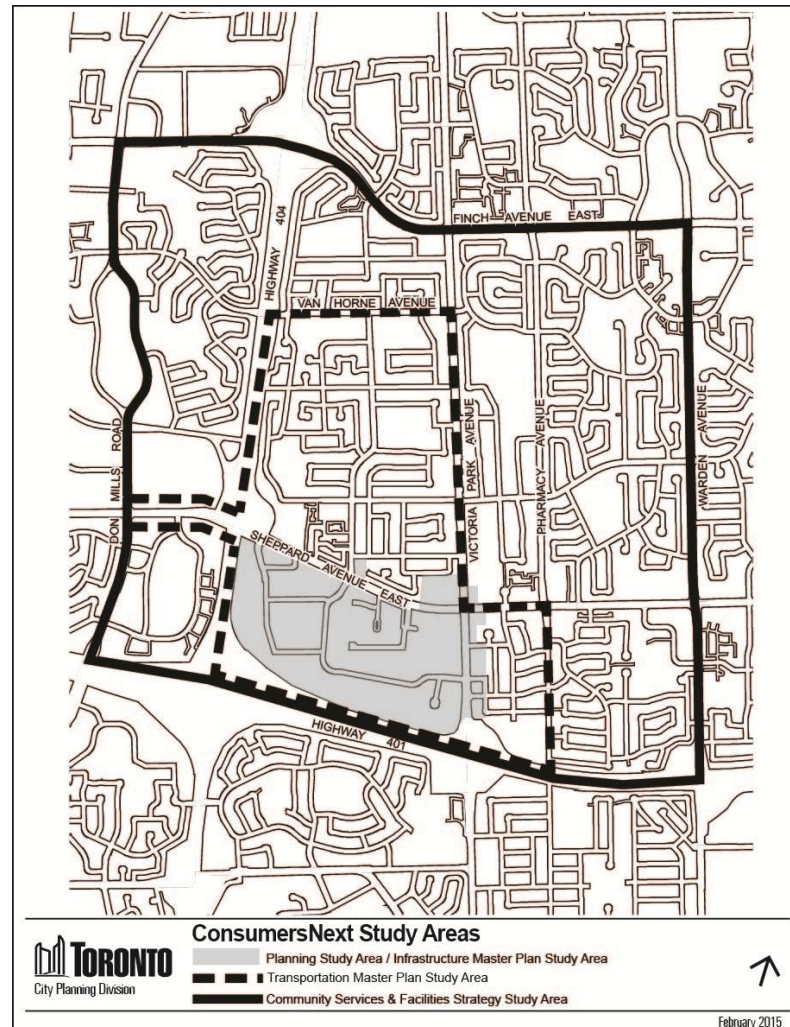
ConsumersNext is a comprehensive study led by the City Planning Division in partnership with the Economic Development and Culture Division and Toronto Water. The study is looking at ways to manage growth anticipated by recent policy changes for lands generally bounded by Sheppard Avenue East, Victoria Park Avenue, Highway 401 and Highway 404. These policy changes are intended to ensure that the Consumers Road Business Park remains an attractive location for business investment and a vibrant place to work that is part of a well-connected, mixed use community. Figure 1 illustrates how ConsumersNext is structured into three component studies that together will address the strategic outcomes necessary to achieve this goal.

Figure 1 - Component studies of ConsumersNext



The components of ConsumersNext have different boundaries of study based on the investigation being undertaken. These component study areas straddle the border between the former cities of North York and Scarborough north of Highway 401 as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - ConsumersNext Study Areas



A multi-disciplinary consultant team was retained to lead the Planning Study and Economic Potential Study under the direction of City staff. This work resulted in a series of recommendations on a range of issues for staff to advance into new Official Plan policy. The Planning Study, summarized in Attachment 3 includes a Transportation Master Plan and Infrastructure Master Plan.

The Community Services and Facilities Study was undertaken by the City Planning Division with the support of an interdivisional staff and agency team including Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Children's Services, Toronto Public Library Board, School Boards and involved outreach to many local human and social service agencies. Its findings are included in the final recommendations of the Planning Study.

The Economic Potential Study, summarized in Attachment 4, assessed the current strengths of the business park and recommended strategies to attract and retain business within the area. The study also identified lessons learned through ConsumersNext that may be transferable to other office-based employment centres. The Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) Study has evaluated the existing

capacity of facilities and services and was integrated with the Planning Study to assess projected growth and identify CS&F priorities to meet future social infrastructure needs.

The first three phases of Consumers Next outlined in Figure 3 consisted of integrated analysis and extensive engagement of the local business and residential community to create a cohesive vision for the study area. A series of Guiding Principles were established that underpinned the preparation of development alternatives. These alternatives were tested against evaluation criteria that sought to ensure balance between the change taking place in the study area through an increase in mixed use development with the improvements necessary to strengthen and support existing and future employment uses.

A preferred alternative emerged at the conclusion of the Planning Study as the recommended vision for the future of the ConsumersNext study area, and is described in subsequent sections of this report. Additional outcomes of the Planning Study included the production of Transportation and Infrastructure Master Plans that satisfy Phase 1 and 2 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

Figure 3 - ConsumersNext Study Phases



This Proposals Report initiates the fourth and final phase of ConsumersNext. The vision and supporting analysis undertaken to date will form the basis for City Planning staff to prepare a Secondary Plan in consultation with partners and the public.

Policy Context

The majority of lands within the ConsumersNext study area are designated *General Employment Areas* with lands along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue designated *Mixed Use Areas*. A finer grain policy framework is expressed by sub-area through SASP 386, although the SASP it is not in force and effect. The sub-area map and SASP policies can be found at the following link:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-63574.pdf#page=48>

The new policies and associated SASP promote a balanced growth of jobs and housing reducing the need for long distance commuting and minimizing congestion on roads. The integration of transportation and land use is a key tenet of the Official Plan. The policies work together to promote new office uses in *Employment Areas* and *Mixed Use Areas* within walking distance of an existing, or approved and funded subway, light rapid transit (LRT) or GO Station. When residential development takes place on a site within 500 metres of a station that contains an existing office building, any new mixed use development must provide a net gain of office space in addition to the residential

component. A full review of the existing and emerging policy frameworks can be found in Chapter 4 of the Phase 1 Report:

<http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/City%20Planning/SIPA/Files/pdf/C/ConsumersNext%20-%20Planning%20Study%20Phase%201%20Report%20Body.pdf#page=20>

SASP 386 provides specific direction to:

- establish an implementation plan as Official Plan policy that includes an incentive program to encourage office development;
- provide amenities to support the employment uses in the business park; and
- establish development densities and new streets and blocks in the study area.

ConsumersNext is being undertaken within this policy context and will develop a planning framework for the study area. Through the Economic Potential Study and components of the Planning Study, ConsumersNext examined what lessons can be learned from other jurisdictions that can be applied to grow employment both in the study area and other business parks. This outcome is critical for Toronto to maintain a diversity of employment opportunities in different locations city-wide.

Engagement, Consultation and Feedback

Over 2,000 people have engaged in the study through public meetings, pop up consultation and a forum of business owners, tenants and landowners in the business park. All study materials, including public meeting summaries, were posted on the ConsumersNext website: www.toronto.ca/consumersnext.

A Local Advisory Committee was struck comprised of local residents, business owners and stakeholders along with the two local Councillors, to discuss the findings and proposals through each phase of the Planning Study. Additional feedback was provided by a Technical Advisory Committee that included representatives of provincial, regional and municipal agencies and transit providers that met at each phase of the project focussing on transportation and technical matters. Similarly, the Planning Study was presented twice to the City's Design Review Panel for specific guidance on public realm, built form and sustainability issues.

Transportation issues were raised through all phases of the study, with the concern that mixed use intensification along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue would further impact the business park and adjacent residential communities. Similarly, comments were advanced through public workshops about the need for better pedestrian and cycling experiences along with a desire for additional green spaces. Retail use was often brought up, with employees citing a gap in local retail destinations for day-to-day errands and residents looking for larger retail establishments, especially grocery stores, to be provided for through a new planning framework.

These, and other issues summarized in the consultant's Planning Study Final Report informed the production and testing of alternative development scenarios and influenced the selection and refinement of the preferred option presented to the public in a community meeting on November 24, 2016. There was general support for the

pedestrian improvements, particularly the highway ramp configurations recommended by the study. Participants were also supportive of the parkland acquisition strategy and streetscape improvements, as well as the general public realm strategy of enhancing the landscape character of the study area. A suggestion was also made that there should be a variety of housing types and sizes of development proposed in *Mixed Use Areas*. While concern persisted regarding the potential impact of growth on transportation infrastructure, some participants said it was important to monitor growth to measure its impact on services and infrastructure in the area.

Subsequent to this public meeting, City staff met with landowners and stakeholders within the study area. While specifically raised by the representatives of the Armenian Community, issues related to transportation access and capacity, compatibility of built form and land use, and provision of local community services. These are matters that ConsumersNext is responding to across the Study Area and represent challenges that future policies will respond to. The final consultant reports were posted to the ConsumersNext website and interested parties were advised of their posting.

Additional consultation will assist in refining the directions presented in this report. Staff will be undertaking additional consultation with key stakeholders in addition to public engagement on the development of future Official Plan policy and related implementing strategies.

COMMENTS

Planning for People and Business at Victoria Park and Sheppard

The future of the ConsumersNext study area is that of a vibrant modern business park which is an attractive, transit oriented location for employment investment and well connected to a walkable mixed use community along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue.

Through the first three phases of ConsumersNext, a development alternative was created to advance this vision structured around the new streets and open spaces delivered by comprehensive redevelopment of the Mixed Use Areas and strategic infill of non-residential development in the business park. The improved street network and public realm supports residential and employment intensification accommodated appropriately scaled built form with improved connectivity through the area to future high order transit stops along Sheppard Avenue East. A Demonstration Plan, found at Attachment 1, illustrates one potential built form outcome of this preferred development alternative which has the potential to accommodate an additional 11,800 residents and 13,500 jobs within the study area over the next 20 to 25 years.

To successfully achieve this future, a number of important city building objectives must be advanced in what is a large and complicated local context. As redevelopment is spurred by the forthcoming public investment in the construction of the Sheppard East LRT, it must deliver improvements to the public realm and new public places that encourage active transportation connections to and from future higher order transit stops.

Figure 4 - Rendering of a potential public park secured through the redevelopment of a large parcel near the future Victoria Park stop on the Sheppard East LRT.



Similarly, employment growth in the area will be supported by improved mobility options that provide additional transportation choice, comfort and connectivity. The provision of new amenities and open spaces can serve both residential and non-residential populations allowing the business park to transition from an 8 hour a day place to one that is active beyond the typical work day and on weekends.

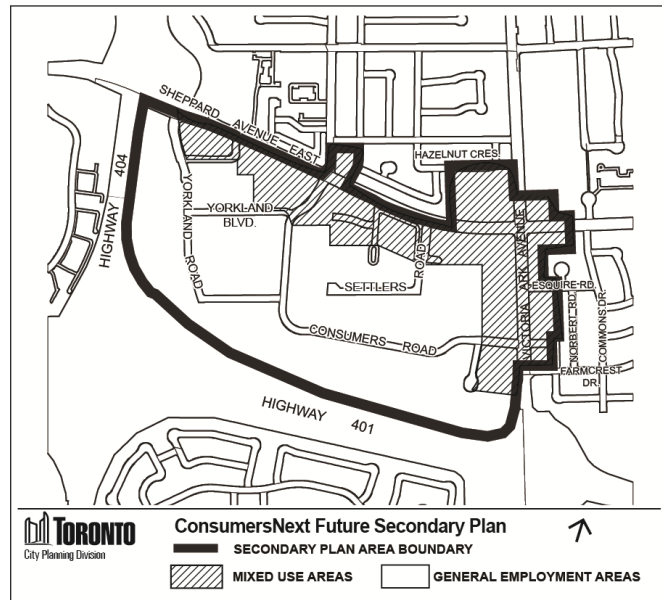
Figure 5 - New open spaces and complementary uses such as restaurants can enliven the public realm and create activity outside of the typical work day.



These important city building outcomes will be addressed by a new Secondary Plan for the ConsumersNext area. The boundaries of a new Secondary Plan are proposed to be

similar to the boundaries of the Planning Study (see Figure 6). In addition to setting the stage for physical growth and improvement, the Plan would also guide strategic decisions necessary support a highly functional and attractive area for people and business at Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue.

Figure 6 - Future ConsumersNext Secondary Plan Area



Building Blocks and Guiding Principles for a Secondary Plan

The development of a new Secondary Plan will focus on the building blocks and Guiding Principles of the ConsumersNext Planning Study. The analysis of the study area and public engagement focussed on six building blocks which provided a common vocabulary for the discussion and evaluation throughout the study based on the objectives developed during Phase 1 and outlined below:



Public Places

Create green, safe and attractive public places with a range of social and recreational activities.



Built Form

Promote a rich and varied built form that supports the existing and planned land uses with new amenities and appropriate transitions.



Transportation Choices

Improve mobility by providing greater transportation choice.



Opportunities for Business Growth

Retain a strong employment base and provide opportunities for business in the area.



Water Infrastructure

Support infrastructure including stormwater management and energy efficient designs.



Community Services and Facilities

Improve and provide new Community Services and Facilities.

The building blocks support three Guiding Principles for ConsumersNext which have been used across all phases of the study as shown below. In seeking better city building outcomes, the description for each Guiding Principle highlights the alignment between the building blocks. The Guiding Principles will be used to structure the policy directions which have emerged through the first three phases of ConsumersNext.

A number of policy directions organized under each Guiding Principle are proposed for inclusion in a new Secondary Plan. A summary of these policy directions can be found in Attachment 2. The subsequent sections of this report outline the rationale for each policy direction and how they address the challenges presented by the existing conditions in the study area and deliver the successful city building outcome.

Principle: Define and Enhance Places & Liveability



Define the identity of the ConsumersNext study area and enhance the liveability of the place for residents, workers and users with high quality streets, parks, open spaces and community services and facilities.

Locate and design buildings to support and create active edges to public spaces at appropriate scales to provide a welcoming environment.

The Challenge

The construction of Highway 401 in the 1950s and its interchange with Highway 404 in the 1960s facilitated rapid development of the lands as a significant business park adjacent to new low density residential neighbourhoods and strip commercial uses along the arterial roads. This initial development was automotive oriented with large blocks organized around a disconnected network of wide streets and few accommodations made for pedestrians or cyclists. At 99 hectares, the future

ConsumersNext Secondary Plan Area is lacking the distinct or defining features like parks and open spaces around which successful urban places develop.

The business park has added employment in each of the past six years and has grown to over 18,000 employees, primarily in the office sector. This growth has occurred largely within existing buildings with businesses making better and more intense use of space. However, most of these buildings have large setbacks from sidewalks on large parcels that are covered by surface parking. This further contributes to the poorly defined public realm which is not supported by active ground floor uses but presents opportunities for improvement through infill development. On the arterial fringes of the business park, development pressure has seen an emerging mixed use character along Sheppard Avenue East with 4,500 residential units and 55,000 square metres of non-residential floor area occupied, under construction, approved or under review. Recent policy changes means there is potential for an increase in development through both residential and non-residential intensification. Consumers Road Business Park can leverage this growth to attract ongoing business investment.

Key Policy Directions

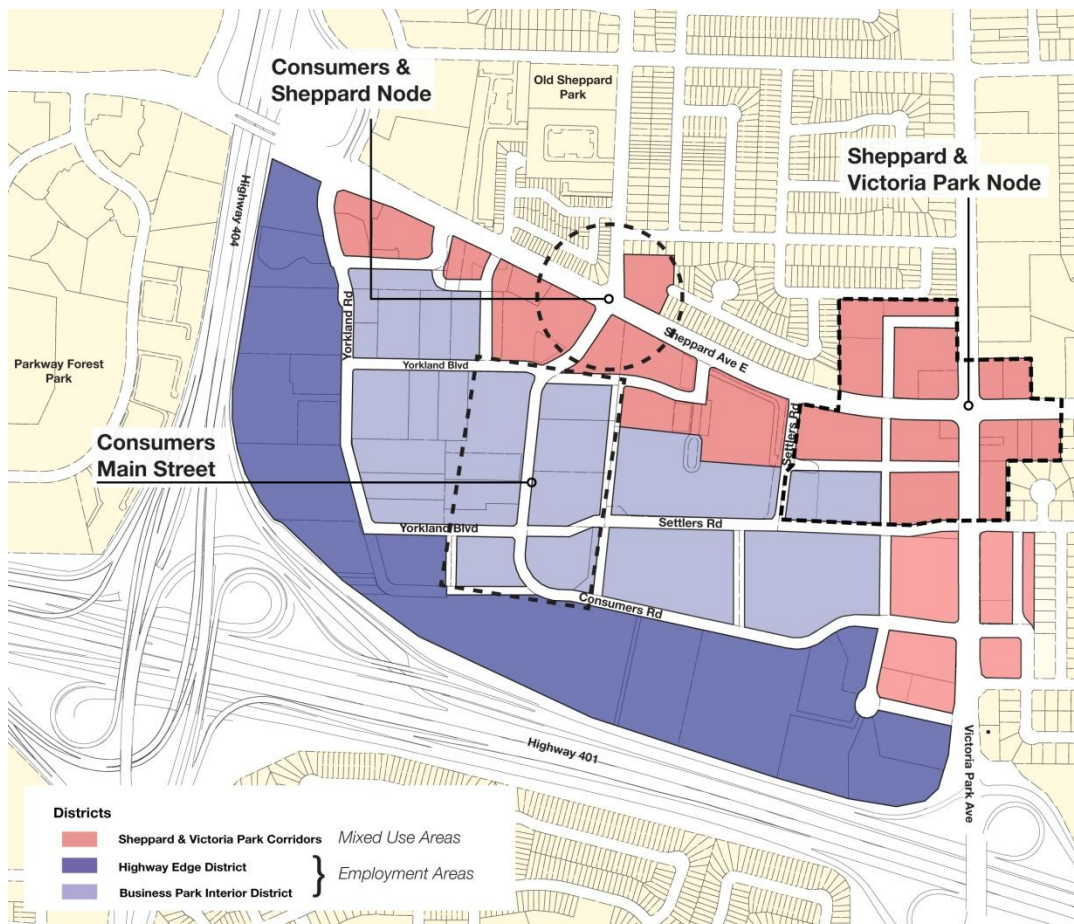
A goal of a ConsumersNext Secondary Plan is to manage the anticipated growth and identify improvements or investments that will benefit workers and residents, support the area's long-term health as an employment centre and address current challenges as described above. Precedents examined by the Planning Study in Mississauga, Montreal and Cambridge, Massachusetts demonstrate that large office-centric employment districts can be reinvigorated by introducing a finer grain of pedestrian friendly streets and using built form and amenity to better define and animate public spaces. Building on these best practices and informed by the local context and community input, a number of key findings were recommended through the Planning Study which should be advanced into a policy framework through a new Secondary Plan.

Policy Direction: *Divide the proposed Secondary Plan Area into smaller places to focus the character of each area while creating an identity and structure for the business park and new residential neighbourhoods.*

The large geography and diversity of uses and site conditions makes it difficult to apply one series of planning or design rules to the entire 99 hectares. Dividing the area into smaller geographies allows for tailored public realm and built form strategies to define the character of smaller areas that will work together to enhance the identity of the future ConsumersNext Secondary Plan Area as a whole. This is illustrated in Figure 7.

For the Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue frontages, Mixed Use Corridor Districts are recommended to be created as pedestrian-oriented arterial streets developed with a mix of uses in proximity to existing and planned transit facilities. These arterials intersect at the Sheppard & Victoria Park Node, a location which presents an opportunity to strengthen connectivity through public realm improvements and concentrate retail uses within higher density developments at a transit interchange.

Figure 7 - Districts and Nodes Plan



The business park is also recommended to be divided into two districts. Lands along the adjacent 400 series highways comprise a Highway Edge District where locating taller building elements in a landscape setting can capitalize on the high visibility from the highways which is a key competitive advantage of the business park. A Business Park Interior District anticipates more infill buildings on smaller parcels close to the internal streets with a focus on walkability, employee amenity and improved walking and cycling connections to transit. Within the Interior District, a Consumers Road Main Street is recommended to extend south from Sheppard Avenue East as a potential concentration of restaurant and retail uses. This cluster could emerge as a central destination for area residents and employees extending the hours of activity in the business park beyond the typical work day.

Policy Direction: *Secure new public streets, public parks and pedestrian connections to improve the pedestrian experience with a series of connected and publicly accessible open spaces.*

Redevelopment presents an opportunity to provide a range of high quality streets, parks and public spaces that combine to create a robust public realm tying together the distinct areas as indicated in Figure 8. Public streets will create a more walkable environment for pedestrians adding connections into and out of the business park while offering opportunities to establish streets which are places themselves.

Figure 8 - ConsumersNext Structure Plan



A new park should be secured on each of the redevelopment sites in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts. Major parks should also be secured on large sites in the Sheppard & Victoria Park Node west of Victoria Park Avenue. These new public parks would be strategically located on lands along the boundaries of the *Mixed Use Areas* and *Employment Areas* land use designations to serve as an open space amenity for workers and residents. Large parks provide an opportunity to provide more flexibility in program and function. Where sites are not large enough to generate an appropriately scaled public park, an implementation framework should be established to secure off-site contribution within the Secondary Plan Area, with a preference to expand existing or future parks.

Public parks can be complemented by publicly accessible private open spaces, a series of plazas, built form setbacks and accessible indoor spaces like atria that are well designed and suitably programmed as extensions of the public realm. The lack of these important spaces and the desire to have a place to be outside to enjoy their lunch or a break from the workday was part of the feedback received from workers in the business park.

Streetscape improvements are recommended for both new and existing streets in the study area to further enhance the pedestrian experience to function as places and destinations as well as links. Implementation of "signature landscape treatments" at the Sheppard & Victoria Park Node and other key locations is recommended to further

assist in creating an identity for the Consumers Road Business Park. "Signature landscape treatments" could include wayfinding elements or enhanced landscaping within urban plazas or important intersections along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue to be gateways into the business park.

Policy Direction: *Establish a hierarchy of density within the ConsumersNext area to ensure that future mixed use development is appropriately located close to future higher order transit and fits within the structure of the City along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor.*

The growth anticipated in the *Mixed Use Areas* can be leveraged to achieve additional connectivity and amenity to benefit the business park and adjacent residential communities. However, the scale and form of development recommended for implementation through a new Secondary Plan must fit within the larger City structure along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor and respond to the local context in terms of built form transition and available transportation capacity. A hierarchy of densities is proposed which recognizes that maximum heights, densities and the number of buildings per site will vary depending on the size of the site, the adjacent land uses, the location within the Secondary Plan Area and access to future higher order transit.

East of Yonge Street, the Sheppard Avenue East transit corridor strings together a number of planning frameworks enacted at various points in time to facilitate intensification in the former municipalities of North York and Scarborough. The Official Plan's growth management strategy for the City is laid out broadly by Map 2, with policies in Chapter 2 providing for intensification in *Centres* and along *Avenues*. Greater heights and densities are provided for in *Centres* to create concentrations of workers and residents outside of the downtown, with *Avenues* identified as important corridors along major streets where reurbanization is anticipated.

Table 1 outlines the various planning frameworks in place along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor, and how they link with the broader Official Plan growth management strategies in Chapter 2. The North York Centre Secondary Plan provides for the greatest heights and densities, reflective of a planning framework for an identified *Centre* on Map 2 located at the interchange of two subway lines. North York Centre is also an urban growth centre in the Province's Growth Plan. A range of densities are provided for by Secondary Plans and other planning frameworks along Sheppard Avenue East when the corridor is identified as an *Avenue* on Map 2 which reflects the different built form context and available transportation capacity in each of these areas.

Table 1 also lists the densities recommended for the sub-areas within the future Secondary Plan Area which reflect the preferred alternative developed through the Planning Study. This preferred alternative was derived through a combination of built form and transportation analysis necessary to achieve the multi-faceted goals of this study as expressed by the Guiding Principles. The recommended densities reflect an appropriate built form scale that fits within the local context and reflects what can be supported by the transportation capacity available with the implementation of additional network connectivity, the construction of the Sheppard East LRT and other transportation improvements described in subsequent sections of this report. While the range and ultimate maximum density recommended fits in with what is provided for

along the corridor, how this potential growth is managed in advance of these transportation improvements will be a key implementation focus.

Table 1 - Maximum Densities permitted in Planning Frameworks along Sheppard Avenue East Corridors

Planning Framework	Urban Structure Official Plan Map 2	Maximum Density Permitted
North York Centre Secondary Plan	Centre	1.0 to 4.5 FSI (up to 6.0 FSI with contribution pursuant to Section 37 policies)
Sheppard East Subway Corridor Secondary Plan	Avenue	3.5 FSI (ability to increase with incentives)
ConsumersNext Future Secondary Plan (under development)	Avenue	Node: 3.0 - 3.5 FSI Sheppard East: up to 3.5 FSI Victoria Park: 2.0 - 3.0 FSI Employment Areas: 1.5 FSI
Sheppard and Warden Avenue By-law	Avenue	1.5 - 4.5 FSI depending on building type
Agincourt Secondary Plan (Review Required)	Avenue	0.5 - 3.0 FSI (net)

The greatest building heights and densities are focussed at the Sheppard and Victoria Park Node where sites can be developed to a maximum of 3.5 FSI. Performance standards will be tailored to mark this intersection with the most prominent buildings in the study area from a height and density standpoint, centred on the interchange of future higher order transit with local and potential regional transit service. These performance standards also include provisions to transition the scale of buildings on sites adjacent to lands designated Neighbourhoods and limiting height and building placement to ensure an appropriate sunlight on sidewalks along Sheppard Avenue East.

The maximum density recommended for the Sheppard East Corridor District is also 3.5 FSI, reflective of a future higher order transit corridor where the addition of the Sheppard LRT will provide capacity for this level of development to occur. Similarly, deeper sites are adequately separated from lands designated Neighbourhoods such that they can potentially accommodate tall buildings above a six storey base building which would define the public realm along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue.

The density recommended for the Victoria Park Corridor District reflects the location of these lands further from future higher order transit stops. They are lower than those recommended for Sheppard Avenue East Corridor District or the Node because transportation improvements along Victoria Park Avenue do not offer the same increase in capacity as those in other areas of the future Secondary Plan area. Development

sites east of Victoria Park Avenue are limited by the need to appropriately transition built form and scale to adjacent lands designated Neighbourhoods and should develop in a midrise form and not exceed 2.5 FSI. Sites in this District west of Victoria Park may also develop with a mixed use midrise built form that should not exceed 3.0 FSI. However, since these are adjacent to the Employment Areas, a tall building typology can be accommodated provided it meets the recommended built form controls and does not exceed 3.0 FSI.

Within the Employment Districts a density of 1.5 FSI is recommended which is also the current zoning permission. This permission will continue to provide opportunity for intensification as most large parcels in the employment areas are underutilized and can accommodate infill development. Moreover, given the trends towards more intense utilization of office space referenced throughout this report, the potential floor area that can be developed in the Business Park can continue to accommodate employment growth.

This scale of development is appropriate in terms of the ranges of densities provided for along the corridor by the in force planning frameworks. Densities in the Sheppard and Victoria Park Node do not exceed density permissions provided for in North York Centre and those in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts are aligned with those provided for in *Avenues* along Sheppard Avenue East. These densities provide for appropriate levels of mixed use development in the future Secondary Plan area based on proximity to higher order transit. Furthermore, the proposed mixed use densities can be achieved while accommodating continued growth within the business park to build on the concentration of employment uses found there.

Policy Direction: *Establish specific performance standards for development in Mixed Use Corridor Districts and the Sheppard & Victoria Park Node to ensure new buildings are appropriately scaled for their context.*

Mixed use intensification is anticipated within the Sheppard and Victoria Park Corridors, as well as within the Sheppard and Victoria Park Node. Limited transportation capacity and the desire to support an enhanced and comfortable public realm underscores the need to specifically control built form to ensure that the emerging community along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue is appropriately scaled.

While all new buildings would be expected to comply with the adopted City-wide urban design guidelines for tall, midrise and low-rise buildings. They were modified, where appropriate, to fit within the area context in response to the emerging vision for the study area. Specific performance standards were recommended by the consultant's Planning Study to achieve a number of objectives so future buildings will appropriately define and support public spaces in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts and at the Sheppard and Victoria Park Node.

A goal of these performance standards is to improve the physical environment and pedestrian comfort in the area with buildings that are appropriately located and scaled on their site to frame adjacent streets and open spaces. In all *Mixed Use Areas*, a six storey street wall is recommended along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue to frame the public realm. In addition, a series of minimum setbacks are

recommended to ensure an appropriate relationship along new and existing streets in the *Mixed Use Areas* as well as provisions for active at-grade uses to support the vibrancy of the public realm.

Angular planes will be used along the arterial roads to ensure appropriate conditions are provided in the public realm for pedestrians and are also used to ensure appropriate transition in built form to lands designated *Neighbourhoods*. A six storey streetwall is established along the arterial roads to appropriately frame with public realm to create a midrise character, either as the base of a tall building or a step back in a midrise building. When sites have the potential for tall buildings, the towers are appropriately controlled by angular planes to set them deep into the site which limits the visual and physical impact on adjacent streets or sensitive land uses. On sites where tall buildings can be accommodated maximum heights for towers are recommended for the Sheppard and Victoria Node (45 storeys), Sheppard Corridor District (43 storeys) and Victoria Park District (27 storeys) reflective of the recommended hierarchy of density. Sites that cannot accommodate a tall building should not exceed the height of the arterial right of way, pursuant to the City's Avenues and Mid-rise Buildings Performance Standards. The maximum height for these midrise sites is recommended to be 11 storeys.

The specific performance standards and hierarchy of density being advanced through the future Secondary Plan and zoning for the ConsumersNext area can result in a range of built form outcomes. As part of the Planning Study, a Demonstration Plan was prepared to illustrate one of the many outcomes possible using the performance standards being advanced. This Demonstration Plan is found in Attachment 1 and models the preferred alternative and includes the built form pattern that has emerged with recent approvals along Sheppard Avenue East. The Demonstration Plan also clearly illustrates that not all sites in the *Mixed Use Areas* are large enough to accommodate towers and meet the recommended built form performance standards. Similarly, sites which might accommodate towers that meet the built form performance standards may not be able to accommodate multiple towers and still meet the recommended maximum densities as determined by their location within the Secondary Plan area.

The future Secondary Plan will bring forward policies that reflect this preferred alternative and performance standards, including maximum height and density, to ensure orderly development in appropriate locations.

Policy Direction: *Provide flexible performance standards for development in the Employment Areas to support the public realm but allow for adaptability to the varied building formats as needed for employment uses in the Business Park.*

The Highway Edge and Business Park Interior Districts are recommended to have a more flexible range of development standards to account for the different needs of businesses. The standards identify important elements that must be provided by a site when redevelopment occurs. They provide direction on the location of building and the organization of the site.

The standards will outline different ways for non-residential development in the business park to support the public realm through requirements for landscape setbacks, strategic location of parking and pedestrian entrances. However, a full range of form controls will not be prescribed in the *Employment Areas* to recognize the various building program needs and varied formats of non residential development. This will improve the quality of place within the business park and preserve the potential of large underutilized parcels. These parcels are an advantage for the business park in attracting new non-residential development and this approach preserves flexibility to accommodate both infill and comprehensive redevelopment.

Policy Direction: *Enhance existing community infrastructure within walking distance of the Study Area and create Community Commons around transit stops to locate services and facilities such as agency space and new child care space.*

Community services and facilities (CS&F) act as focal points where people can play, learn, work and socialize. They can also support employment uses by providing services to workers in proximity to their place of work. A profile of existing services and facilities developed in Phase 1 of ConsumersNext identified a broad range of community services and facilities within and surrounding the Consumers Road Business Park. New development can play a role in supplementing the existing CS&F network with enhanced services that serve the incremental growth in residential and employment populations anticipated by the study over the long term. Two area-based approaches have emerged to support local CS&F needs in the area: securing new non-profit child care and additional community agency space within the future Secondary Plan area and continued enhancement of existing CS&F in the surrounding community.

In the Secondary Plan area, new non-profit child care is a priority and additional community agency space should also be delivered through the redevelopment of sites near the future LRT stops at Consumers Road or Victoria Park Avenue. Clustering potential community services and facilities in these locations will provide easy access for workers and residents allowing them to support broader public realm goals in establishing gateways and focal points for social activity.

Within 1.6 kilometres, or a 20 minute walk, of the Mixed Use Corridor Districts, a number of existing services and facilities including a library, community centres and schools serve the area. These CS&F have existing capacity or may be able to support future growth through service planning and/or targeted capital improvements. Investing in existing facilities will benefit current and future populations. The CS&F policies in the future Secondary Plan will address these two area-based approaches.

Principle: Connect and Move



Create balanced transportation options to get to and move through the business park and surrounding are by improving connections for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders.

The Challenge

The street network in the area surrounding Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue is not well connected particularly from a pedestrian and cycling standpoint. The disjointed public streets also lack appropriate pedestrian amenity and safety measures making it difficult for active transportation users to access the surface transit that exists on the arterial roads. There are few public streets accessing the business park which combines with an auto-centric mode share (nearly 90% of trips are made via private automobile) to contribute to congestion at the intersections of Consumers Road and Victoria Park Avenue and Yorkland Boulevard and Sheppard Avenue East during peak travel periods.

The majority of the study area lies beyond what could be considered walking distance to the Don Mills subway station and the pedestrian connections to the subway station are lengthy and difficult, particularly in winter months. The Sheppard East LRT is funded and approved with construction by Metrolinx expected to begin in 2021. The LRT will include stops at Consumers Road and Victoria Park Avenue providing two higher order transit stops to the business park. Although Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue are well serviced by surface transit routes there is a lack of regional transit service to the area despite the fact that 51% of employees in the business park commute there from outside of Toronto.

Key Policy Directions

Implementation of higher order transit along Sheppard Avenue East and actions recommended by the Transportation Master Plan prepared as part of the ConsumersNext Planning Study represent a significant opportunity to promote safe and accessible transportation choices into the area for all users. Improving access to the business park and integrating it with the surrounding transportation network enhances its attractiveness for investment and business growth, while also serving the needs of residents along this "ridership ready" transit corridor. To enhance mobility through the study area, a number of recommendations emerged from the Planning Study to improve transportation choice, comfort and connectivity.

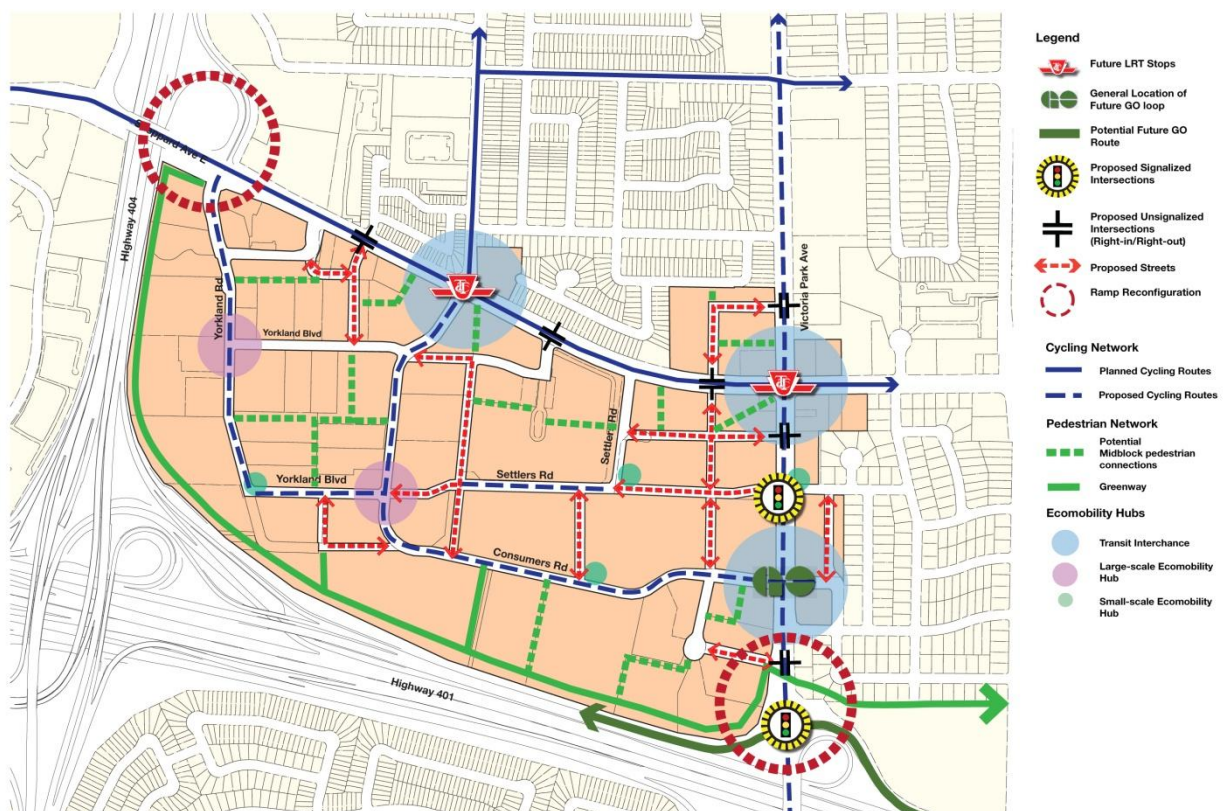
Policy Direction: *Implement the Sheppard East LRT "Plus" solution evaluated through the Transportation Master Plan to shift mobility behaviour away from private automobile uses and promote active modes of transportation to maximize capacity of the transportation network.*

A Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was undertaken which addresses Phases 1 and 2 of the five-phase Municipal Class EA process. The TMP process engaged a number of public agencies and transit operators and the public was consulted on major components throughout the community engagement process.

Three solution sets were evaluated through the TMP process (Do Nothing, LRT "As Is" and LRT "Plus"). The preferred solution was identified as the LRT "Plus" solution. The foundation of this solution is the implementation of the Sheppard East LRT and stops at Consumers Road and Victoria Park Avenue. This is accompanied by the recommendation for the implementation of a new street network with improvements to cycling infrastructure such as separated lanes and new routes through the business park. The LRT "Plus" solution includes a number of additional opportunities for

improving connectivity, enhancing safety and using innovative mobility strategies to provide greater transportation choice. These opportunities are illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9 - Transportation Composite Plan



However, the key is the arrival of higher order transit along Sheppard Avenue. The construction of the LRT is required to support any significant intensification as the upgrade to higher order transit provides the necessary transportation capacity to support future growth. Subsequent sections of this report outline how to manage growth until such time as the LRT is in service.

Implementing the full LRT "Plus" solution outlined in the TMP will satisfy a range of objectives, including positive city building outcomes, supporting employment growth and creating social equity consistent with the transportation policies in the Official Plan. The future Secondary Plan for ConsumersNext should provide policy support for infrastructure investment that will underpin the incremental shift in mobility behaviour away from the private automobile and provide capacity in the transportation network to support future intensification.

Policy Direction: *Balance land uses to promote shorter trips and enhance choice and connectivity for workers and residents, and improve the transportation experience for active transportation users.*

It will be important for the future Secondary Plan to recognize the characteristics of the land use pattern in the area, the trips generated by these uses and how to influence these trips through future policy. The Consumers Road Business Park is an important concentration of employment uses, primarily in the office sector. The uses within the

business park have generally the same hours of operation causing sharp peaking for employee travel at the beginning and end of the business day.

The residential components of mixed use developments along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue have the potential to create new, short distance non-auto trips. The live-work relationship between residential use and the office uses found in the business park may take time to emerge, but the development of supportive non-residential uses such as retail, restaurant and recreation can create synergy with the office uses in the short term. Concentrating these uses along the Consumers Road Main Street will create a destination for employees to arrive before or linger after regular business hours. This will serve to reduce peak travel times and transform the business park from a place that is active primarily during an 8 hour work day to one with activity stretched out over 16 hours of the day.

Policy Direction: *Implement a new finer grain street network to benefit all mobility users. Create an extension of Settlers Road to provide a crucial link from Victoria Park Avenue to the heart of the business park.*

The anticipated intensification of residential and employment uses will need to be supported by additional connectivity in the transportation network for all users. Access to the business park is limited to a few streets constraining the ability for working populations to get into and out of the central part of the employment area. Increasing the number of streets and walking or cycling connections will improve access to the business park but also create a more walkable place. Implementing the finer grain street network recommended by the Planning Study will allow for 80% of the business park to be within a 10 minute (800 metre) walk to future LRT stops.

New streets secured through the redevelopment of mixed use parcels will provide additional access points to the business park. The most important link to secure is the extension of Settlers Road from the core of the business park to a new signalized intersection at Victoria Park Avenue. This intersection is the only additional traffic control signal proposed through the TMP. It provides for full movements and improves access both into and out of the business park in all directions. It has the potential to relieve the congestion at the Consumers Road and Victoria Park Avenue intersection, and provide a new east-west link through the business park by connecting to Yorkland Boulevard.

Policy Direction: *Enhance the active transportation infrastructure, including improved pedestrian and cycling connections at the two highway interchanges.*

The area suffers from a lack of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Poor conditions can also be a deterrent for potential transit riders who become pedestrians for the "last mile" of their transit trip between exiting the transit vehicle and their ultimate destination. Cross sections for new and existing streets were developed through the Planning Study which improve pedestrian and cycling conditions through enhanced safety and comfort. This ranges from protected cycling lanes to wider and more pleasant pedestrian routes between key destinations and around transit stops. Improving the comfort and connectivity of active transportation modes will elevate these modes and transit, as a real alternative to private automobile use.

A similar theme was raised consistently at public engagement events where participants expressed concern with the pedestrian and cycling conditions on Sheppard Avenue East where it crosses over Highway 404. The existing narrow sidewalk has no physical buffer from multiple lanes of vehicular traffic and the condition worsens in winter months when ploughed snow further impedes pedestrian travel. The TMP identified an ability to remove a redundant vehicular travel lane to add much needed pedestrian and cycling facilities within the existing bridge structure with limited impact on vehicular level of service. Combined with a reconfiguration of the intersection of the ramps from Highway 404 and Sheppard Avenue East, this intervention would offer a significant improvement in the pedestrian and cycling connectivity from Don Mills station and the subway and regional transit connections located there.

An opportunity was also highlighted at the intersection of Victoria Park Avenue and Highway 401 at the southeast limits of the future Secondary Plan Area. Currently, a long access ramp provides freeflow access from Victoria Park Avenue southbound to Highway 401 westbound. Creating a more traditional intersection between Victoria Park Avenue and the on-ramp to Highway 401 westbound would provide the ability for a protected pedestrian crossing from the future Secondary Plan area to Wishing Well Park, a significant green space east of Victoria Park Avenue. Removal of the long approach to the on-ramp would create an opportunity for additional access to the business park through a link between Hallcrown Place and Victoria Park Avenue. It would also provide the opportunity for additional greening of the public realm adjacent to the St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church. This link will also provide the access necessary to support development in the *Mixed Use Areas* south of Consumers Road and has the potential to relieve traffic concerns expressed in numerous public forums.

Policy Direction: *Implement innovative mobility technologies and parking strategies.*

Future Secondary Plan policies should build on the success of existing transportation demand measures (TDM) implemented through the Metrolinx Smart Commute Program that demonstrated shifts in mobility behaviour away from the single occupancy vehicles. TDM measures could be extended to meet the needs of smaller businesses within the business park which comprise 65% of the establishments in the future Secondary Plan area.

Policies and infrastructure investment can also be advanced that promote co-locating car-share, bike-share and ride-sharing at designated "Ecomobility Hubs". These hubs would be strategically located to help facilitate transition to the "last mile" of travel for transit riders and support alternative opportunities for business-related trips (e.g. client cars) during office hours. These shared mobility options can be integrated through Toronto Parking Authority operations as this agency owns both Bike Share Toronto and are a partner with Car2Go, a local car share organization. Piloting a mobility hub in the Consumers Road Business Park is a way to embrace these innovative mobility technologies and offer an alternate way for employees to travel.

Policy Direction: *Explore the feasibility of regional transit integration.*

A travel survey of employees conducted in the course of the ConsumersNext Planning Study found that 51% of those surveyed travel to the business park each day from

outside Toronto. While the future Sheppard East LRT will strengthen higher order transit connections to the study area, this data indicates that additional regional transit connectivity should be explored as a way to shift travel behaviour away from private automobile use.

There are a number of ways regional transit could be integrated into the future Secondary Plan area. York Regional Transit (YRT) routes could be included in transit interchanges with future LRT stops along Sheppard Avenue East. Similarly GO Transit bus service which currently bypasses the Consumers Road Business Park on existing routes along Highway 404 and Highway 401 could add a stop at Victoria Park Avenue and Highway 401 with limited travel time delay for these existing routes. Stronger east-west connections along Sheppard Avenue East should be explored via transit or shuttle service to existing GO Train and future Regional Express Rail service at Oriole and Agincourt Stations. Through the TMP process, regional transit providers indicated their interest in exploring how best to strengthen their service to workers in the business park.

Policy Direction: *Advance interim improvements to transit facilities with the potential to be made permanent after the construction of the LRT.*

Prior to the implementation of the Sheppard East LRT, the curb lanes along Sheppard Avenue East can be repurposed for high-occupancy vehicles (HOV) and transit vehicles. The implementation of HOV lanes on Sheppard Avenue East is warranted based on a high level of transit and auto-passenger trips. The incremental growth anticipated by future Secondary Plan policies would be oriented towards existing surface transit use in advance of the LRT construction. Once the LRT is operating, the HOV lanes would be removed from Sheppard Avenue East.

HOV and transit priority lanes on Victoria Park Avenue are not currently warranted in the near term but could be added if monitoring determines that they would facilitate improved transit service as redevelopment of the future Secondary Plan area proceeds. Before HOV lanes are implemented along Victoria Park Avenue, a monitoring program would also need to determine the impact of these lanes on the road capacity given the other demands placed on this short segment of Victoria Park Avenue between Highway 401 and Sheppard Avenue East in terms of site access and local connectivity.

Policy Direction: *Monitor transportation improvements to provide for the ability to implement priority pieces of transportation infrastructure prior to development.*

Throughout the Planning Study, transportation analysis and public engagement highlighted the constraints on capacity and connectivity that currently exist in the proposed Secondary Plan area. As development is constructed, infrastructure priorities identified through the TMP must also be implemented to ensure the capacity and connectivity exists to support growth. Most important is the construction of higher order transit through the planned Sheppard LRT. Other pieces of infrastructure are important to support development from a connectivity perspective including the Settlers Road extension and the link between Hallcrown Place and Victoria Park Avenue. The Secondary Plan will need to include monitoring provisions to ensure that infrastructure

is implemented in a timely way to support future development contemplated by the Secondary Plan.

Principle: Support and Promote Business



Enhance the area's attractiveness as a place to do business by encouraging more complementary uses for workers and residents, and ensuring a robust mobility network and community services and facilities.

The Challenge

The last major office building was constructed in the business park in 1991. However, the past 25 years have seen ongoing change in leasing and ownership patterns. This has allowed the business park to maintain its anchor role in the office market. Today, Consumers Road Business Park has the largest concentration of office employment outside of the downtown. Over 18,000 people work in the business park, 89% of them in an office. This represents an increase in employment since 2012 with 135 new businesses choosing to locate in the park, including a major employer relocating 2,000 jobs to the Consumers Road Business Park from Markham in 2015.

Much of this growth has occurred through investment in existing buildings with businesses making more intensive and efficient use of existing floor areas. The business park continues to benefit from its central location in the region, with visibility and access from the adjacent 400-series highways. The strength of the business park as an employment area is found both in the range of office uses and building stock which contains the highest concentration of Class 'B' and Class 'C' space in Toronto. These buildings provide affordable rents attractive to business establishment and expansion and serve an important role in a balanced office market locally and across the City.

Historically, the competitive advantage Consumers Road Business Park had was its location adjacent to a major highway interchange and the regional connectivity offered by the 400 series highways to regions beyond the boundaries of Toronto. Phase 1 of the Economic Potential study identified a number of trends in labour force mobility and business location revealing a greater desire for businesses to be locating closer to labour and a waning interest in long auto commutes, particularly among millennial workers.

Despite its current success, enhancements are required for the Consumers Road Business Park to maintain a competitive advantage to other similarly situated business parks and ensure the long term viability of the area for employment. This includes improved connectivity to higher order transit, but also the availability of an amenity rich environment offering activities for employees before, during and after their work day.

Key Policy Directions

Through future policy changes, investment and targeted economic development initiatives, the City can support the evolution of the Consumers Road Business Park and

other outer-core employment districts to ensure they remain competitive. The Economic Potential Study undertaken through ConsumersNext made a number of recommendations, some specifically for the future ConsumersNext and others which were demonstrated to have potential for applicability city-wide.

Policy Direction: *Promote amenitization of the Business Park through zoning flexibility for retail and recreation uses, amenity in strategic locations and improvements to the public realm within the future Secondary Plan area.*

Throughout the engagement process, workers cited a lack of local amenity within the Business Park (such as retail, restaurants and services) as a key gap which forces additional auto-trips during the work day to complete errands. Amenity is a key factor in attracting and retaining talent. It also supports increased rental rates for leasing office space as these supportive uses create a successful image of the business park with potential new employees and investors. The ability to offer the right mix of amenities within the future Secondary Plan area will give it a competitive advantage over other non-downtown employment areas that often do not offer a diverse land use environment.

Much of the current retail and restaurant uses are within existing office buildings setback from the public sidewalk usually behind large surface parking areas. Retail and service uses benefit from pedestrian traffic for patronage, so amenities should be located within buildings that have a close relationship with the public realm. They should also be centrally located within walking distance of a large part of the employee population. This role is proposed to be fulfilled by the Consumer Road Main Street. Identified along the north-south alignment of Consumers Road, the Main Street is intended to provide a cluster of retail, amenity and services within the business park. Similarly, new public parks and gathering places delivered by redevelopment of lands in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts will be sited in a way that benefit the working and residential populations. These are key directions for good city building, as well as good economic development as they can both contribute to increased demand for rentable space.

Policy Direction: *Make the necessary capital investments for transit improvements, transit stop amenity, streetscape improvements and complete streets to improve the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to, from and within the area.*

The City has a significant role in supporting and promoting employment growth in the future Secondary Plan Area by making the necessary public capital investment that would in turn raise the bar for future private sector investment in the area. This includes investment in transit improvements, streetscape and public amenities such as new parks and community facilities servicing both workers and residents. Early in the ConsumersNext Planning Study process, concerns were raised by both landowners and real estate brokers regarding the reliability of hydroelectric infrastructure in the business park and the impact that has on their ability to lease space in the business park. Toronto Hydro reported that upgrades were in process, and the upgrades were completed at the end of 2016 to address this issue.

A pro forma analysis undertaken through Phase 2 of the Economic Potential Study compared the potential profitability of a typical office development in the Consumers Road Business Park with two competitive market areas: Airport Corporate Centre in Mississauga and Markham Town Centre. The analysis showed that under current conditions the development of a new office building in any of the three business parks was not an immediately profitable proposition. However, Consumers Road Business Park gained a competitive advantage over these office centres in the 905 region when the uplift in potential rents spurred by the implementation of LRT was factored into the pro forma. This is because the new transit improved connections to skilled labour within the City of Toronto, in particular offering better east-west connectivity to areas within the former City of Scarborough where the highest proportion of trips to the Business Park originate as well as to future Regional Express Rail (RER) at Agincourt GO Station.

Policy Direction: *Explore the potential of establishing an incentive program to support the expansion of employment opportunities within the existing stock of office buildings.*

Almost three quarters (73%) of the buildings in the Consumers Road Business Park are classified as Class "B" or Class "C" office space, representing about 60% of the office space. Although these classes of buildings do not receive the highest rent, they serve an important role in a balanced office market. The existing low rents are part of the value proposition of the business park, but offer little incentive for building owners to reinvest in existing buildings and limit potential for new office development in the near term.

Until such time as transit infrastructure and other enhancements to the area occur, the main opportunity to support continued employment growth is through retrofits and upgrades to existing buildings. If an older building has positive qualities such as good transportation access or highway visibility, building upgrades are the next major threshold for increasing demand. The Economic Potential Study described tenant based incentive programs that exist in the City of Hamilton and the City of Ottawa. The program in Hamilton is specifically geared to increase the attractiveness and marketability of the existing office stock in specific locations through low interest loans and grants to cover the cost of alterations or improvements to the building which cannot be removed upon the termination of the lease.

It is important to ensure a healthy office market across the full spectrum of office space classification and create an environment that attracts investment into these types of buildings. This report recommends initiating a process to advance some of the analysis undertaken through ConsumerNext on tenant investment in Class B and C buildings to see if there are lessons learned that can be applied in the business park as well as to other potential locations in Toronto. A next step involves the Economic Development and Culture Division in partnership with City Planning convening a business forum of local stakeholders in an effort to understand the market dynamics of potential investment decisions and whether additional incentives could complement programs that currently exist in the City.

Policy Direction: *Establish a business association for the Consumers Road Business Park with the potential to become a Business Improvement Area (BIA) to advocate on*

behalf of businesses in representing common interests and co-ordinating implementation of transportation, streetscaping, branding and marketing initiatives.

A local business association could be well positioned to undertake initiatives recommended through other components of the ConsumersNext study including the expansion of SmartCommute, the co-ordination of private shuttles, streetscape improvements along with other transportation and public realm initiatives. A business association could speak as one voice representing the interests of businesses in addressing issues related to the intensifying mixed use community along the Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue corridors. It could also prepare and implement branding and marketing programs for the future Secondary Plan area while organizing events such as farmers markets, food fairs and outdoor events that contribute to the amenitization of the business park.

To establish a full BIA, preliminary work and additional consultation would be required with businesses and landowners. Some stakeholders that participated in the ConsumersNext Business Forum, held in January 2016, did not see the value in creating a BIA at this time as retail stores and personal services generally have more to gain from BIAs than office tenants. However, as additional retail establishments emerge through the redevelopment in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts along the arterial roads and along the Consumers Road Main Street, additional support may be garnered for the implementation of a BIA for the future Secondary Plan area. Furthermore, there are successful precedents emerging of BIAs established in Employment Areas such as the Duke Heights BIA along Finch Avenue West between Dufferin Street and Keele Street.

Policy Direction: *Provide certainty in the development approvals process while maintaining flexibility in performance standards to account for the varied building program needs for different establishments that may be looking to develop in the area.*

The creation of a Secondary Plan provides certainty from a land use perspective, further crystallizing the outcome of the Municipal Comprehensive Review and OPA 231. The future Secondary Plan will set out clear expectations for development in terms of infrastructure delivery, not leaving these issues up to negotiation through the development review process. However, flexibility is provided through the implementation of the approach to urban design performance standards in the business park as described previously.

In the future, a Development Permit System (DPS), combining rezoning, minor variance and site plan approvals into one application and approval can offer a streamlined approach to the approvals process once the policy framework for a DPS By-law is in effect. The work undertaken through ConsumersNext, the future Secondary Plan and supporting implementation framework could be key inputs for the preparation of a Development Permit By-law once the policy framework is approved.

Implementation Strategy and Future Refinement

An effective implementation strategy will be a cornerstone of the future Secondary Plan for ConsumersNext. In developing this strategy through consultation and additional

analysis, refinements to the findings of the Planning Study attached to this report may be necessary to ensure successful implementation. In this final phase of ConsumersNext, staff will examine potential policy refinements, review zoning conformity and advance an approach to monitor and manage growth and provision of supportive infrastructure as follows.

Policy Direction: *Determine the applicability and future role of how the policies of SASP 386 are used in the future Secondary Plan Area.*

Once developed, the future Secondary Plan for the ConsumersNext area stands as the implementation plan identified in Site and Area Specific Policy 386 (SASP 386). The policies of SASP 386 can be incorporated, as necessary, into the Secondary Plan. However, the intent of these policies may need to be reconsidered in light of the findings of the ConsumersNext Planning Study and the directions recommended for the future Secondary Plan. For example, SASP 386 provides for retail, restaurant and other amenity uses if they are located on the ground floor of existing office buildings or in new multi-storey office buildings. This may preclude some of the infill development anticipated to provide the retail and service amenity necessary to fulfill the objectives of the Consumers Road Main Street. As parts of SASP 386 remain under appeal and are not yet in force, it may be necessary to align future work with the ongoing OPA 231 appeals process.

Policy Direction: *Incorporate lands in the future Secondary Plan into Zoning By-law 569-2013 with appropriate amendments to implement performance standards for built form and urban design as developed through the Planning Study.*

Much of the future Secondary Plan area does not form part of Zoning By-law 569-2013 and is still subject to Zoning By-laws of the former municipalities of North York and Scarborough. Some of the enhancements proposed to the public realm and built form recommended through the ConsumersNext Planning Study may be in conflict with existing zoning across the future Secondary Plan area. To implement the findings of the Study and advance the policy framework of the future Secondary Plan, a number of zoning updates will be considered through the implementation phase of ConsumersNext.

Priority will be given to employment lands that need to be incorporated into Zoning By-law 569-2013. This will provide greater certainty to landowners and streamline future applications as current projects need to be reviewed for conformity against multiple Zoning By-laws where they apply. This would also be an opportunity to incorporate some of the "kit of parts" urban design tools into the zoning for the employment lands to enhance the character goals for the public realm and supporting built form.

Lands in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts and the Sheppard & Victoria Park Node will also be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate for them to be incorporated into Zoning By-law 569-2013. This process may also include residential densities and built form performance standards incorporated into the zoning to reflect the findings of the Planning Study. Updated zoning may also need to include appropriate holding provisions to address the outcomes of the growth management strategy outlined below.

Policy Direction: *Establish a growth management strategy to monitor and manage the anticipated mixed use development to ensure that it does not proceed in advance of the implementation of key supporting infrastructure.*

In addition to the place making, mobility and economic development goals enshrined by the ConsumersNext Guiding Principles, the implementation strategy of the future Secondary Plan will need to include a clear growth management strategy. This strategy will tie development potential, particularly in the Mixed Use Corridor Districts and the Node, to the implementation of infrastructure necessary to relieve transportation capacity issues observed and analysed through the Transportation Master Plan process.

Provisions will need to be developed for the use of a Holding (H) Symbol in the zoning of parcels along the Mixed Use Corridor Districts. Holding provisions are required to ensure the satisfactory implementation of transportation infrastructure necessary to support new development, specifically higher order transit along Sheppard Avenue East and the Settlers Road extension from Consumers Road to Victoria Park Avenue. Landowner agreements may also be an appropriate mechanism by which to implement phased infrastructure improvements. Similarly, establishing a framework for community benefit contributions pursuant to Section 37 or 45 of the *Planning Act* would also be necessary to implement directions related to community services and facilities.

Early Implementation

The growth anticipated by the future ConsumersNext Secondary Plan will be incremental and the strategic directions presented from an implementation standpoint are generally associated with medium and long-term goals. However, some early implementation measures could be advanced to provide early momentum to the economic development component of this study and lay the groundwork for future success in the medium and long-term horizons.

A number of the recommendations of this report are geared towards a rolling implementation of study findings, in advance of the adoption of a Secondary Plan by City Council. The adoption of this Proposals Report outlines Council's position regarding the policy direction for the future Secondary Plan Area. Applications for development approval in the area submitted in advance of a Secondary Plan coming into force should be reviewed against the findings of the ConsumersNext Planning Study and the directions presented in this report. The first three phases of ConsumersNext represent a level of review and analysis which established goals for the area with the input of the community and key stakeholders that goes beyond the policy framework provided for by SASP 386. Applications submitted in advance of a new Secondary Plan should not preclude the achievement of these goals and may not be advanced if they are in conflict with these directions.

Similarly, any upcoming municipal capital projects in the area should be informed by the findings of the Planning Study. Streets in the study area that are scheduled for near term resurfacing projects should be reconstructed in a way that reflects the street cross sections developed through ConsumersNext which advance public realm improvements. Implementing the streetscape treatments developed through this process would modernize and upgrade the area's pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

The investment in the enhanced public realm would also signal the City's commitment to amenitize the Consumers Road Business Park, potentially attracting similar investment in improvements on private lands by the business community.

An example of early private sector investment could include the provision of amenities through interim solutions such as "box parks", where shipping containers are customized as small pop-up restaurants or service uses to provide the small scale retail opportunity so often cited as lacking in the business park. An example of this type of use can be found at Bathurst Street and Dundas Street West, where a small coffee shop and retail uses are clustered in repurposed shipping containers around Scadding Court Community Centre. A larger version of this concept is being developed for Build Toronto lands at Bathurst Street and Front Street West. These interim uses can develop along the Consumers Road Main Street with limited capital investment by landowners in the business park and establish a market prior to more substantial investment in a more permanent solution.

Spurring early private sector investment will involve removing disincentives to the redevelopment process in the form of unnecessary cost burdens. The Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) currently levies education development charges on a per square foot of gross area for non-residential development. During the consultation process with local business owners, this additional cost, although small in terms of the total cost of redevelopment, was cited as a disincentive for implementing desired city building outcomes such as replacing surface parking spots with structured parking. The Economic Potential Study Final Report recommends that the City pursue options to discontinue or substantially reduce the Education Development Charge for non-residential development. This issue could be raised through consultation with the TCDSB through the school board's next update to its Education Development Charges By-law which expires in June 2018.

The final early implementation measure is for Economic Development, in partnership with City Planning, to host a Business Forum to follow up on the successful January 2016 forum. This second forum would initiate discussions with respect to the potential to establish a business association for the business park as well as exploring how tenant enhancement incentives could spur additional investment and expansion in employment uses in the existing stock of buildings. The building enhancements and retrofits to be explored could modernize the business park and advance broader goals related to economic development, energy efficiency and resiliency. These discussions can build on the lessons learned through ConsumersNext and see what could be applicable to other areas in the City of Toronto to strengthen office-oriented business parks with older non-Class 'A' building stock outside of the downtown core.

What's Next?

Through ConsumersNext's first three phases, a vision has emerged for the future Secondary Plan Area of a modern, business park surrounded by a pedestrian-oriented mixed use community anchored by future higher order transit stops along Sheppard Avenue East. Implementing this vision will require a suite of planning tools and targeted actions strategically guided by a new Secondary Plan. The development of the new policy framework and implementation strategy will advance using the directions contained in the attached consultant studies and highlighted in this report. This process

will be guided by public engagement with the local community, businesses and landowners to incorporate refinements before the staff report on drafts of the Secondary Plan and accompanying implementation documents are brought forward to Planning and Growth Management Committee later this year.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: ConsumersNext Demonstration Plan
Attachment 2: Summary of Guiding Principles and Policy Directions for a ConsumersNext Secondary Plan
Attachment 3: ConsumersNext: Final Report May 11, 2017
Attachment 4: ConsumersNext Economic Potential Study Phase 2: Final Analysis and Recommendations
Attachment 5: ConsumersNext Transportation Master Plan Final Report


Attachment 1: ConsumersNext Demonstration Plan



Attachment 2 - Summary of Guiding Principles and Policy Directions for a ConsumersNext Secondary Plan



The future of the ConsumersNext study area is that of a vibrant modern business park which is an attractive, transit oriented location for employment investment and well connected to a walkable mixed use community along Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue. To achieve this future, a Secondary Plan will be prepared based on the Guiding Principles developed through the ConsumersNext study. The Guiding Principles would be used to frame key policy directions which have emerged through the first three phases of ConsumersNext.

Principle: Define and Enhance Places & Liveability 
Define the identity of the ConsumersNext study area and enhance the liveability of the place for residents, workers and users with high quality streets, parks, open spaces and community services and facilities.

Locate and design buildings to support and create active edges to public spaces at appropriate scales to provide a welcoming environment.

Policy Directions:

- Divide the proposed Secondary Plan Area into smaller places to focus the character of each area while creating an identity and structure for the business park and new residential neighbourhoods.
- Secure new public streets, public parks and pedestrian connections to improve the pedestrian experience with a series of connected and publicly accessible open spaces.
- Establish a hierarchy of density within the ConsumersNext area to ensure that future mixed use development is appropriately located close to future higher order transit and fits within the structure of the City along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor.
- Establish specific performance standards for development in Mixed Use Corridor Districts and the Sheppard & Victoria Park Node to ensure new buildings are appropriately scaled for their context.
- Provide flexible performance standards for development in the Employment Areas to support the public realm but allow for adaptability to the varied building formats as needed for employment uses in the Business Park.
- Enhance existing community infrastructure within walking distance of the Study Area and create Community Commons around transit stops to locate services and facilities such as agency space and a new child care.

Principle: Connect and Move

Create balanced transportation options to get to and move through the business park and surrounding area by improving connections for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders.

Policy Directions:

- Implement the Sheppard East LRT "Plus" solution evaluated through the Transportation Master Plan to shift mobility behaviour away from private automobile uses and promote active modes of transportation to maximize capacity of the transportation network.
- Balance land uses to promote shorter trips and enhance choice and connectivity for workers and residents, and improve the transportation experience for active transportation users.
- Implement a new finer grain street network to benefit all mobility users. Create an extension of Settlers Road to provide a crucial link from Victoria Park Avenue to the heart of the business park.
- Enhance the active transportation infrastructure including improved pedestrian and cycling connections at the two highway interchanges.
- Implement innovative mobility technologies and parking strategies.
- Explore the feasibility of regional transit integration.
- Advance interim improvements to transit facilities with the potential to be made permanent after the construction of the LRT.
- Monitor transportation improvements to provide for the ability to implement priority pieces of transportation infrastructure prior to development.

Principle: Support & Promote Business

Enhance the area's attractiveness as a place to do business by encouraging more complementary uses for workers and residents, and ensuring a robust mobility network and community services and facilities.

Policy Directions:

- Promote amenitization of the Business Park through greater zoning flexibility for retail and recreation uses, amenity in strategic locations and improvements to the public realm within the future Secondary Plan area.
- Make the necessary capital investments for transit improvements, transit stop amenity, streetscape improvements and complete streets to improve the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to, from and within the area.
- Explore the potential of establishing an incentive program to support the expansion of employment opportunities within the existing stock of office buildings.
- Establish a business association for the Consumers Road Business Park with the potential to become a Business Improvement Area (BIA) to advocate on behalf of businesses in representing common interests and co-ordinating implementation of transportation, branding and marketing initiatives.
- Provide certainty in the development approvals process while maintaining enough flexibility in performance standards to account for the varied building program needs for different establishments that may be looking to develop in the area.