

## Renew Sheppard East Planning Review

# Consultation Summary

*This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of comments received, but instead provides a high-level summary of participant feedback and key themes. Many of the themes below were captured throughout the Renew Sheppard East Planning Review Study and release of the draft Official Plan Amendment via feedback received by email, phone, social media, and other means.*

*If you have any questions after reviewing this summary and the appendix, please contact Michael Romero, Planner, Community Planning, City of Toronto at [michael.romero@toronto.ca](mailto:michael.romero@toronto.ca) or 416-395-6747.*

### Overview of Public Consultation

The City of Toronto – City Planning and Development Review has hosted open houses and virtual meetings for the Renew Sheppard East Planning Review. Meetings were also hosted by the Study team to present Development Scenarios. The Study team last held an in-person open house on September 24, 2024 at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in North York to present the draft Official Plan Amendment and associated plans and maps. Consultation materials from the latest meeting are available online on the [project website](#):

The Study team held consultation to:

- Obtain community feedback on existing built form and public realm conditions, and understand the community vision for the area;
- Ensure engagement and awareness of the study by landowners, businesses, and the public at large; and
- Present development scenarios and draft Official Plan amendments, including maps and plans that are based on the findings of the Renew Sheppard East Planning Review - refer to Figure 1 for a context map illustrating boundaries of the Plan area.

There were approximately 350 people who attended the open house meetings, excluding City Staff. Staff also conducted virtual engagement by using Social Pinpoint which resulted in an additional number of approximately sixty-five points of engagement. Staff also received email and phone calls from the broader public to provide feedback on the Study and draft Official Plan amendment.

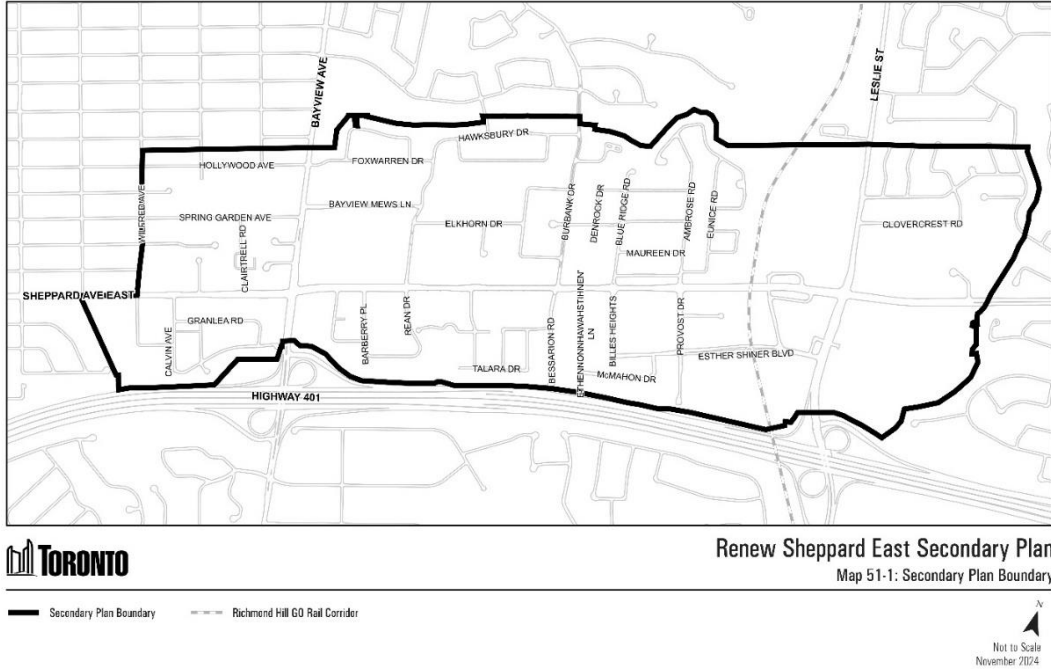


Figure 1: Context map of Renew Sheppard East Planning Review Plan area.

## Consultation Promotion Strategy

### Promotion

Community Engagement for the Study was conducted through open houses, notices, or using virtual engagement tools in the following ways:

- Through the City of Toronto's dedicated project website and on the City Planning Consultations webpage to post Community Consultation Meeting details;
- Shared via the City of Toronto social media webpages on platforms including Instagram as well as X (formerly known as Twitter) to a combined number of approximately 23,000 followers;
- Through coordinated e-blasts sent by local Councillor Carroll (Ward 17) and Councillor Cheng (Ward 18) to local constituents;
- Through community consultation public notice meetings mailed through postal mail.

Staff took measures to provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Official Plan Amendment in the following ways:

- The draft Official Plan Amendment was posted on the project website on October 7, 2024, for a two week commenting period ending on October 21, 2024;
- The draft Official Plan Amendment commenting period was shared via City of Toronto social media webpages on platforms including Instagram as well as X (formerly known as Twitter) on October 10, 2024;
- Through an email notifying interested parties on October 17, 2024, to approximately 200 registered Interested Parties on the Renew Sheppard East Study listserv;
- Although the commenting period ended on October 21, Staff continued to receive and review comments until October 28.

## **Summary of Public Feedback**

City staff received comments throughout the Study on various themes and topics, including land use, public realm, parks and open spaces, availability of infrastructure, and sustainability, among others. Staff have reviewed and considered all feedback received. The following is a summary of the feedback received both for the Study and during the commenting period for the draft Official Plan Amendment.

### **Affordable Housing**

Several comments mentioned the need for developers within the Study area to continue to help fund affordable housing. In addition, many comments noted that affordable housing should be an important objective to be implemented through the Official Plan Amendment. In response to feedback, Staff have incorporated affordable housing as a key goal for the Official Plan Amendment. Further tools in the Official Plan will be used to fund affordable housing and through the development review process.

### **Built Form**

There were comments raised about the inclusion of high-rise development within existing low-rise neighbourhoods in proximity to transit stations as opposed to mid-rise built form.

Comments expressed wanting to see more mid-rise construction along Sheppard Avenue, and greater density located near transit and Highway 401. In response to feedback, the policies have provided direction to ensure a mix of building types near transit stations and mid-rise buildings along areas of Sheppard Avenue East. The policies support a range of building types to have a range of housing options.

Comments noted that higher density would strain the existing public transportation network, potentially resulting in transit service disruptions within the study area. Staff have incorporated policies into the recommended Official Plan Amendment to provide direction for required transportation system improvements and studies to assess the effects of proposed development on the transportation network.

Comments expressed concern regarding the draft Official Plan Amendment's use of numerical standards for built form policies. Comments noted that built form policies should be focused on desired planning outcomes rather than numerical standards to allow for design flexibility. Comments also noted that there should be flexibility within Plan policies for specific built form standards, including but not limited to building height, setback, encroachment, vehicle access, and street frontage and streetscape design requirements. Staff have reviewed the comments on the built form policies and have incorporated adjustments to the built form policies in the recommended Official Plan Amendment where additional flexibility was considered appropriate.

Comments were raised about building design to ensure they are sustainable, aesthetic and environmentally positive. In response to these comments, Staff have incorporated policies into the recommended Plan to encourage new buildings to minimize energy demand and to incorporate design features and massing to minimize heat loss and energy demand. The impact of buildings on the public realm was a consideration raised, including increased wind impacts. In support of existing Official Plan policies regarding wind impacts, the recommended Plan provides policy direction for certain large sites to provide thermal comfort studies.

## **Land Use Designations**

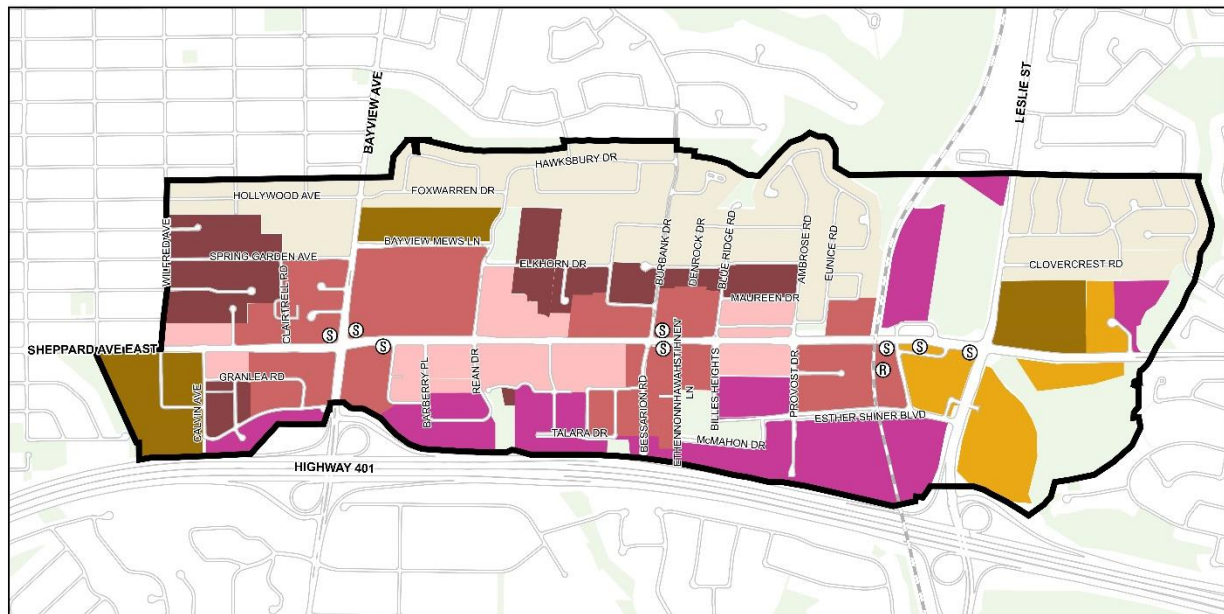
There was a mix of support and opposition to the application of *Mixed Use Areas* designations and retail use permissions to existing low-rise residential neighbourhoods. Staff noted that the *Mixed Use Areas* designation intends to promote a range of residential uses for housing and non-residential uses to encourage retail, office, and service uses. Staff also identified that there are areas that will remain designated *Neighbourhoods* which currently permit new small-scale

retail, service and office uses, subject to criteria in Chapter 4 of the Official Plan. The proposed land use designations support community feedback for more job opportunities through a range of non-residential uses, including office, retail, and service uses and more housing options.

## Character Areas

There were questions raised regarding lands within certain Character Areas based on the location of the sites and its proximity to nearby transit hubs. In response to these questions, the recommended Plan provides clarity on the intended building typologies in the Character Areas, including the areas for the tallest buildings in the Plan area and areas of transition.

Staff received questions regarding the purpose and function of Green Character Areas, including policies for the requirement of a block context plan, landscaping, lot coverage, and transition to parks and areas of lower scale. In response to comments, the recommended Plan has incorporated revisions to the policy language, while maintain the Plan's intent to maintain characteristics of these areas.



*Figure 2: Map of Renew Sheppard East Planning Review Character Areas*

## **Public Realm**

Staff received commentary about opportunities for more tree coverage and landscaping in the public right of way. Additionally, other comments were received about having pedestrian space that is well landscaped and provides improved space for pedestrian connectivity. In response to these comments, Staff have incorporated policies for the Green Loop to be a sustainable, landscaped connection that prioritizes people walking using mobility devices. Sustainability in the public realm was a key consideration to minimize impacts from stormwater runoff. The recommended Plan incorporates Green Loop policies encourage green infrastructure to support stormwater management.

Staff heard that Sheppard Avenue East is not very pedestrian oriented. To support a vibrant and green commercial Sheppard Avenue, the recommended Plan requires policies to support a wide area for rows of streets, a functional market zone, enhanced weather protection, and public art and features. The Plan also requires additional setbacks and publicly accessible privately owned spaces to encourage pedestrian activity at key intersections, including near transit hubs.

## **Parkland**

Comments requested that planned locations for future parkland be further expanded to accommodate for both the existing population of residents inclusive of an increasing number of young families, as well as the projected increased resident population within the Study area. There was also concern raised about the need to improve trail connections. In response to comments, the recommended Official Plan Amendment incorporates policies that identify parkland priorities, including expanding and enhancing the function of new parks, creating new parks, and complementing and integrating parkland with the adjacent natural heritage system and privately owned publicly accessible spaces.

Concerns were raised regarding the inclusion of conceptual park locations within the draft Secondary Plan. When suggesting these comments, the public raised the reduction of development potential of certain lands, conflicts with the high-rise buildings, and potential expropriation concerns for privately-owned lands. In response to these comments, the recommended Official Plan Amendment provides policy direction to indicate that the precise

size, location and configuration of Potential Future Parks and Parkland Priority will be determined through the development review process and as opportunities arise.

## **Community Services & Facilities**

Comments were provided pertaining to integration of additional educational facilities within high-rise developments throughout the Study area due to projected population growth. While local school boards independently determine the development of new educational facilities, the recommended Official Plan Amendment considers plans for future school accommodations by encouraging the incorporation of new community services & facilities within development.

Requests were also made to require other community facilities into new and existing developments. The recommended Official Plan Amendment has incorporated policies to indicate community service facilities priorities that include new non-profit licensed childcare facilities and new community space.

## **Employment**

Comments expressed support for incorporating employment land uses within new developments throughout the Study area, especially in the forms of commercial office uses and institutional healthcare uses. The recommended Official Plan Amendment has policies, land use designations, and Character Areas to provide for a wide range of non-residential uses including retail, office, and institutional uses to serve the community and provide a diversity of employment opportunities.

## **Infrastructure**

Comments identified concerns regarding the capacity of existing and future local infrastructure such as water, sewage, electricity, and roadways to support the planned density for the study area. Feedback noted that local infrastructure must provide residents with all essential services without interruptions, while also being able to accommodate for future development within local communities. Staff conducted a servicing analysis to assess servicing capacity based on the estimated population and employments projections that were derived from the demonstration models. The recommended Official Plan Amendment includes policies for the City to impose a Holding ("H") provision on any development that requires such upgrades and/or improvements.

The H provision may be lifted once the upgrades and/or improvements are installed and operational satisfactory to the City.

## **Natural Environment**

There were also comments provided about the protection of the natural heritage system, due to impacts from adjacent development on natural heritage. In support of the Official Plan policies, the recommended Official Plan Amendment has policies regarding the protection of the ecological and recreational functions of the Natural Heritage System. In addition, comments were raised regarding potential reduced permeability and increased flooding of local neighbourhoods due to dense redevelopment. The policies of the recommended Official Plan Amendment have incorporated policies to ensure development incorporate sustainability measures including, biodiversity, low impact development, and sufficient soil volumes.

There were also concerns raised through public feedback about impacts to the existing ravine areas and the use of existing paved pathways within these areas by motorized vehicles such as electric bikes and scooters. Where improvements are made for access to the network of pedestrian and cyclist connection, the policies of the recommended Official Plan Amendment require coordination with the local conservation authorities.

## **Transportation & Mobility**

Concerns were raised pertaining to traffic congestion and road safety issues being further increased by reduced traffic capacity caused by high-rise developments and multimodal infrastructure such as separated bike lane. The recommended Official Plan Amendment has implemented policies for traffic calming measures on streets to mitigate road safety concerns. Comments also noted that the public street network, and existing public transit services, must be expanded to accommodate for planned intensification within the Study area. The recommended Official Plan Amendment implements an approach to support multi-modal transportation to reduce congestion and support walking and cycling.

## **What happens to this feedback?**

This feedback is one component of input into the Renew Sheppard East Planning Review and recommended Official Plan Amendment. Other inputs include planning policy and inputs from local stakeholders, City Divisions, and external agencies. The Toronto City Planning and



Development Review Divisions have considered the feedback received in developing the recommended Official Plan Amendment. This recommended Official Plan Amendment has been updated as a consequence of the public and stakeholder input received through consultation throughout the Study and the draft Secondary Plan.