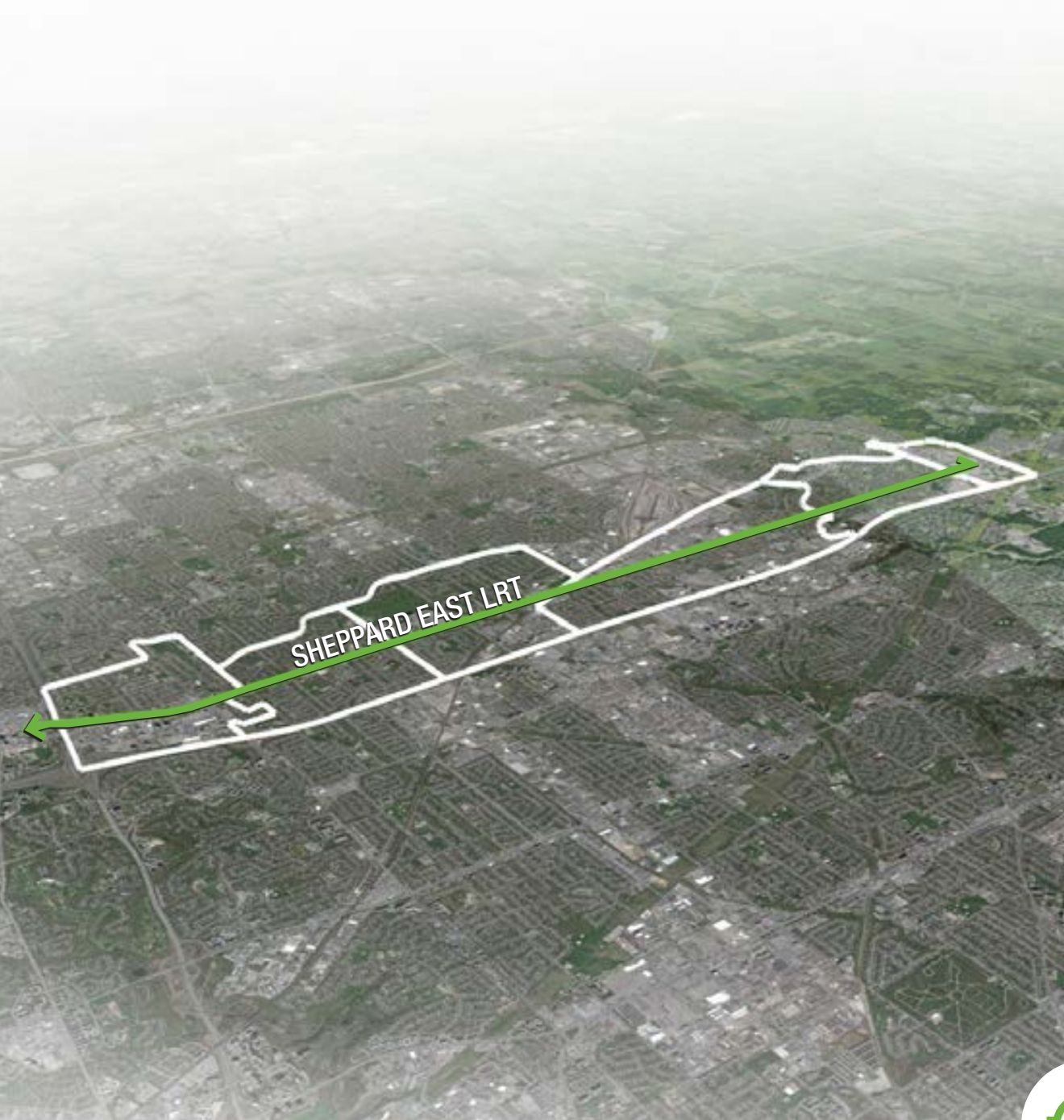


Setting the Stage:

Encouraging Transit Supportive Places on the Sheppard East LRT Corridor



METROLINX

August 2015

The “Setting the Stage: Encouraging Transit Supportive Places on the Sheppard East LRT Corridor” report was prepared by:

Consultant Team:

planningAlliance

N. Barry Lyon Consultants



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	iii
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 The Sheppard Avenue East Corridor Today	3
2.1 Existing Transit Experience	3
2.2 Existing Physical Context.....	5
2.3 Existing Demographic Context	8
2.4 Existing Social Equity Context	9
2.5 Existing Planning Framework.....	11
2.6 Existing Market Conditions	15
3.0 Lessons Learned	18
3.1 Minneapolis Hiawatha Line.....	18
3.2 Minneapolis-St. Paul Green Line.....	21
3.3 Calgary C-Train	26
3.4 Vancouver SkyTrain.....	29
3.5 Phoenix Valley Metro Light Rail.....	32
3.6 Houston METRORail.....	37
3.7 Denver FasTracks	39

4.0 Key Considerations for the Corridor.....	41
4.1 Market.....	41
4.2 Physical/Public Realm.....	43
4.3 Socio-Economic	43
4.4 Planning	45
5.0 Submarket Areas	49
Submarket Area 1: Consumers Road	51
Submarket Area 2: Warden	54
Submarket Area 3: Agincourt.....	56
Submarket Area 4: McCowan/Markham.....	60
Submarket Area 5: Neilson.....	63
Submarket Area 6: Water Tower.....	65

Appendix A: Real Estate Market Conditions Study

Appendix B: Demographic Profiles by Submarket Area (City of Toronto)

[This page intentionally left blank]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The proposed LRT along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor will catalyze change, delivering convenient and reliable higher-order transit to area residents, businesses and institutions – improving connections across the corridor and beyond. This investment will create a generational opportunity to reimagine the shape and character of the corridor, address long-standing issues, and welcome new residents and businesses.

Demographically, the area is changing. The population is aging and households are getting smaller. Employment is shifting away from traditional manufacturing and while average private household incomes are increasing across the corridor, they are still lower than the city average. New developments, concentrated in the western half of the corridor, are also changing the demographic profile of the area, introducing many younger and smaller households. The corridor performs generally well in terms of social need, and is generally in line with city-wide averages for most criteria, with the exception of localized issues related to diabetes and low income.

The corridor hosts a mature real estate market with strong demand for single-family grade-related homes and a productive market for high-rise building types. Construction of the LRT is expected to accelerate the demand for both types and further accelerate existing demand for high-rise housing types.

Goals and Objectives of the Study

The Study purpose is to identify approaches to maximizing the benefits of investment in LRT infrastructure along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor. It includes a detailed analysis of the real estate market conditions along the corridor and a review of the existing planning framework, physical conditions, and demographic trends. A series of case studies from jurisdictions across North America highlight approaches to leveraging LRT investments. Together, this analysis and these case studies aim to identify those areas along the corridor that may experience market pressure, provide planning and public realm considerations to support reinvestment and to remedy social need along the corridor.

Key Considerations for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

Below is a summary of the key considerations from this study for the overall corridor. The considerations are a result of information gathering and analysis, a detailed real estate market conditions analysis, case study review, collaboration with City Staff, and a review of existing conditions along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor.

Market

- The Sheppard Avenue East corridor in the area of the LRT proposal is already a moderately strong real estate market characterized by high resale prices and new investment in high density residential development. Investment and re-investment in commercial and office uses is also evident. The impact

of the LRT will likely help support new higher density developments where market conditions are currently marginal.

- In general, the western segment of the LRT corridor is beginning to emerge as a more complete community with a healthy mix of employment and residential uses in a variety of building types and densities. However, there is an apparent lack of park space in certain segments and a very car dominated street environment that likely needs improvement for the corridor to meet its full market potential.
- The accessibility and exposure to 400 series highways and the DVP initially underpinned the success of the Consumers Road Business Park Area (CRBPA). The introduction of the Sheppard Subway at Don Mills Station was the catalyst for high density residential development along the Sheppard frontage of the CRBPA. The introduction of the new, connecting LRT service is likely to enhance the market demand for new high density developments in this area.
- The new transit line will also help support reinvestment, primarily in residential uses, but also some office demand eastward to the Agincourt GO Station. Here there is an opportunity for a significant amount of new investment given the potential for several current or planned higher order transit lines (GO, LRT and subway) nearby. The area has already proven a successful high density market with several developments over the past 15 years. The opportunity for significantly intensified development in this area is very strong.

- Agincourt Mall occupies the northwest quadrant of Sheppard Avenue East and Kennedy Road, representing another important redevelopment opportunity. As the transit improvements become closer to reality, its demand for intensification for this property and others surrounding will become strong.
- The Employment Area between Brimley Road and Markham Road lacks the market position it once had which is reflected in low rents, high vacancies, and the low density/intensity nature of the uses. New transit will improve the appeal of the area; however there are other market issues that may need to be addressed to maximize the future potential of these lands.
- Beyond Markham Road, the opportunities for reinvestment are limited, due to the nature of development. The remainder of the corridor is dominated with stable, single family detached residential neighbourhoods abutting Sheppard Avenue East, which restricts new investment.

Physical/Public Realm

- Currently, the corridor offers little amenity or interest to passing pedestrians and/or cyclists, particularly along the eastern portion of Sheppard Avenue East. The corridor would benefit from the preparation of a detailed public realm plan in tandem with LRT design to identify streetscape improvements along Sheppard Avenue East, with regards to pedestrian crossings, improved comfort, landscaping, street furniture, way-finding, tree canopy and integration with active retail and/or residential uses.

- In addition, given that existing residential neighbourhoods in the eastern half of the corridor are characterized by a street network that is discontinuous that also includes many cul-de-sacs, it would be beneficial to conduct a detailed public realm analysis that identifies opportunities to improve connections between proposed LRT stops and neighbourhood destinations (area schools, institutions, community centres, or parks) by upgrading pedestrian and cycling infrastructure as required.
- To further complement the proposed LRT, there should be consideration for ways to implement safe and continuous cycling infrastructure throughout the corridor and to the broader cycling network to increase accessibility to the transportation network and to surrounding communities.

Socio-Economic

- The corridor performs generally well in terms of social need, and is generally in line with city-wide averages for most criteria, with the exception of localized issues related to diabetes and low income, specifically around Neilson Road. Generally, the issues that may be most directly resolved as a result of the LRT are related to access (i.e. proximity to green spaces, employment opportunities, walkability, etc.).
- The corridor will benefit most through comprehensive planning and the extension of connections into the adjacent neighbourhoods including feeder bus routes, pedestrian connections to parks, employment areas, mixed use areas, and other community spaces. The coordination of this comprehensive planning and the provision of a planning and public realm framework which

serves to support the LRT and surrounding neighbourhoods will better address the issues faced along the corridor.

- In addition to larger-scale initiatives, a number of key considerations identified in the study analysis can also address these issues. They include: making Community Benefit Agreements mandatory for all infrastructure projects over a certain dollar value; consideration for local business supports (e.g. free advertising on transit vehicles, design contests and other forms of outreach to schools, seniors' centres, community groups etc.) and provision of support during construction.

Planning

- **Conduct a Gap Analysis at a Corridor Level:** The western half of the corridor is identified as an Avenue in Toronto's Official Plan, allowing the City to help determine and describe the built form requirements for the area. At this time, one Avenue Study and three Avenue Segment Studies have been completed along Sheppard Avenue East. Additionally, the ConsumersNext Study is underway. There are 'gaps' in the built form guidelines along the full segment of the corridor between these areas. The City should consider completing Avenue Studies to fill in these 'gaps', in particular at the intersections of Pharmacy Avenue and Birchmount Road.
- **Ensure Appropriate Density, Form, and Character of Development:** Future intensification along the corridor would benefit from a careful consideration of the physical characteristics of the Sheppard Avenue East corridor which include: wide right-of-way (36m planned as per the OP); LRT

stop spacing that is wider compared pre-war streetcar routes; Relationship with employment districts (either across Sheppard Avenue East or adjacent); tower-in-the-park sites that share the characteristics outlined in Tower Renewal; and surrounding stable neighbourhoods.

- **Consider Transit-Supportive Densities:** Consider transit-supportive densities in certain locations along the corridor which could include minimum heights and/or densities. There is also the potential to reserve areas along the corridor for higher density built forms (e.g. mid-rise and taller buildings) once the market becomes favourable for this type of development.
- **Opportunities for Infill or Redevelopment:** There are opportunities for increased density and intensification through infill and/or redevelopment, particularly around existing malls, in Mixed Use Area sites (first priority) and some apartment sites (second priority). Recent residential intensification efforts in the city have led to increased benefits for existing and future residents.
- **Provision of a Robust Public Realm:** A comprehensive Public Realm Plan that considers key origins and destinations within 500m of the corridor would provide a framework for the full integration of the LRT into the existing and planned communities. A Public Realm plan can provide guidance on the design of streets, parks, open spaces, bicycle routes, public art and community buildings so that they are responsive to the local context and to community interests and needs.
- **Support of Employment Uses:** The Employment Lands policies found in the Toronto Official Plan are strong and supportive of the preservation of employment lands throughout the corridor. With the introduction of higher order transit along Sheppard Avenue East and associated development pressures that will promote more distant commuting to places of employment, it will prove beneficial to explore streetscape improvements to these employment areas to provide safe, comfortable and accessible pedestrian connections.
- **Integration with Adjacent Uses:** Connections between the LRT itself and adjacent neighbourhood and/or employment uses can be strengthened through the provision of improved bus services, streetscape improvements, and/or cycling infrastructure.
- **Area-Specific Considerations:** There is a significant opportunity for transformative planning along Sheppard Avenue East should the Scarborough subway extend through the area between Brimley Road and Markham Road. Understanding the impact of this potential major infrastructure and how it may affect surrounding neighbourhoods will prove beneficial in the long run in determining the vision for this corridor and how it may develop in the future.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The proposed LRT along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor will catalyze change, delivering convenient and reliable higher-order transit to area residents, businesses and institutions – improving connections across the corridor and beyond. This investment will create a generational opportunity to reimagine the shape and character of the corridor, address long-standing issues, and welcome new residents and businesses.

The Sheppard Avenue East corridor was largely planned, subdivided and developed in the 1960s. The planning of the time set out neighbourhoods and employment districts that rely heavily on private automobiles for transportation and benefit from the nearby highway (401, 404, and Don Valley Parkway) and rail (CN, GO, and CPR) connections that serve the corridor. Neighbourhoods and employment areas along the corridor are shaped by these transportation corridors.

Geographically, the corridor consists primarily of single detached homes and low-rise employment districts. A major cluster of office uses is located at the Consumers Road *Employment Area*, between Victoria Park Avenue and Highway 404. Small clusters of modernist “towers-in-the-park” are located around the intersections of Victoria Park Avenue and Birchmount Road in the western half of the corridor. A number of small neighbourhood-scale commercial centres are located at major intersections, while smaller strip commercial buildings are

distributed across the corridor. Significant, recent development activity has been concentrated at the western half of the corridor at Consumers Road, Pharmacy Avenue, and Kennedy Road. This new development has been predominantly high-rise in form, and residential in use.

The area is well serviced by a grid of arterial roads that also support a network of well-used and frequent buses. The Sheppard subway terminates at Don Mills Road, and will be the starting point of the planned LRT.

Demographically, the area is changing. The population is aging and households are getting smaller (Appendix B). Employment is shifting away from traditional manufacturing and while average private household incomes are increasing across the corridor, they are still lower than the city average. New developments, concentrated in the western half of the corridor, are also changing the demographic profile of the area, introducing many younger and smaller households. The corridor performs generally well in terms of social need, and is generally in line with city-wide averages for most criteria, with the exception of localized issues related to diabetes and low income.

The original Infrastructure and community facilities from the 1960s in the corridor are approaching the end of its useful life and will require significant capital improvements over the coming decades. Specific improvements have been made in tandem with new development and in anticipation of the proposed LRT (grade separation at the Agincourt GO line).

The corridor hosts a mature real estate market with strong demand for single-family grade-related homes and a productive market for high-rise building types. Construction of the LRT is expected to accelerate the demand for both types and further accelerate existing demand for high-rise housing types.

Goals and Objectives

The Study purpose is to identify approaches to maximizing the benefits of investment in LRT infrastructure along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor. It includes a detailed analysis of the real estate market conditions along the corridor and a review of the existing planning framework, physical conditions, and demographic trends. A series of case studies from jurisdictions across North America highlight approaches to leveraging LRT investments. Together, this analysis and these case studies aim to identify those areas along the corridor that may experience market pressure, provide planning and public realm considerations to support reinvestment and to remedy social need along the corridor.

2.0 THE SHEPPARD AVENUE EAST CORRIDOR TODAY

2.1 EXISTING TRANSIT EXPERIENCE

The Sheppard East Corridor is currently serviced by the 85 Sheppard East and 190 Scarborough City Centre Rocket bus routes which have a combined daily ridership of 36,500 passengers.

At the busiest points on the two lines during peak hours, they carry a total of 1,100 passengers per hour in the peak direction. The frequent bus service along Sheppard operates within mixed traffic and close together, causing back-to-back buses or “bunching”. The unreliability in traffic conditions has resulted in inconsistent travel times across the corridor.

The Sheppard East LRT represents a significant investment in expanded and improved transit in the City of Toronto. It is a light rail transit line that will run along the surface of Sheppard Avenue East from Consumers Road to east of Morningside Avenue and includes a tunnelled connection to Don Mills subway station. An Environmental Assessment was completed in 2009 by the City of Toronto and TTC, to find the preferred way of significantly improving transit service along Sheppard Avenue East from Don Mills Subway Station to Meadowvale Road. The study recommended that the existing bus service along Sheppard Avenue East be replaced with an LRT service. Since the Environmental Assessment, subsequent design work has been completed to address the preferred interchange at Don Mills. The project will be constructed following the completion of the Finch West LRT and will include:

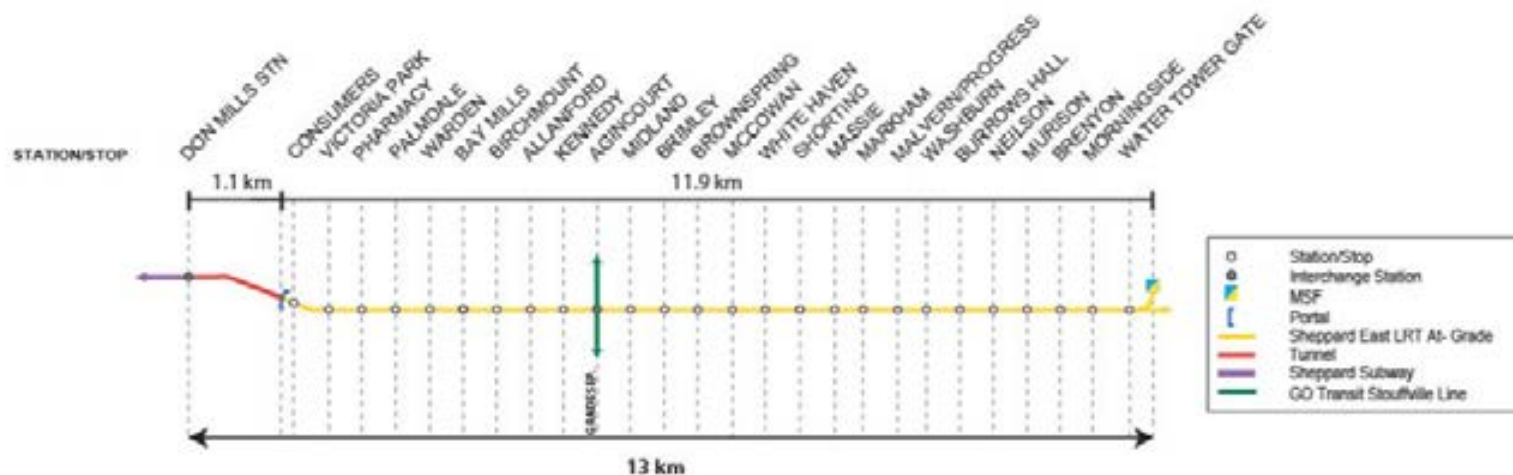


Figure 1. Sheppard East LRT - Station Stop Locations (Source: Metrolinx)

- 13 kilometres of light rail transit along Sheppard Avenue East from the planned Don Mills subway station to east of Morningside Avenue
- 1.1 kilometre tunnelled connection to Don Mills subway station
- Up to 26 surface stops along the alignment
- Rapid Transit Connections: Sheppard subway line, and the future Scarborough subway
- Total capital costs: \$1 billion (\$2010)
- Projected Ridership: 3,000 people per hour in the peak direction by 2031
- The Sheppard Maintenance and Storage Facility at Conlins Road is part of the Sheppard East LRT Alternative Finance Procurement package

The new LRT will bring speed, convenience and accessibility to daily commutes. The new Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) carry approximately 3 times the number of passengers as a bus, which will reduce overcrowding. It is estimated that the LRT will provide service that is over 20% faster than buses in mixed traffic today. The introduction of the Sheppard East LRT will relieve gridlock through the replacement of morning and afternoon peak period buses from existing lanes of traffic. The existing 36m ROW along the majority of Sheppard Avenue East will be able to accommodate the addition of the LRT trackway and maintain two lanes of through traffic in either direction. The LRVs will remain accessible with multiple entrances and low floors to ensure fast and accessible boarding.

2.2 EXISTING PHYSICAL CONTEXT

The eastern half of the Sheppard Avenue East corridor is largely defined by the surrounding transportation infrastructure while the western half is defined by the planning framework and recent redevelopment activity, resulting in two distinct halves, east and west of Midland Avenue.

The CP rail corridor and yard east of Midland Avenue, together with the Highway 401 physically constrain the eastern half of the corridor and limit north-south connections, as illustrated on Figure 2. North-south connections into the Tapscott/Marshalling Yard Employment District, Malvern Town Centre are often indirect, missing, or far apart. The built form in the eastern half consists of low rise residential with reverse frontage lots. The southern end of the Tapscott/Marshalling Yard Employment District represents approximately 20% of the frontage in this half of the corridor. Residential neighbourhoods in the eastern half are characterized by a street network that is discontinuous and includes many cul-de-sacs which are then augmented by pedestrian passages to improve connectivity to Sheppard Avenue East. The resulting public realm along Sheppard Avenue East offers little amenity or interest to passing pedestrians and/or cyclists.

The western half is not constrained by the rail corridor, and is served by approximately twice the number of north-south connections. The planning framework for the Agincourt area anticipated the construction of the Sheppard Subway to the Scarborough Town Centre on a route that ran south of the Sheppard Avenue East and north of Highway.

Together, these factors have contributed to the significant development activity in the area that is currently changing the character of the corridor. Highway 401 access contributes to incentivizing development activity and has resulted in high density development that is distant (+/-800m) from the proposed LRT (e.g. new developments at Midland Avenue). The residential streets in the western half of the corridor typically follow a broken grid pattern that is based on the original concession grid pattern. The public realm along Sheppard Avenue East is varied and includes a mix of areas that have been recently improved as part of redevelopment projects, areas of strip commercial retail that are largely deficient of trees and other amenities, and areas adjacent to high-rise apartment buildings that often benefit from adjacent landscaped open spaces.

The Sheppard Avenue East corridor is crossed by three tributaries of the Highland Creek and one tributary of the Rouge River. These watercourses along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor are typically smaller, located in narrow and shallow ravines, and often pass under Sheppard Avenue East in engineered culverts (rather than bridges). The surrounding topography is generally flat and well connected to Sheppard Avenue East.

The area around Midland Avenue is characterized by the remnants of the historic Village of Agincourt. Founded on the high ground next to Highland Creek in 1858, the area developed as an agricultural village centred on the Knox Presbyterian Church (now known as Knox United Church). The village grew considerably as two railroads established stations in close proximity: the Toronto and Nippising Railway (now CN) at the current Agincourt GO Station and a second station (now closed) at the intersection of the CP line (at Brimley Road).

The entire corridor is well served by parks and open spaces and terminates at the Toronto Zoo and Rouge Park in the east.



Neighbourhood of Agincourt Village (Source: Wikimedia Commons)



Knox Presbyterian Church, Agincourt Village
(Source: City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1568, f1568_it0221)

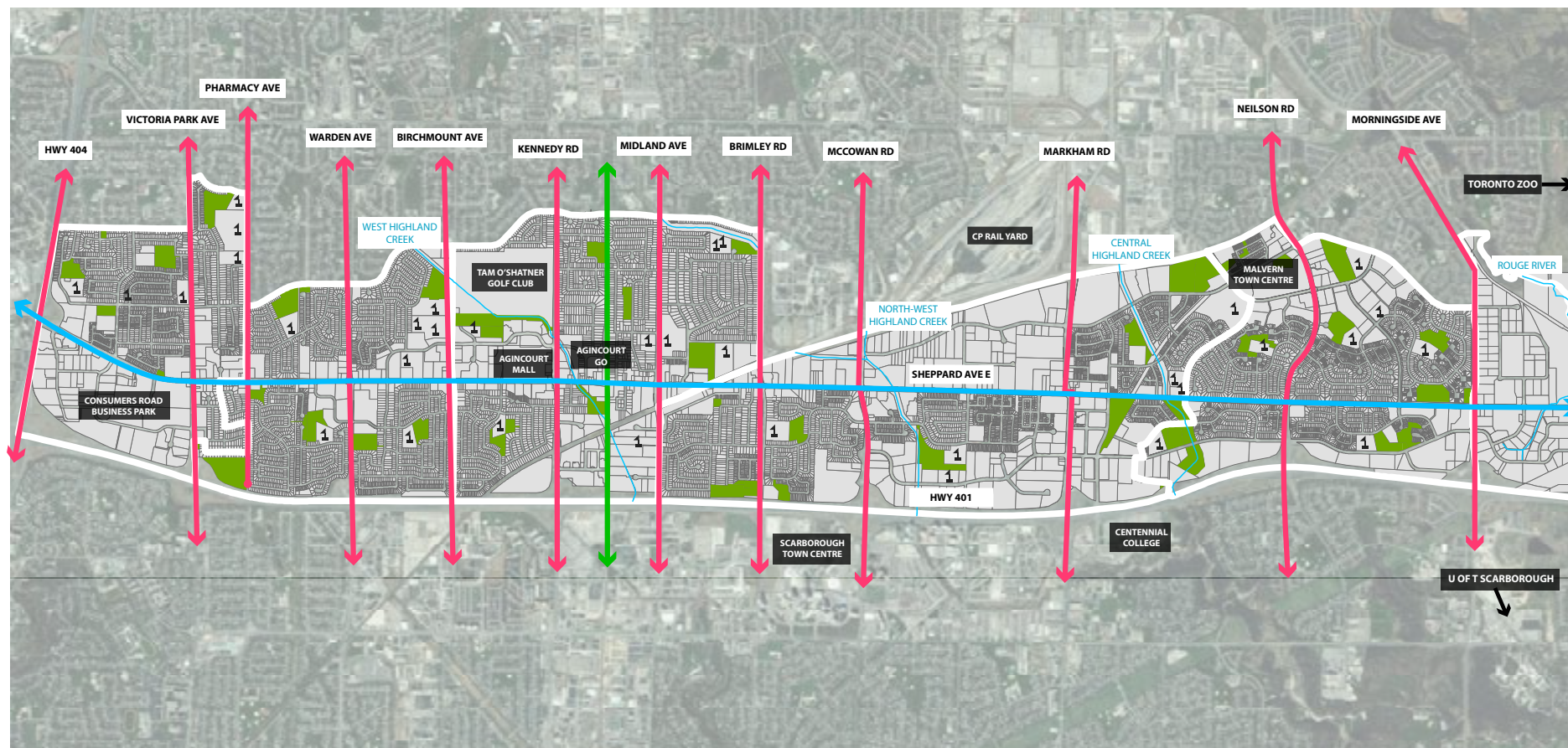


Figure 2. Sheppard Avenue East Corridor - Existing Physical Context

2.3 EXISTING DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Key indicators, such as average household income and level of completed education decline steadily from the west end of the corridor to the east, while other indicators such as the unemployment rate and the proportion of low income households increase in a similar pattern.

- Overall, the Sheppard Avenue East corridor has experienced low population growth between 2001 and 2011, growing by approximately 2% or 2,000 people over this time. This is likely the combined effect of declining household sizes which is compensated somewhat by new residential intensification.
- The area has larger household sizes and a larger proportion of multi-family households along the corridor, resulting in a higher average person per household than the City as a whole. This characteristic is more pronounced in the eastern end of the corridor where the average person per household is 3.1, compared to an average of 2.9 in the western end of the corridor and 2.5 for the City of Toronto. The higher person per household observed in the eastern end of the corridor could be a function of the more affordable ground-oriented housing stock, which is attractive for families.
- While the 2011 census has noted few housing completions between 2006 and 2011 along the SEC, the data does not reflect the newly

constructed condominium projects in the western end of the corridor that have been occupied after the survey period, which is a significant number of units. These projects are primarily located around the Consumers Road Business Park and within the Agincourt neighbourhood.

- The individuals living in these units are also not represented by the census data, which may have an impact on reported income, the rental population, transit ridership and many other key data sets.
- Incomes along the entire SEC (\$75,229) are below the average noted for the City (\$87,038) and are also increasing at a slower rate than the City at large, with incomes along the SEC increasing by 15.6% between 2001 and 2011 and the City increasing by 25.9% over the same period. Incomes are close to the average noted for the City in the western end of the corridor but decrease steadily toward the eastern end.
- Homeownership rates are also fairly high along the corridor, which is a reflection of the large percentage of ground-oriented homes and relatively higher incomes. This could have a bearing on the demand for housing from aging adults.
- The SEC also contains a significant supply of employment land and represents a major employment destination in the City of Toronto, accommodating approximately 4% of the City's total jobs.¹

¹ City of Toronto Employment Survey 2011

2.4 EXISTING SOCIAL EQUITY CONTEXT

Neighbourhoods along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor were analyzed from a social equity perspective, in an effort to identify opportunities where the transit infrastructure, and associated investment, could improve existing conditions in the corridor.

Key socio-economic considerations for the Sheppard Avenue East corridor are provided in Section 4.0. The social baseline relied upon by this study is grounded in work completed for the *Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020*, in particular the Neighbourhood Equity Index (NEI) and associated indicators which

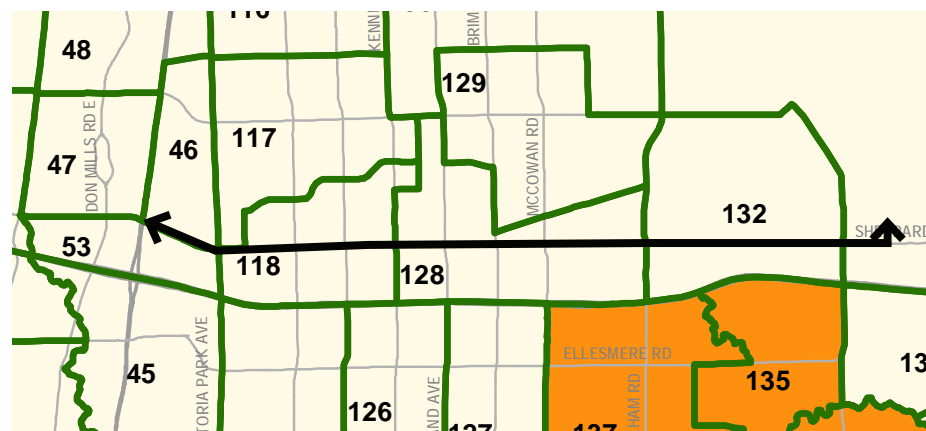


Figure 3. Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (Source: City of Toronto)

were used to identify Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIA). The NEI score for each neighbourhood is derived from indicators of neighbourhood inequity which describes how neighbourhoods in Toronto are faring relative to others. These indicators are listed in Table 1. Further information regarding the indicators can be found in the *TSNS2020 Neighbourhood Equity Index: Methodological Documentation* report².

Benchmarks for each indicator were used to determine whether neighbourhoods met or fell below established targets.

The following neighbourhoods were analyzed along the Sheppard Avenue east Corridor (none of which have been identified as an NIA):

- Neighbourhood No. 46: Pleasant View
- Neighbourhood No. 117: L'Amoreaux
- Neighbourhood No. 118: Tam O'Shanter-Sullivan
- Neighbourhood No. 128: Agincourt South-Malvern West
- Neighbourhood No. 132: Malvern

Neighbourhoods along Sheppard Avenue East often fall below meeting benchmarks for individual indicator set out in the *TSNS2020 NEI: Methodological Documentation* report (Table 1). The following is a summary of the key characteristics of these neighbourhoods:

- Localized issues related to diabetes, low income and low rates of post-secondary completion in the eastern neighbourhoods, specifically around Neilson.
- Average scores for most indicators across all neighbourhoods including: walkability, proximity to healthy food stores, access to green space and community places for meeting, unemployment rates and incidences of diabetes.
- Low rates of premature mortality across all neighbourhoods.

Table 1. Sheppard Avenue East Corridor Indicator-Benchmark Results

Indicator	46	117	118	128	132
1. Unemployment	●	●	●	●	●
2. Low Income	●	●	●	●	●
3. Social Assistance	●	●	●	●	●
4. High School Graduation	●	●	●	●	●
5. Marginalization	●	●	●	●	●
6. Post-Secondary Completion	●	●	●	●	●
7. Municipal Voting Rate	●	●	●	●	●
8. Community Places for Meeting	●	●	●	●	●
9. Walkability	●	●	●	●	●
10. Healthy Food Stores	●	●	●	●	●
11. Green Space	●	●	●	●	●
12. Premature Mortality	●	●	●	●	●
13. Mental Health	●	●	●	●	●
14. Preventable Hospitalization	●	●	●	●	●
15. Diabetes	●	●	●	●	●

- Below Benchmark
- In Between/Average
- Meets Target

2.5 EXISTING PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Sheppard Avenue East corridor has two distinct halves where the east and west have different development potential and opportunities for investment.

West of Midland Avenue, the corridor benefits from a planning framework which supports future growth and intensification compatible with the future Sheppard East LRT. The area east of Midland Avenue enjoys a healthy market for low-rise single-family residential, however there is limited market interest in high-rise, due to existing land uses and the lack of proximity to existing higher-order transit.

Provincial Policy

The Sheppard Avenue East corridor is considered under a number of Provincial policies and plans that shape the way the corridor will grow and redevelop into the future. These include the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan), The Big Move Regional Transportation Plan and Transit Supportive Guidelines.

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS contains a number of transit-supportive planning policies that all Ontario communities must be consistent with which include: integrating transportation and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; identifying growth areas, nodes and corridors; an emphasis on intensification and the

creation of a more compact urban form; promoting a land use pattern, density and mix of uses that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support transit as a viable mode choice; and, protecting corridors and rights-of-way for transit and transit-related facilities.

The Growth Plan provides municipalities with a 25-year framework to manage growth, promoting intensification and transit-supportive densities. The Growth Plan requires that Intensification Corridors, which include Sheppard Avenue East, are planned to achieve increased residential and employment densities that support and ensure the viability of existing and planned transit service levels. Further, the Growth Plan requires that by the year 2015 and for each year afterwards, a minimum of 40% of all residential development (annually) will be within the built-up area.

The Growth Plan also emphasizes the creation of complete and livable communities. The objective is to create communities with a better mix of uses that are walkable and transit-oriented, while preserving employment areas for future economic development. In support of the Growth Plan, the Sheppard East LRT will provide connections between transportation modes; contribute to a balance of transportation choices; reduce reliance on a single mode; and promotes transit, cycling and walking as viable means to access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

In concert with the Growth Plan, The Big Move provides a common vision for transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area which includes building

a comprehensive regional rapid transit network. The Big Move builds on the direction and policies set out in the Growth Plan. In support of Intensification Corridors, The Big Move provides new transit service along several corridors including the Sheppard Avenue East corridor. The future LRT will promote development and connect communities to employment and training opportunities throughout the GTHA.

The Transit Supportive Guidelines are province-wide in scope and are intended to assist municipalities in implementing the policies and objectives of the PPS and the Growth Plan. The guidelines were developed by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and provide strategies related to transit-supportive planning, design and best practices in transit operations, and ridership growth strategies for implementation across communities of all sizes. The guidelines include illustrative diagrams on intensification over time along intensification corridors and station areas.

City of Toronto Policies

At the municipal level, a number of plans and guidelines apply including the City of Toronto Official Plan (OP), ConsumersNext Study and Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Performance Standards.

The Toronto Official Plan encourages development described in the Growth Plan and The Big Move through a number of policies that contribute to the creation of a comprehensive, high quality and affordable transit system, and vibrant complete communities that have integrated open spaces and recreational

opportunities. Through the identification of an Urban Structure and land use designations, the Official Plan encourages the preparation of planning studies, context-sensitive infill development, improved streetscape and pedestrian environments, a variety of housing types and tenures, the preservation and support of employment areas and a broad range of commercial, residential, and institutional uses. For example, the City recently launched its Consumers Next Study for the Consumers Road Business Park and lands around its Sheppard and Victoria Park intersections.

Avenues have only been identified along the western portion of the Sheppard Avenue East corridor, from Don Mills Road until west of McCowan Road. One Avenue Study has been completed at Sheppard Avenue East and Warden Avenue. To facilitate and shape growth, these studies set out investments in community improvements (streetscape, transportation, parks and open space, infrastructure) and contextually appropriate zoning and other regulations (permitted uses, maximum density and heights, parking standards, appropriate massing, scale, siting and organization of buildings, etc.).

Geographically, the majority of the Sheppard East corridor is characterized by *Neighbourhoods* and *Employment Areas* land use designations with Mixed Use Area designated lands close to Sheppard Avenue East itself (Table 2). The *Neighbourhoods* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods* designations are generally stable land uses where the intent of the Toronto OP is to protect and preserve these areas.

Table 2. Sheppard Avenue East Corridor Land Use Proportions

Land Use	Proportion of Corridor
Neighbourhoods	49.66%
Apartment Neighbourhoods	4.59%
Mixed Use Areas	6.39%
Natural Areas	3.37%
Parks	5.87%
Other Open Space Areas	2.4%
Institutional Areas	0%
Employment Areas	26.13%
Utility Corridors	1.59%
Regeneration Areas	0%

On *Neighbourhoods* designated lands lower scale buildings such as detached houses, semi-detached houses, townhouses as well as four-storey walk-up apartments are permitted. *Neighbourhoods* also provide for parks, low scale local institutions, cultural and recreational facilities and small-scale retail, service, and office uses. Proposals for intensification on major streets in *Neighbourhoods* are not encouraged by the policies of the Official Plan.

Similarly, *Apartment Neighbourhoods* are considered stable areas with limited opportunities for infill development, where appropriate. On *Apartment Neighbourhoods* designated lands, apartment buildings, parks, local institutions, cultural and recreational facilities, and small-scale retail, service, and office uses are permitted.

On *Employment Areas* designated lands, offices, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, research and development facilities, utilities, parks, hotels, and ancillary retail uses are permitted. Land uses that detract from the economic function of employment lands will not be permitted to locate in *Employment Areas*.

On *Mixed Use Areas* designated lands, growth and change may be encouraged. A broad range of residential, commercial and institutional uses are permitted on *Mixed Use Areas* lands. Development criteria include: appropriate transition in massing near lower intensity areas, particularly near designated *Neighbourhoods*; limiting shadow impacts; framing of street edges and parks; and provision of good site access, circulation, and adequate supply of parking.

The corridor includes one Secondary Plan at Sheppard Avenue East and Kennedy Road. The Agincourt Secondary Plan (1999) was developed to address a post-subway planning vision for the Agincourt area. The Agincourt Secondary Plan provides direction on new road connections as well as increased residential densities. The Plan is scheduled for review, pending transportation work related to Smarttrack/RER and the Scarborough Subway proposed alignment.

In light of more office and residential growth anticipated in westernmost end of the corridor, the City has initiated its ConsumersNext Study that will look for ways to enhance the Consumers Road Business Park and areas around the Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue intersection to manage the growth, support employment uses, and to direct investments into broader community

improvements. ConsumersNext will set out a new planning framework to support continued employment investment and intensification in the Consumers Road Business Park, residential uses, community facilities, a street and block plan, and public realm improvements to serve resident and working populations.

Along the western portion of the corridor, Sheppard Avenue East is an OP identified *Avenue* which encourages reurbanisation. However along the eastern portion of the corridor, Sheppard Avenue East is not an identified *Avenue* and consists mainly of large employment lands and back-lotted residential neighbourhoods with limited reurbanisation opportunities. Along the western

portion of the corridor, where Sheppard Avenue East is an identified as an *Avenue*, only one Avenue Study has been completed and 3 Avenue Segment Studies have been completed. There is great opportunity here to “fill in the gaps” of the planning framework along this portion of Sheppard Avenue East between the ConsumersNext study area, the Sheppard/Warden Avenue Study and the Agincourt Secondary Plan.

Corridor-wide considerations for the planning framework along Sheppard Avenue can be found in Section 4.0.

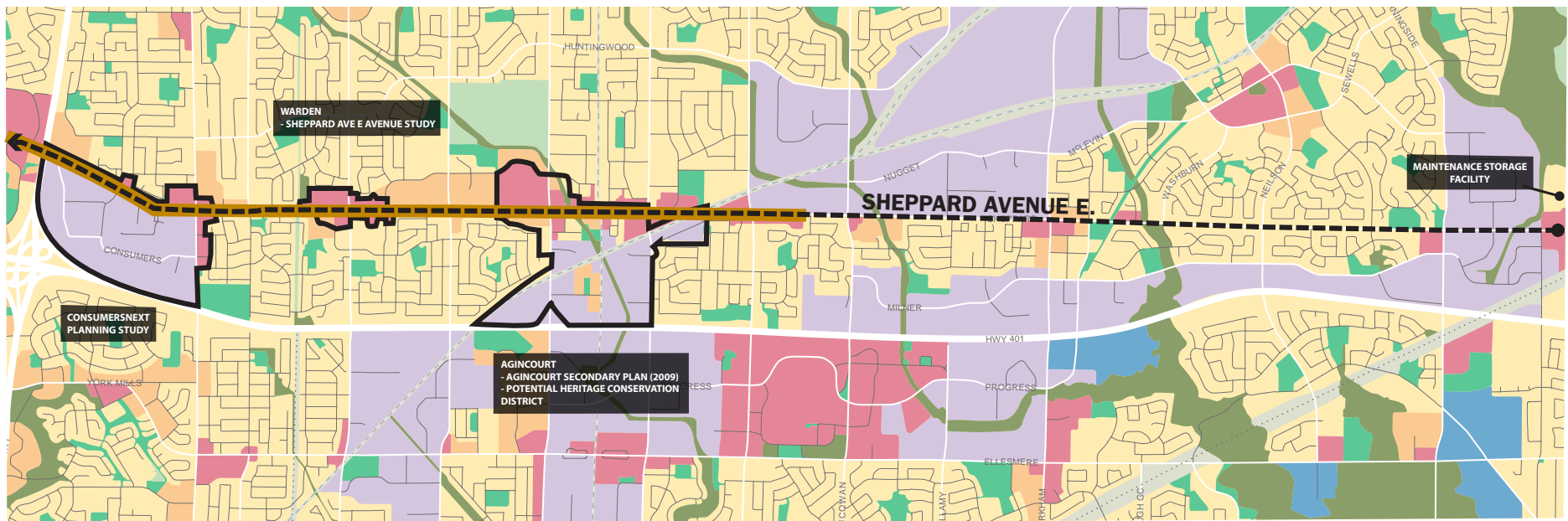


Figure 4. Sheppard Avenue East Corridor - Existing Planning Framework

2.6 EXISTING MARKET CONDITIONS

Overall, the market for residential and commercial real estate has been positive, with strength focused on the western end of the corridor near the Consumer Road Business Park. Demand in terms of development activity, applications, and land transaction is also focused in the area surrounding the Agincourt Mall, and the Kennedy and 401 intersection. The Agincourt GO Station may have the potential to be a Mobility Hub through Metrolinx and SmartTrack initiatives. In the eastern segments, apart from a modest amount of activity at the Markham Road intersection, real estate demand has been modest largely due to the lotting pattern and stable Neighbourhood Areas along the flanks of Sheppard Avenue East.

The Resale Market

- The local resale market is an important indicator of market strength. It illustrates the relative attractiveness of the area for each class of residential development. It also frequently provides an indication of the propensity of someone to sell a home, especially empty nesters, and move to a condominium.
- Table 3 illustrates the very strong market conditions for existing homes along the corridor. The pricing achieved for detached homes (over \$664,000) suggests support for higher density housing forms.
- The sales to listing ratio (SLR) for freehold residential properties across the corridor was 90%, indicating conditions of a seller's market. A seller's

market is a condition characterized by a market where demand outweighs supply, where homes can sell quickly and for a higher price.

- However, nearly 47% of all housing units on the market between February 2014 and 2015 were condominium apartment units, 67% of which sold, indicating strong market acceptance for high density living.

The High Density Residential Market

- As of January 30th, 2015, there were 542 high-rise condominium units remaining for sale across 5 projects.
- Overall, end-pricing for actively marketing condominium apartment projects along Sheppard Avenue East ranged from \$181,500 to \$625,000.
- As of January 30th, 2015, the average index selling price for the projects surveyed was \$499 per square foot (PSF), compared to \$558 for the GTA as a whole (based on the remaining inventory.)
- In terms of total sales, approximately 71% (1,323 units) have sold, leaving an unsold inventory of 542 units spread across the five actively marketing projects. Based on this absorption rate, approximately one year of supply is remaining, assuming no new projects
- The majority of these projects were focused on the western sector of the corridor, close to the Don Mills Subway station and at Metrogate – a large Tridel project near the Agincourt GO station area. Transit has played a significant role in the marketing of these sites.

- Stacked townhomes are increasingly popular among first time buyers and single persons who cannot afford a townhome and are not attracted to high density apartment living. However, in the Sheppard Avenue East corridor they are not currently a significant influence with only two projects currently in the market.

Table 3

Sheppard East Corridor Resale Transactions February 2014 - February 2015							
Product Type	Listings	Sales	SLR*	Average List Price	Average Sold Price	SLP**	Avg DOM***
Attached/Row/Townhouse	74	66	89%	\$376,055	\$377,649	100%	16
Detached	636	567	89%	\$661,476	\$664,223	100%	16
Semi-Detached	265	242	91%	\$520,019	\$536,386	103%	17
Freehold Total/Average:	975	875	90%	\$601,366	\$607,251	101%	16
Condominium - Apartment	1247	839	67%	\$264,270	\$245,345	93%	43
Condominium - Townhome	465	416	89%	\$348,755	\$351,234	101%	23
Condominium Total/Average:	1712	1255	73%	\$287,217	\$280,444	95%	36
*SLR = Sold to List Ratio **SLP = Sold to List Price Ratio ***DOM = Days on Market Source: Toronto Real Estate Board, Multiple Listing Service							

Table 4

Active High-Rise Condominium Overview	
# of Projects	5
# of Units	1,865
# of Sales	1,323
% Sold	71%
Min. Price	\$181,500
Max. Price	\$625,000
Min. Home Size (SF)	388
Max. Home Size (SF)	1,248
Average \$PSF (Curr)	\$499
Absorption	9.1
Source: Realnet Canada and N. Barry Lyon Consultants	

Commercial Office/Industrial Market

- Since 2001, the amount of jobs along the SEC has grown by approximately 6% or 3,100 jobs. This has largely been driven by growth in the office and institutional sector, which accounted for an increase of approximately 3,200 and 1,100 jobs respectively between 2001 and 2011.
- The focus of the office market in the corridor is the Consumers Road Business Park area that benefits heavily from the access and exposure to Highway 401 and the DVP. Over 18,142 office jobs were located in this area as of 2011.³
 - The intrusion of high density residential uses and several new places of worship have created concern that the viability of the area as an office/commercial centre will be undermined.
 - Places of worship conflict with the planned function and marketability of a business park as noted by the City's study of places of worship in the Consumers Road Business Park.⁴ The major impacts can include traffic congestion, the consumption of land that could be occupied by commercial or industrial space, property tax burdens, and detracting from the professional and corporate image of the business park.
- While the Consumers Road Business Park area is considered stable, there has been little recent evidence of market interest for new office development along the SEC. While the western end of the corridor is likely to be more attractive for new office projects than the eastern end, no significant market interest has been observed.
- A growing population along the corridor should begin to support new retail uses in the areas. Standalone facilities and strip retail are expected to become less commonplace, especially in the western end of the corridor where retail is expected to be primarily accommodated on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings.
- The major employment area in the eastern end of the corridor, north of Sheppard Avenue East and between Brimley and Markham Road, features a range of commercial and industrial buildings, all in low density formats, and built in the 1960s or more recently. Rents are typically low and vacancies high. The presence of several places of worship and a City waste transfer facility also weaken the appeal of the area.
- Transit will help improve the marketability of this employment area by increasing its accessibility but given the low density/intensity nature of the uses, the impact in terms of reinvestment is expected to be modest.

³ Malone Given Parsons Ltd., Sustainable Competitive Advantage and Prosperity – Planning for Employment Uses in the City of Toronto – October 2012

⁴ City of Toronto; Zoning By-law Amendment for the Consumers Road Employment Area – Final Report; 09 172371 NNY 33 OZ

3.0 LESSONS LEARNED

3.1 MINNEAPOLIS HIAWATHA LINE

The Blue Line LRT (formerly known as the Hiawatha line) runs between downtown Minneapolis, the airport, and the Mall of America in Bloomington. The Blue line was the first light rail project to be built in the Minneapolis area since the dismantling of the streetcar network in the 1950s. Construction began in 2001 and the line opened in 2004. The Blue Line runs for 19 km and has 17 stations.

Planning

Three Station Area Master Plans were in place by 2001 (for Lake Street, Franklin and 46th Street stations) but none of the station areas had been re-zoned when the line opened. In 2005, the year after the line opened, the City re-zoned the Lake Street station area, followed by the Franklin station area in 2007⁵.

While station area re-zoning has been slow, the City did create a new Transit Station Area land use category and pass public realm standards for the areas

⁵ Centre for Transportation Studies. The Hiawatha Line: Impacts on Land Use and Residential Housing Value. 2010. <http://www.cts.umn.edu/Publications/ResearchReports/reportdetail.html?id=2266>. 65.



Hiawatha Line Route Map (Source: iridetheharlemline.com)

within ½ mile of LRT stations. Bloomington updated its zoning around the LRT line near the airport, increasing the permitted density for commercial uses, setting a minimum residential density of 30 units/acre and restricting surface parking⁶.

Real Estate

A study by the Centre for Transportation Studies at the University of Minnesota demonstrated that single family houses near the line increased in value after the opening of the transit line and that proximity to LRT stations increases value. Properties on the east side of the line did not increase in value because the LRT abuts a 4-lane arterial road with a strip of industrial land. Residential properties east of the LRT are therefore 200m away from LRT line with a visual barrier between them. The LRT line is credited with producing an increase of \$47.1 million in residential property value between 2004 and 2007⁷.

The number of building permits for station areas show little change before and after the LRT line except for significant increases in permits around three stations; two of which had updated zoning. The greater rate of investment and building activity may be a result of completed planning processes in those station areas.⁸

6 Centre for Transportation Studies. The Hiawatha Line: Impacts on Land Use and Residential Housing Value. 2010. 68.

7 Center for Transportation Studies. The Hiawatha Line: Impacts on Land Use and Residential Housing Value. 2010. Executive Summary.

8 Center for Transportation Studies. The Hiawatha Line: Impacts on Land Use and Residential Housing Value. 2010. Executive Summary

Business Supports

The City of Minneapolis includes all LRT station areas in its Great Streets Neighbourhood Business District Program. Through this program, businesses can access business support grants, façade improvement matching grants, real estate development gap financing loans and small business loans⁹.

Community Engagement

At least one business improvement association along the LRT line offers discounts to shoppers who hold a transit pass or a current transfer. This serves to reinforce the transit accessibility of the corridor¹⁰.

The transit agency recruits volunteer Community Advisory Committees to act as community liaisons for more detailed public engagement work and to advise on initiatives such as public art at LRT stations¹¹.

9 City of Minneapolis. Great Streets Neighborhood Business District Program. http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/ba/cped_great_streets_home

10 City of Minneapolis. Case Study 1: East Lake Street. http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/convert_283242.pdf

11 Mill City Times. Volunteers Needed to Serve on Community Advisory Committees. March 24, 2015. https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/news/2015/03/24/302/volunteers_needed_to_serve_on_community_advisory_committees

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

Development activity around the Blue Line stations increased first around stations where updated zoning was in place. This offers a lesson for the Sheppard Avenue East corridor: when new transit infrastructure is going in, putting zoning in place to support transit-oriented scales of development as early as possible is a strong driver of new development. Where market interest is low, the addition of transit infrastructure alone may not be sufficient to incent new development. Removing the obstacle that the need for re-zoning presents is important for these areas to be redeveloped.

In Minneapolis, all businesses in station areas have access to economic development supports. Toronto may wish to examine its businesses support programs to ensure that existing businesses in the Sheppard East LRT station areas, as well as new businesses that may locate there, are able to access appropriate public supports so that their businesses will thrive.

3.2 MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL GREEN LINE

The Green line LRT connects downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis. It opened in June 2014. At 18 km and 23 stations, the trip between the two downtowns takes about 45 minutes. The ride took over an hour when the line first opened but was reduced through improved signal and traffic coordination.



Minneapolis-St. Paul Green Line Route Map (Source: metrotransit.org)

Planning

Before the Green Line opened, station area plans and new downtown plans for Minneapolis and St. Paul were in place. A new zoning code was created for St. Paul which allows for greater height and density, as well as eliminating minimum parking requirements in certain areas around light rail stations¹².

St. Paul approved plans in 2008 for the proposed station areas. Each area plans includes building scale standards for ¼ mile areas around the stations and public realm standards including identifying areas for public art and more green space. Each plan identifies and considers how to strengthen pedestrian, bicycle and bus access to each station including breaking up 'superblocks'¹³.

Increased Real Estate Market Activity

In 2013, the year before the LRT opened, building permit activity along the Green line's route showed a considerable increase over previous years. The value of building permits granted in 2013 represented a 49% increase since 2008¹⁴.

Funding for TOD

Using funding from the national Livable Communities Act, the regional Metropolitan Council makes grant and loan awards available to projects along the LRT corridors. Projects have included a \$1.5 million grant for a new four-storey, mixed-use building adjacent to the Hamline Avenue LRT transit station, and \$612,000 for clean-up of the Else Warehouse site in Minneapolis' warehouse district, which is now attracting mixed-use development¹⁵.

Build-out along the transit corridors is also being supported by the three-year Corridors of Opportunity program which is funded by two national programs beginning in 2011 (a \$5 million HUD Sustainable Communities grant, and \$2.7 million in grants and \$13 million in loans from the Living Cities Integration Initiative)¹⁶. Corridors of Opportunity financed seven affordable housing projects (creating 637 housing units), and supported eight mixed-use projects. It also funded community engagement initiatives. The program resulted in changes to the way the Metropolitan Council will plan higher-order transit including earlier and more substantial involvement of local residents and businesses¹⁷.

12 Mianulli, Kyle. Beyond The Rails: Mapping the Development, Cultural and Community Impact of the New Green Line. The Line. June 11, 2014. <http://www.thelinemedia.com/features/greenlinedevelopment06112014.aspx>

13 City of Saint Paul. City of Saint Paul's Central Corridor Development Strategy: Plans for Seven University Avenue Station Areas. <http://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/7504>

14 City of St. Paul. Economic activity along Green Line reaches 5-year high as construction nears end. <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?nid=5261>

15 Metropolitan Council. Metro Green Line Helps Attract at Least \$2.5 Billion In Development. May 14, 2014. [http://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Projects/Current-Projects/Central-Corridor/News-Display-Page/METRO-Green-Line-helps-attract-at-least-\\$2-5-billion.aspx](http://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Projects/Current-Projects/Central-Corridor/News-Display-Page/METRO-Green-Line-helps-attract-at-least-$2-5-billion.aspx)

16 Corridors of Opportunity. Partnership for Regional Opportunity: Growing a prosperous, equitable, and sustainable region. <http://www.corridorsofopportunity.org>

17 Wilder Research. Corridors of Opportunity: Final evaluation report summary. April 2014. <http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Studies/Corridors%20of%20Opportunity/Corridors%20of%20Opportunity%20Final%20Evaluation%20Report,%20Summary.pdf>

Local Business Support

To help local businesses survive the construction phase of the LRT line, the regional Metropolitan Council contributed \$2.5 million of \$4 million to a small business forgivable loan fund being administered by the City of St. Paul. The loans supported 210 businesses and only 10 closed during the two-year construction phase. Loans are forgiven for businesses that stay open for five years after construction. The Metropolitan Council also offered a marketing campaign valued at \$1.2 million that included free bus side ads and billboards for corridor businesses and print and online business directories¹⁸.

Business was lost during construction but was reported to be bouncing back six months post-construction. Businesses in the Little Mekong neighbourhood are using the transit line as a branding tool¹⁹.

¹⁸ On the Green Line. www.onthegreenline.com

¹⁹ Melo, Frederick. The Green Line at 6 months: How's it doing? TwinCities.com December 16, 2014. <http://www.twincities.com/transportation/ci27151192/green-line-at-6-months-hows-it-doing>

Community Benefits

When the Green Line was first planned its central section between Saint Paul and Minneapolis included only four stops, spaced about 1.6 kilometres apart. In 2007, a coalition of community groups began the Stops for Us campaign that successfully advocated for three additional stops (Hamline, Victoria, and Western) between those four; reducing the spacing of the stations by half to about 800m and improving equitable access to high-order transit for more economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods²⁰. The campaign to add more stations also prompted the Federal Transit Administration to alter its performance measures criteria – which had been focused on cost-benefit ratios that made these stations ineligible – to give equal weight to considerations like economic development, environmental sustainability, and social benefit²¹.

After the successful Stops for Us campaign, community groups began to work to harness the economic opportunities that would come with the new LRT stations. The Old Home Foods distribution centre, a block-sized building next to the Western LRT station stood vacant. The Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation (ASANDC) aimed to redevelop the site for affordable housing. They had pro bono planning support but no early funding for community engagement. ASANDC bought the property for \$1.2m but couldn't

²⁰ Joan Vanhala, How the Stops for Us Campaign leveraged Federal Funding for local benefit. Alliance for Metropolitan Stability. <http://grandaspirations.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Stops-for-Us-Presentation-Joan-Vanhala.pdf>

²¹ Aurora/St. Anthony Neighbourhood Development Corporation. Community Celebrates "Stops for Us" Success! <http://www.aurorastanthonystopsforus.org/stops-for-us.html> . See also Stops for Us! Organizing and Equity Along the Corridor. <http://dcc-stpaul-mpls.org/sites/dcc-stpaul-mpls.org/files/images/u5/Stops%20For%20Us%20Booklet.pdf>

get financing. The Twin Cities Community Land Bank bought the property to hold on its behalf. Within a year, ASANDC had partnered with a developer who could finance the project (Sand Companies Inc.) and received a TOD grant through the Metropolitan Council to redevelop the property²².

A neighbourhood coalition in the Hamline Midway neighbourhood (mid-way between Minneapolis and St. Paul on the LRT corridor) where development interest has been low, is forming a Community Investment Cooperative to promote investment, particularly in commercial development. Initial efforts include the formation of a working group to research cooperative structures, draft a mission statement and bylaws for the new organization, and set up a Community Investment Cooperative²³.

Youth Engagement and Job Creation

Several innovative events and programs were organized prior to construction to maximize local engagement and employment. These included a one-day retreat for community organizations, construction firms, trades-people, and local businesses. From the retreat came initiatives such as a local website (LRTWorks.org) for construction jobs, and a community-based oversight committee, chaired by the Metropolitan Council and made up of contractors, local agencies, and representatives from federal and state funders²⁴.

The oversight committee hosted a construction career expo to introduce interested community members to construction career opportunities. The expo featured information sessions including Women in Construction, and Getting and Maintaining a Job in Construction. Construction contractors posted jobs on LRTWorks.org and held interviews at the expo.

Other initiatives included a “Dream Design Build” event on the college campus. Local unions, light rail contractors, and community members worked together to create the event where students were introduced to transit-oriented construction and engineering career options.

22 Corridors of Opportunity. Old Home Plaza. <http://www.corridorsofopportunity.org/activities/LIC/oldhome>, Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation. <http://www.aurorastanthonny.org/index.html>

23 The Hamline Midway Community Investment Cooperative. July 9, 2014, <http://hamline.stylefish.com/content/hamline-midway-community-investment-cooperative>

24 Metropolitan Council. Central Corridor Green Line DBE and Workforce Story, June 2014. <http://www.metrocouncil.org/METC/files/33/33ed5e20-3bec-451c-8f88-e49867368058.pdf>

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

Development activity along the Green Line increased considerably even before the LRT line was complete. This is partly due to the early station area planning and re-zoning undertaken by the City of St. Paul. Considerations for the Sheppard Avenue East corridor include ensuring that station area plans, including public realm improvements and plans for improved bus, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to stations, are in place before the trains start running.

Initial plans for the Green Line failed to consider the needs of some residents along the line. Following an intensive community campaign, three new stations were added. While the social and historical realities that contributed to this situation in Minnesota are not directly applicable in Toronto, planners for Sheppard Avenue East would do well to ensure that community voices are heard early and throughout the planning

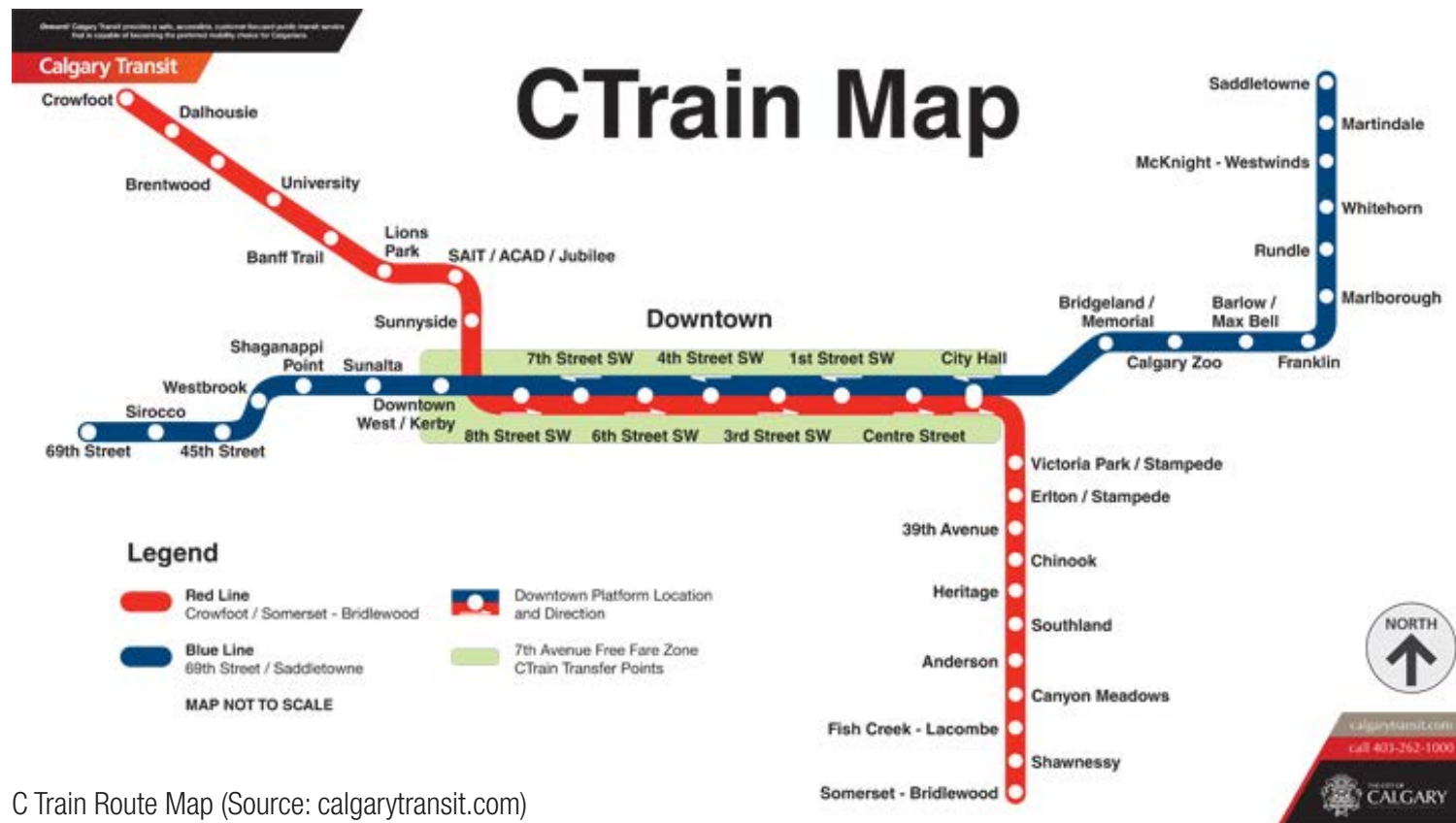
process. While station areas may be already set, ensuring that local communities are involved in decisions around bus service changes, pedestrian and bicycle links, and public art initiatives will help to build community pride in the new line.

Planners for the Green Line ensured that local businesses were supported during construction. The City and Metrolinx should ensure the same for the Sheppard Avenue East corridor which can include offering promotional support to local businesses during construction.

Local employment and education were part of the Green Line initiative. Similar initiatives can be put in place for the Sheppard Avenue East corridor including entering into Community Benefit Agreements that will ensure training and employment for local residents.

3.3 CALGARY C-TRAIN

Calgary's C-Train has been in operation since 1981. It has two lines covering 58 km. The West line, an 8.2km, 6-station extension, opened in 2012; the first addition to the system in 25 years. New trains have been purchased and will begin running this August.



C Train Route Map (Source: calgarytransit.com)

Planning for Transit-Oriented Development

While most of Calgary's LRT system is not new, there has been a renewed focus in planning for transit-oriented development around existing stations and transit corridors. Calgary has had plans in place to promote transit oriented development around some stations for 30+ years. However, market conditions appear to be more favourable now for TOD to take place and the City has implemented many more TOD plans in recent years. It passed Transit Oriented Development Policy Guidelines in 2004 and included provisions for TOD in its 2009 Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan²⁵. Land use studies and station area plans are in place for selected corridors and stations. Six stations are undergoing Station Area Planning to create more effective use of the existing transit infrastructure²⁶.

The eight hectares around Anderson LRT station are owned by the City and are primarily used for surface parking. A new design for TOD in place that reduces parking spaces from 1750 to 500 over 10 years as the area is developed to include mid- and high-rise buildings, parks, and walkable mixed-use streets. The plan is currently undergoing revisions following a public consultation process and

25 City of Calgary. Anderson Station Open House. <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Documents/Publications/anderson-tod-status-of-area-plan.pdf>

26 Megan Fernandes, iTRANS Consulting Inc., David Patman, City of Calgary, Ryan Vanderputten, City of Calgary. Transit Oriented Development From Both Sides of the Tracks: How the City is Promoting It and How Developers are Building It. Paper prepared for presentation at the 2009 Annual Conference of the Transportation Association of Canada. 7

is expected to go to the Calgary Planning Commission and City Council in the fall of 2015²⁷.

Fare Reductions

In 2005, Calgary council approved the introduction of a monthly pass for low income residents. In 2013, Calgary Transit reduced the requirements to qualify for a pass and expanded the program to offer passes to youth in low income families. Ridership by low income pass holders currently makes up just over five percent of all transit customers²⁸.

In addition, a pass for seniors is available for \$95/year. Since 2003, Calgary Transit has had agreements with five post-secondary schools to provide all full time students (and faculty at one institution) transit passes at a negotiated price for the school semesters. The program is revenue neutral for Calgary Transit as the fare revenue that was previously received from individual students using transit is spread over the whole student body allowing a lower individual rate. Schools collect a transit fee as part of their tuition cost and then make payments to Calgary Transit based on enrolment²⁹.

27 City of Calgary. Anderson Station (TOD) Transit Orientated Development Outline Plan and Land Use Application process update.

28 Calgary Transit. Calgary Transit Funding and Fare Strategy Review. February 2014. <https://www.calgarytransit.com/sites/default/files/content/PDF/transit-fare-strategy-review-final-report-feb-2014.pdf> p.2; 12.

29 Calgary Transit. Calgary Transit Funding and Fare Strategy Review. February 2014. <https://www.calgarytransit.com/sites/default/files/content/PDF/transit-fare-strategy-review-final-report-feb-2014.pdf> p.13-14

An analysis of the value of providing low-income transit pass users in Calgary revealed that access to the pass increased transit use substantially, allowing people to attend school or get to work, medical appointments, or volunteer opportunities. Users expressed that having access to the pass improved their lives and half of the low-income pass holders do not use any other form of transport³⁰.

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

In Calgary, many stations have been in place for decades operating as commuter stations with large parking lots. Transit-oriented development has not been pursued until recently. Considerations for the Sheppard Avenue East corridor to avoid similar long delays include limiting surface parking near stations, putting zoning in place for transit-supportive densities, and developing any publicly owned lands along the corridor as showcase sites with transit-oriented developments.

Calgary has several options for reduced fare cards to make transit more accessible. As the Sheppard East LRT will pass through several neighbourhood improvement areas, ensuring that the transit fare is affordable for everyone will increase ridership, and improve the lives of those who may have few other transportation options.

30 Vibrant Communities Calgary. Social Return On Investment (SROI) Case Study: Low Income Monthly Transit Pass. <http://vibrantcanada.ca/files/fairfaressroi.pdf>

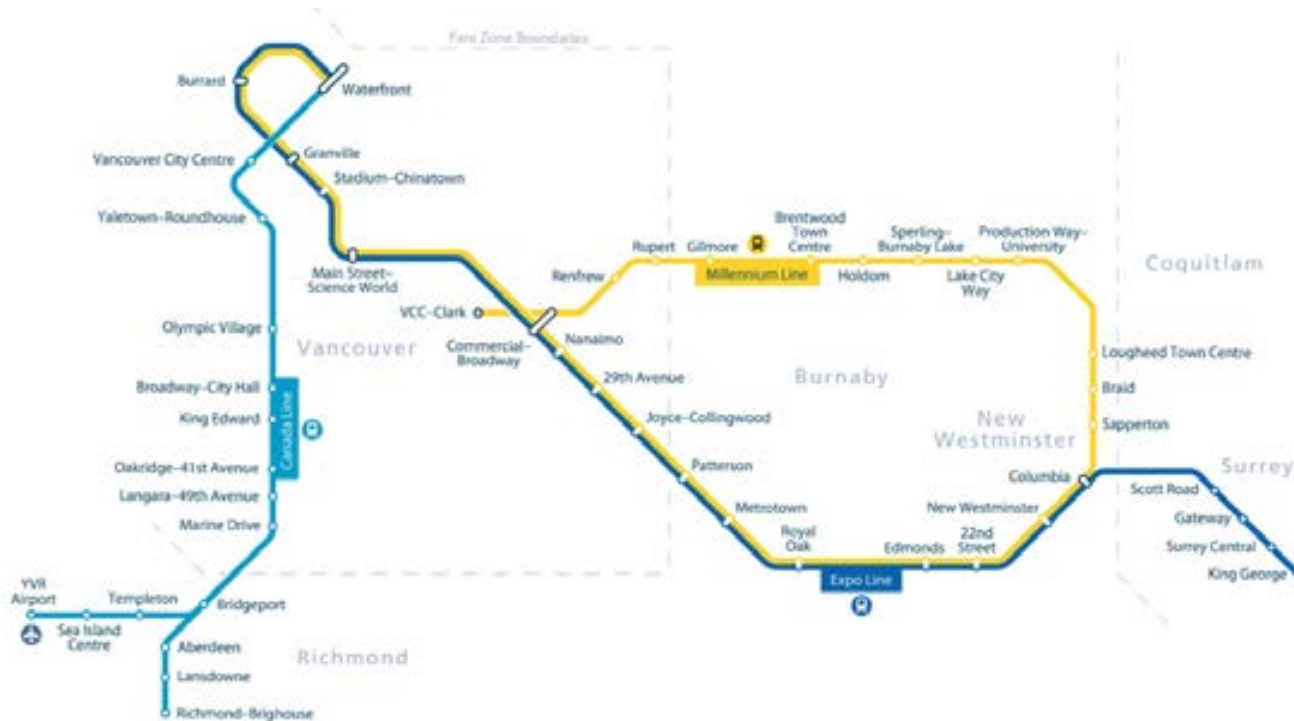
3.4 VANCOUVER SKYTRAIN

Translink operates the Skytrain LRT system in Metro Vancouver. There are currently three lines with an extension through Coquitlam expected to open in 2016. The 19km, 16-stop Canada Line runs from downtown to the suburb of Richmond with a spur line serving the airport. It opened in 2009 ahead of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

Planning

There has been considerable transit-oriented development in Richmond along the transit line. Planning was underway as soon as the transit line was announced and the City had a new City Centre Area Plan to encourage mid- and high-density redevelopment before the line opened³¹.

31 Bula, Frances. Vancouver's Canada Line is a model of transit-oriented development, too. Citiscope. February 18, 2014. <http://citiscope.org/story/2014/vancouver's-canada-line-model-transit-oriented-development-too>



Vancouver SkyTrain Route Map (Source: translink.ca)

Private Funding for Extensions and New Stations

In Metro Vancouver, private investment by TOD developers is supporting station upgrades and the construction of new stations³². A new Canada Line station at Capstan Way, between two existing stations, will be funded through an agreement between TransLink and the City of Richmond, with the cost being fully funded by development. Money for the new station will be collected by the City from developers building new residential units in Richmond's City Centre. Once the estimated \$25 million required for the new station's construction is collected, the City will pass the funds to TransLink, who will have 30 months to build the new station. The fee amounts to about \$8,000 per new dwelling unit, paid at the time permits are issued.

In Coquitlam, along the Evergreen Line that is currently under construction, the owners of the Coquitlam Centre shopping mall have agreed, in partnership with City of Coquitlam, to pay for a new LRT station that had not been part of the original provincial funding plan³³.

In both of these cases, the market demand for units in transit-oriented development projects is strong enough to support the private sector's involvement in station funding.

32 Bula, Frances. Vancouver's Canada Line is a model of transit-oriented development, too. Citiscopes. February 18, 2014. <http://citiscopes.org/story/2014/vancouver-s-canada-line-model-transit-oriented-development-too>

33 Bula, Frances. Dear developer: Want to build us a transit station? Globe and Mail. May. 15 2014. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/property-report/dear-developer-want-to-build-us-a-transit-station/article18610232/>

Mall Lands Redevelopment

Throughout the Metro Vancouver area, malls with large surface parking lots near Skytrain stations are being redeveloped into mixed-use transit-oriented developments. Significant projects include the redevelopment of Oakridge mall in Vancouver which is being positioned as a new town centre with 14 residential and office towers and nine acres of public open space. Plans for the site claim to bring \$228.3-million in privately funded public amenity benefits including a community/senior's centre, a library, a daycare, and 290 units of social housing³⁴.

The Brentwood Town Centre mall in Burnaby, adjacent to a Skytrain station, will be redeveloped to include 10 mixed-use towers over the next 20 years. The site is envisioned as a new Town Centre for Burnaby and council has approved a conceptual master plan for the area³⁵. Burnaby also identifies the Lougheed mall area as a Town Centre which will be redeveloped with mid- and high-density mixed-use development over the next 15 to 25 years. Lansdowne Centre, on the Canada Line in Richmond, is also believed to be considering extensive redevelopment that would include high rises although details are not yet public.

34 Bula, Frances. Vancouver's Canada Line is a model of transit-oriented development, too. Citiscopes. February 18, 2014. <http://citiscopes.org/story/2014/vancouver-s-canada-line-model-transit-oriented-development-too>;

Chan, Kenneth. Massive \$1.5-billion Oakridge Centre redevelopment approved by Vancouver City Council. VanCity Buzz. March 14, 2014. <http://www.vancitybuzz.com/2014/03/oakridge-centre-redevelopment-approved/>

35 Chan, Kenneth. Brentwood Mall redevelopment to include 10 towers up to 60 storeys tall. VanCity Buzz. January 28, 2014. <http://www.vancitybuzz.com/2014/01/brentwood-mall-redevelopment-the-amazing-brentwood/>

The potential for mall parking lots to be redeveloped is driven by supportive city plans which call for new urban centres, high land values which off-set the cost of building underground parking, and proximity to transit.

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

Much of the development along Vancouver's Skytrain system is driven by high land values and strong development pressure. In addition, mall lands that are being redeveloped are in locations deemed by the municipalities to be new urban growth centres. These conditions are not comparable to the conditions along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor. However, in order for lands along Sheppard Avenue East with large surface parking lots, such as mall lands, to be redeveloped for more transit-intensive uses in the future, putting zoning, parking and public realm standards in place early will help to make the redevelopment of those lands more viable. This will also ensure that land uses such as surface parking lots or large-format shops do proliferate in areas where more transit-supportive scales are desired.

In the long term, should land values increase to the point where larger-scale developments are feasible, Metrolinx may consider levying new building permit fees for station upgrades or new station connections.

3.5 PHOENIX VALLEY METRO LIGHT RAIL

The Valley Metro light rail system serves Phoenix, Mesa, and Tempe, Arizona. It runs for 32 km with 28 stops and opened in 2008. The line was funded by a 0.5% sales tax increase approved by voters in 2000. The system has an average of 44,000 weekday riders and takes one hour of travel time from end-to-end³⁶.

³⁶ Valley Metro. Economic Development Highlights Brochure. http://www.valleymetro.org/publications_reports/economic_highlights

Planning

Areas along the LRT are divided into six districts and transit-oriented development policy plans are being created for each district. The plan for the Downtown district was adopted in 2008 and is now part of the Zoning Ordinance³⁷.

³⁷ Reinvent Phoenix. <http://www.reinventphx.org>



Phoenix Valley Metro Light Rail Route Map (Source: valleymetro.org)

Developing transit-oriented projects in Phoenix is gaining traction. Reinvent PHX is a collaborative partnership between the City of Phoenix, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Arizona State University and St. Luke's Health Initiatives which aims to promote the development of walkable communities connected to light rail. Reinvent PHX will create action plans for districts along the light rail system and identify investment strategies in an effort to establish a new, transit-oriented model for urban planning and development along the LRT system³⁸.

Reinvent PHX is a planning initiative. Working with funding from HUD, it is doing visioning workshops, traffic and parking analyses, and updating the land use regulations to permit transit-oriented development and improve walkability. Funds also support public outreach campaigns to help TOD gain support in a very car-oriented region³⁹.

Impacts on Land Value

The LRT line traverses three municipalities and many dis-similar neighbourhoods. Land value changes since the announcement of the LRT and its opening in 2008 vary widely across the system. The highest land value increases were in Phoenix and Tempe but other areas saw no change⁴⁰.

There is evidence, however, that the LRT has improved the resilience of land values during the economic recession. Tax revenues in downtown Phoenix rose in stark contrast to less dense areas during the recession⁴¹.

Street Revitalization and TOD

Apache Boulevard in the City of Tempe was a languishing main street. The LRT opened along the boulevard in 2008 and Apache is once again flourishing. The street now boasts new student housing (Campus Suites on the Rail), apartment developments (Apache ASL Trails) and new housing developments (Newberry Terrace) which have revitalized the once struggling area with new residents⁴².

One example of transit-oriented development along Apache Boulevard is a 450-unit apartment complex that includes a park-and-ride garage. The site was

38 Reinvent Phoenix. <http://www.reinventphx.org>

39 Reid, Betty. Reinvent PHX eyes development on light-rail system. The Arizona Republic. <http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2014/05/05/reinvent-phx-eyes-development-light-rail-system/8742745/>

40 Center for Neighborhood Technology. The New Real Estate Mantra: Location Near Public Transportation. March 2013. 9. http://www.cnt.org/sites/default/files/publications/CNT_TheNewRealEstateMantra.pdf

41 Smart Growth America. How Phoenix, AZ is using transit-oriented development to reinvent downtown. August 13, 2013. <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/2013/08/13/how-phoenix-az-is-using-transit-oriented-development-to-reinvent-downtown/>

42 Apache Boulevard. City of Tempe, AZ. <http://www.tempe.gov/city-hall/community-development/neighborhood-revitalization-redevelopment/apache-boulevard>

originally planned to serve as a transit station parking lot, but as the market for transit-oriented development became favourable, a developer proposed providing the planned parking within a garage and developing the rest of the site with apartments and shops⁴³.

Funding for Transit-Oriented Development

Since July, 2011 the Sustainable Communities Fund (initially capitalized by the Local Initiatives Support Corp. and Raza Development Fund) has provided \$20 million of loan funds leveraging almost \$200 million in additional private investment for 20 developments connected to the light rail corridor including 1155+ affordable, workforce, market rate, and mixed-use housing units. Projects include the adaptive reuse of the vacant, iconic Beefeater's building into a locally owned bookstore, a job incubator, restaurant and wine bar, and the Native American Connections Office Building⁴⁴.

Affordable Housing

Developed by Native American Connections, a non-profit corporation serving the urban Native American population of Phoenix, and financed by the City of Phoenix (which deferred development fees), the Arizona Department of Housing, Federal Home Loan Bank, and the U.S. Department of Housing, Devine Legacy was the first transit-oriented development to open along the LRT line. Developed on the site of a vacant former charter school, the site offers 65 rental units, 90%

affordable and 10% market rate housing⁴⁵. The city's main public high school is across the street. Parking was reduced due to the site's location on the LRT line. The project is oriented toward Native American working families in Phoenix but houses anyone who meets the income requirements. Affordable units rent for 10% to 45% below market rate⁴⁶.

Grace Community Church owns a two-acre site where it runs a thrift store. A proposal is in place to demolish the thrift store and build a residential building that would include retail space for Gracie's. Gracie's Village would be open only to residents with low or moderate incomes, between about \$18,000 and \$52,000. The developer notes that the project is geared to provide housing for people such as teachers, food service workers and others who work in Tempe but cannot afford to live there. The project faced considerable neighbourhood opposition and was scaled down from an original six-storey proposal to the existing 50-unit, four-storey development⁴⁷.

43 Groff, Garin. Apache Blvd. grows from seedy to chic. East Valley Tribune. November 5, 2007. <http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/news/article9292b3e4-711b-5144-b1b9-b2437f7f613b.html>

44 Sustainable Communities Collaborative. Our Accomplishments. <http://www.sustainablecommunitiescollaborative.com/our-accomplishments/>

45 Sustainable Communities Collaborative. Case Studies: Native American Connections. Devine Legacy. <http://www.sustainablenativecommunities.org/fieldnews/2013-case-studies/>

46 Smokey, Sadie Jo. Former offices will become low-income housing. The Arizona Republic. February 25, 2010. <http://archive.azcentral.com/community/phoenix/articles/20100225legacy-affordable-housing.html>

47 Groff, Garin. Even after changes, Tempe neighborhood opposes low-income housing. East Valley Tribune. June 5, 2012. <http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/local/tempe/article5ae2fae-ae9d-11e1-b9e5-001a4bcf887a.html>

Outreach and Marketing

Because transit represents a new form of transportation for parts of greater Phoenix, Valley Metro operates an extensive transit education program. Education teams offer workshops in schools to teach kids about the public transit system. It also offers free group passes and field trip planning for elementary school student groups⁴⁸. Valley Metro also runs sessions on how to use the transit system for new residents and refugees and monthly training sessions at the Disability Empowerment Centre which include an all-day transit pass and instructions on how to use the system for those with mobility constraints⁴⁹.

To help spread awareness and a sense of pride in the transit system, Valley Metro runs transit-themed art contests for kids and an annual contest for high school students to design a transit-positive message. Winning designs are wrapped onto a transit vehicle⁵⁰.

Public art is integrated into the stations. Following a nationwide call for artists, five artistic teams were selected and were paired with five architectural teams to create the visions for the stations. Public art at many stations incorporate local histories into the design⁵¹.

48 Valley Metro. School Outreach Program: Designed for students, educators and administrators. http://www.valleymetro.org/transit_education/school_outreach

49 Valley Metro. Community Outreach Program. http://www.valleymetro.org/transit_education/community_outreach

50 Valley Metro. Glendale Student Wins 2015 Design a Transit Wrap Contest. http://www.valleymetro.org/transit_education/bus_wrap

51 Valley Metro. Metro Art 2008. http://www.valleymetro.org/images/uploads/misc_reports/METRO-Art-Book.pdf

Reduced Fare Passes

Arizona State University students are eligible to receive a transit pass for \$200 for the academic year. Passes are paid for by ASU Parking and Transit Services, a self-funded auxiliary unit of the university. Employer passes are available to employers with at least five participating employees. The employer is charged for each employee's actual number of rides up to a maximum of \$64 per month. In addition, the City of Phoenix's Homeless Service Provider Program may purchase passes at half price for their clients⁵².

52 Valley Metro. Fare Options. http://www.valleymetro.org/paying_your_fare/fare_options/

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

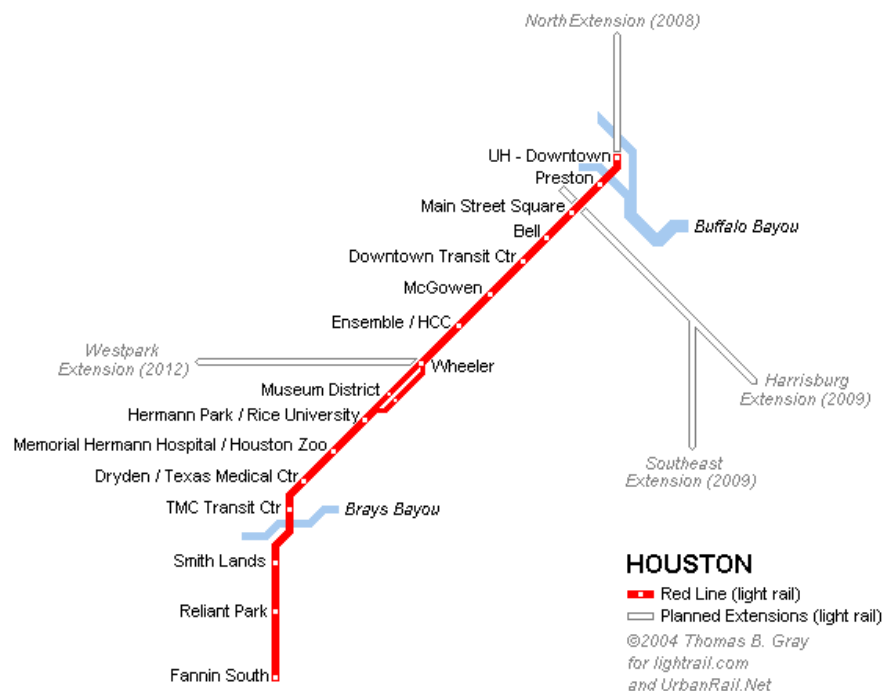
Valley Metro has done some innovative outreach in the Phoenix area to help people become more acquainted with using transit. Similar initiatives may be beneficial around the Sheppard Avenue East corridor. In areas that are not currently well-served by higher order transit, people may be unfamiliar with the system and therefore reluctant to embrace it once it arrives; particularly when new vehicles and fare payment systems are involved. Outreach to seniors, schools, neighbourhood associations and other community groups to demystify the transit and fare system can help to increase ridership and build local pride in the new lines.

Integrating public art into the stations is also an opportunity to build local awareness and pride. Hiring local artists, design teams and installers; and ensuring local input into design selections are all outreach initiatives that have been demonstrated to work elsewhere.

Phoenix has several reduced fare pass options including reduced fare passes for post-secondary students, employee groups, and community support organizations. The Sheppard East LRT line will serve post-secondary institutions and areas of concentrated employment. Offering reduced fare passes to students and employee groups, through agreements with the colleges and employers, will support higher ridership and revenue levels; and may offer the necessary motivation for people to switch from using private cars for daily commutes.

3.6 HOUSTON METRORAIL

Houston's MetroRail Red Line consists of a 12km, 16-station line that opened in 2004 and a 8.5 km, nine-station extension that opened in 2013. It is run by the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (Metro). The lines radiate from downtown connecting university campuses, a museum district, a soccer stadium and a baseball stadium.



Houston MetroRail Route Map (Source: lightrail.com)

The transit agency faced considerable opposition with two referendums over 20 years, funding cuts, and funding blocks. The original line was therefore built with no federal funding although the extension line received \$9m in federal funds.

Transit-Oriented Development Planning

Houston created a new Transit Corridor Ordinance to regulate development and street design along the light rail corridors. The new ordinance applies to six streets where LRTs are in place or planned. It identifies transit corridor streets, along which the LRT runs, and “A” streets which intersect the transit corridor streets within walking distance of an LRT station and sets pedestrian realm and streetscape standards for those sections of streets in an effort to create conditions that will support higher density development close to the rail stations.^{53,54}

Market conditions are making transit-oriented developments more feasible although using transit represents a cultural shift for a region where 9 out of 10 people drive to work. Plans are in place for an eight-block transit-oriented redevelopment “University Place” around the LRT line and between two universities.

⁵³ City of Houston, Proposed Transit Corridor Ordinance. http://www.houston.tx.gov/planning/_urban/PC_presentation.pdf

⁵⁴ City of Houston, Urban Corridor Planning Houston. http://www.houston.tx.gov/planning/_urban/urban_cor.html

Public Art

MetroRail commissioned artwork for the light rail transit stations. The artists who were selected worked closely with local communities to develop the artistic vision for each station. Many acknowledge the neighbourhoods' unique histories. Stops along the line in the 3rd Ward feature designs paying homage to African-Americans in Houston while in the East End, stops feature murals of Mexican-American life.^{55,56}

Preserving Affordability

Houston's Third Ward, adjacent to downtown, is facing considerable gentrification that threatens to displace low-income, mainly African American residents. Metro's Green line, scheduled to open this year, is helping to create renewed development interest in the neighbourhood.

State Representative Garnet Coleman, who hails from the Third Ward, did not want long-time homeowners pushed out by rising property values and taxes. He has spearheaded an unorthodox use of tax increment financing to buy up land in the Third Ward and hold it for development as low-income rental housing. Nearly two million square feet have been bought up so far.⁵⁷ Houston's City Council has designated 22 tax increment reinvestment zones (TIRZs), each with its own

⁵⁵ Rodriguez, Frank. Houston's METRO Rail and Implications for Gentrification. 2013, https://www.academia.edu/4594398/Houstons_METRO_Rail_and_Implications_for_Gentrification. 10.

⁵⁶ Glentzer, Molly. MetroRail commissions art for new light-rail stations Houston Chronicle. August 7, 2013. <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/entertainment/arts-theater/article/MetroRail-commissions-art-for-new-light-rail-4716046.php>

⁵⁷ Wrigley, Deborah. New development surging in Houston's Third Ward area. ABC13. March 11, 2013. <http://abclocal.go.com/story?section=news/local&id=9023392>

governing board. One TIRZ, in a neighbourhood known as Midtown, is acting a little differently. Midtown, just east of the Third Ward, is a revitalized mixed-use neighbourhood with a strong re-development market. The board of the Midtown TIRZ, influenced by Coleman, has chosen to use almost all of its revenues to buy and hold land in the Third Ward.⁵⁸

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

Houston's unconventional use of tax increment financing to preserve affordable housing in the Third Ward is not easily replicated elsewhere. However, other initiatives that have proven successful in Houston such as community-led public art at transit stations can be applied to the Sheppard Avenue East corridor. And, while the mechanism of preserving affordable housing in Houston does not fit the Toronto context, it is an important reminder that property values often rise following new infrastructure provision and that mechanisms may be needed to preserve affordability where it exists along Sheppard Avenue East.

⁵⁸ Buntin, John. Land Rush. Governing. March 2006. <http://www.governing.com/topics/politics/Land.html>

3.7 DENVER FASTRACKS

Denver's LRT covers 31 km with 13 stops. A southeast extension was completed in 2006 and further expansion plans are in place. The system runs in a spoke pattern outward from downtown Denver.

Denver's transportation plan, FasTracks, is being funded by sales tax revenues, federal grants and the first transit-related public-private partnership in U.S. history.⁵⁹ The transit plan includes six new commuter and LRT lines and three extensions to existing lines.

Land Acquisition for TOD Development

The \$15 million revolving Denver Regional TOD Fund is funded by a partnership of 13 organizations and the City of Denver.⁶⁰ The fund purchases sites near planned transit stops and holds them until financing can be arranged, or market conditions become favourable to develop affordable housing. The fund has enabled the construction of over 600 permanently affordable homes, over 100,000 square feet of commercial space, a public library, non-profit office space, and a day care facility, all within walking distance of transit.⁶¹ Also in use in Denver are the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) which uses

⁵⁹ see RTD Eagle P3 Project: http://www.rtd-fastracks.com/ep3_2

⁶⁰ Denver TOD Fund Investors/Partners: City of Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships, City of Denver Office of Economic Development, Colorado Division of Housing, Enterprise Community Partners, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, The Denver Foundation, The Ford Foundation, The Gates Family Foundation, The MacArthur Foundation, The Rose Community Foundation, Mercy Loan Fund, Mile High Community Loan Fund, Enterprise Community Loan Fund

⁶¹ Enterprise. Our Work in Denver. <http://www.enterprisecommunity.com/where-we-work/denver>



Denver FasTracks Route Map (Source: rtd-fastracks.com)

HUD funding to acquire and redevelop foreclosed and abandoned properties. Denver received \$19 million in NSP-2 funding dedicated to multifamily housing preservation in transit corridors.⁶²

Several affordable housing projects used this funding to acquire land near transit prior to prices going up. These resulted in projects such as Mercantile Square – a mixed use development including affordable rental units in 1886 former industrial buildings.^{63,64}

Fare Reductions

Several reduced fare passes are available for the Denver area's transit system. The EcoPass and FlexPass are employer-sponsored passes for employees that offer tax deductions for employers and tax savings for employees (because passes are paid for using pre-tax dollars).⁶⁵

The Neighbourhood EcoPass allows neighbourhood associations to buy bulk passes for its residents. The cost is based on the current amount of transit revenue already coming from a neighbourhood, spreading the cost between more people and increasing transit affordability for residents.

Lessons for the Sheppard Avenue East Corridor

The Denver Regional TOD Fund is a partnership of 13 agencies including the City of Denver. The fund has facilitated the development of affordable transit-oriented development along the transit lines. The City of Toronto can explore partnership options to facilitate affordable development along the Sheppard Avenue East corridor.

Denver's EcoPass system shows the range of fare reductions that a transit agency can explore. It offers not only discounts for bulk purchases to employers, it also has a neighbourhood-based pass that helps make transit a more viable choice for those who may not have sought it out before.

62 Quigley (ed). Preserving Affordable Housing Near Transit: Case Studies from Atlanta, Denver, Seattle and Washington, D.C.

<http://www.ctod.org/portal/sites/default/files/preservingAffordableHousingNearTransit2010.pdf> p.6

63 Enterprise. Denver Regional Transit-Oriented Development Fund. <http://www.enterprisecommunity.com/denver-tod-fund>

64 Quigley (ed). Preserving Affordable Housing Near Transit: Case Studies from Atlanta, Denver, Seattle and Washington, D.C.

<http://www.ctod.org/portal/sites/default/files/preservingAffordableHousingNearTransit2010.pdf>

65 RTD. Eco Pass for Employees. <http://www.rtd-denver.com/EcoPass.shtml>

4.0 KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CORRIDOR

4.1 MARKET

The Sheppard Avenue East corridor in the area of the LRT proposal is already a moderately strong real estate market characterized by high resale prices and new investment in high density residential development. Investment and re-investment in commercial and office uses is also evident. While real estate markets tend to ebb and flow, all indicators point to long term or accelerating demand in most areas of the City. The impact of the LRT will likely help support new higher density developments where market conditions are currently marginal.

In general, the western segment of the LRT corridor is beginning to emerge as a more complete community with a healthy mix of employment and residential uses in a variety of building types and densities. This emerging close live-work relationship along the corridor is a positive factor that can support both office and residential developments as individuals seek to shorten commuting times. However, there is an apparent lack of park space in certain segments and a very car dominated street environment that likely needs improvement for the corridor to meet its full market potential.

The accessibility and exposure to 400 series highways and the DVP initially underpinned the success of the Consumers Road Business Park Area (CRBPA). The introduction of the Sheppard Subway at Don Mills Station was the catalyst for high density residential development along the Sheppard frontage of the CRBPA. The introduction of the new, connecting LRT service is likely to enhance

the market demand for new high density developments in this area. The CRBPA also has new commercial investment and demand for the existing office buildings appears stable. The enhanced transit service will also improve the accessibility of the area, which will support demand for office and related uses. It is noted that the City of Toronto is currently undertaking a study of the Consumers Road Business Park (Consumers Next) that will look for ways to enhance the CRBPA. The new transit line will also help support reinvestment, primarily in residential uses, but also some office demand eastward to the Agincourt GO Station. Here there is an opportunity for a significant amount of new investment given the potential for several current or planned higher order transit lines (GO, LRT and subway) nearby. The area has already proven a successful high density market with several developments over the past 15 years. The opportunity for significantly intensified development in this area is very strong.

The Agincourt neighbourhood is currently a collection of single family dwellings, high density rental and condominium buildings, and a range of low density commercial uses. From a development perspective, the area is complex due to ownership and development patterns. Considerable effort may be required in terms of lot consolidations and additions to create a development pattern suitable for new high density uses. Agincourt Mall also occupies the northwest quadrant of Sheppard Avenue East and Kennedy Road, representing a significant redevelopment opportunity. To the south of Agincourt Mall on Kennedy Road, Metrogate is nearing full build-out and an application has recently been made immediately south of this project at 2035 Kennedy Road for over 1,000 units; however due to this site being located outside of a walkable distance from

Sheppard Avenue East and the future LRT, it is not apparent that the future higher-order transit will positively impact the marketability of this site. Also of note, land on Cowdray Court, located to the north of Metrogate and a walkable distance from the planned LRT stop at Kennedy Road and Sheppard Avenue East, has been approved for conversion from an *Employment Area* to a *Mixed Use Area* and has significant development potential. As the transit improvements become closer to reality, it is expected that the pressure for redevelopment will be significant and primarily driven by some of the larger development parcels at Agincourt Mall and near Sheppard Avenue East.

Between Brimley and Markham Road, on the north side of Sheppard Avenue East is a significant employment area. This area of development was largely a result of spinoffs from the massive CPR Toronto marshalling yard to the north. The area lacks the market position it once had which is reflected in low rents, high vacancies, and the low density/intensity nature of the uses. In addition, several places of worship and a City transfer facility hinder the market appeal of the area. New transit will improve the appeal of the area, however there are other market issues that may need to be addressed to maximize the future potential of these lands.

Beyond Markham Road, the opportunities for reinvestment are limited, due to the nature of development. The remainder of the corridor is dominated with stable, single family detached residential neighbourhoods abutting Sheppard Avenue East, which restricts new investment. The only exception to this are the lands on the south side of Sheppard at Markham Road which are designated for Mixed-Use. This area has already received a significant amount of high-density development. Transit investment will help improve the marketability of the remaining parcels.

4.2 PHYSICAL/PUBLIC REALM

Key considerations for the physical/public realm for the Sheppard East corridor include:

- Prepare detailed public realm plan in tandem with LRT design to identify streetscape improvements along Sheppard Avenue East, with regards to pedestrian crossings, improved comfort, landscaping, street furniture, way-finding, tree canopy and integration with active retail and/or residential uses. Particular care should be taken to develop public realm designs that respond to the unique requirements of Employment Lands as these areas have different requirements compared to residential areas or urban streets (e.g. truck traffic, light industrial uses, etc.).
- Conduct detailed public realm analysis that identifies opportunities to improve connections between proposed LRT stops and neighbourhood destinations (area schools, institutions, community centres, or parks) by upgrading pedestrian and cycling infrastructure as required.
- Consider ways to implement safe and continuous cycling infrastructure throughout the corridor and to the broader cycling network.

4.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Overall, the corridor performs generally well in terms of social need, and is generally in line with city-wide averages for most criteria, with the exception of localized issues related to diabetes and low income, specifically around Neilson Road. Several of the key issues faced along the corridor cannot be addressed directly through the implementation of the Sheppard East LRT. These include: high school graduation rates, preventable hospitalizations, and post-secondary completions rates. However, other indicators can directly and indirectly benefit from its implementation including: unemployment and low income rates, community places for meeting, proximity to green spaces and healthy food stores as well as decreasing the incidences of diabetes.

Generally, the issues that may be most directly resolved as a result of the LRT are related to access (i.e. proximity to green spaces, employment opportunities, walkability, etc.). However, to truly maximize the benefits of transit infrastructure to address issues related to economic development, public health and affordability along the corridor, there is a need to look beyond the immediate Sheppard Avenue East right-of-way.

There is an opportunity to magnify the impact of the LRT and related transit infrastructure beyond the right-of-way. That is to say that the corridor will benefit most through comprehensive planning and the extension of connections into the adjacent neighbourhoods including feeder bus routes, pedestrian connections to parks, employment areas, mixed use areas, and other community spaces.

The coordination of this comprehensive planning and the provision of a planning and public realm framework which serves to support the LRT and surrounding neighbourhoods will better address the issues faced along the corridor.

In addition to larger-scale initiatives, a number of key considerations identified via case study analysis (Section 3.0) can also address these issues, they include:

- Consideration of re-zoning for transit oriented design including reduced parking standards prior to the completion of the LRT to determine compatible built form, open space and parking standards.
- Put public realm requirements in place for the length of the corridors and along parts of intersecting streets.
- Make Community Benefit Agreements mandatory for all infrastructure projects over a certain dollar value.
- Consider local business supports (e.g. free advertising on transit vehicles, design contests and other forms of outreach to schools, seniors' centres, community groups etc.).
- Provide support during construction which can include free advertising to local businesses during the construction period.
- Ensure that businesses in transit corridors are eligible for supports through other municipal or BIA programs like facade improvement programs.
- Develop publicly owned lands with showcase transit oriented design and development.
- Support community involvement in initiatives like public art at stations.
- Offer discount fare programs for post-secondary students, employers and low-income residents. Make eligibility requirements simple.

4.4 PLANNING

Many opportunities exist to develop and/or improve strong transit-supportive neighbourhoods along the LRT corridor, however the transit infrastructure, market demand and planning framework(s) will need to be brought into alignment to best realize these opportunities. The market analysis identified a demand for residential, and to a lesser extent office and commercial uses, in the following sub-markets:

- Victoria Park;
- Warden; and
- Agincourt.

While the eastern half of the corridor does not exhibit the same strong market characteristics at this time, the segment will be fundamentally affected by decisions surrounding the proposed Scarborough Subway. Depending on the final alignment, the potential exists to affect transformative change at the chosen intersection along Sheppard Avenue East. This decision will trigger more detailed planning work at the specific intersection of Sheppard Avenue East.

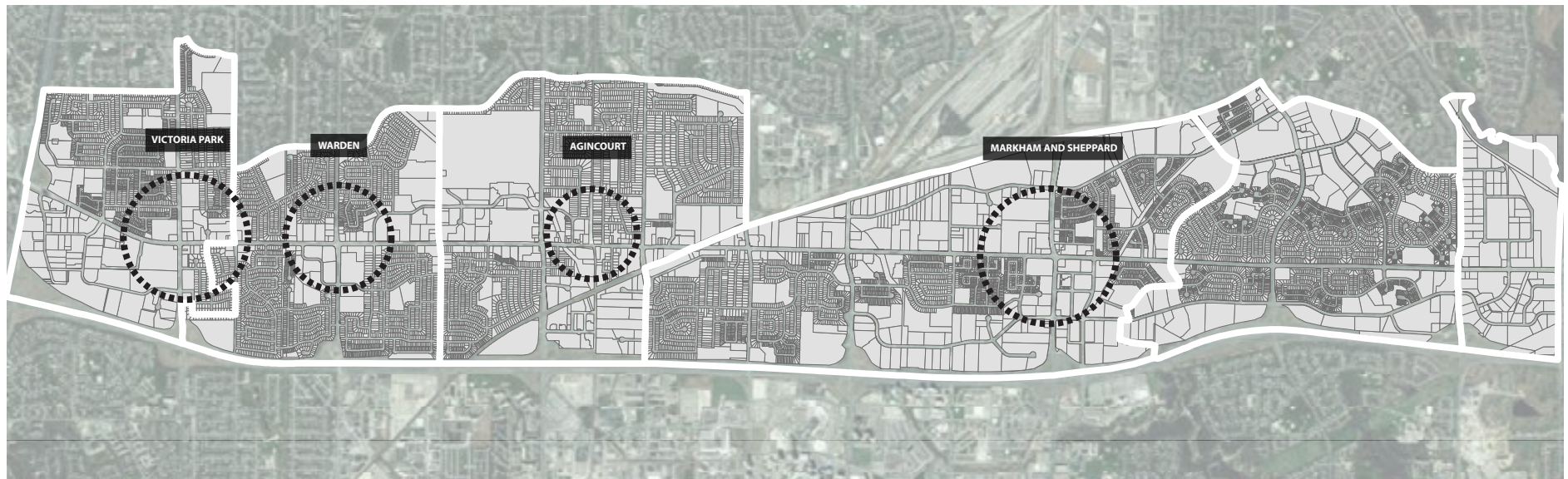


Figure 5. Sheppard Avenue East Corridor - Key Areas of Planning Focus

The following summary identifies key planning considerations for the corridor:

1. Gap Analysis at a Corridor Level

The western half of the corridor is identified as an Avenue in Toronto's Official Plan, allowing the City to help determine and describe the built form requirements for the area. At this time, one Avenue Study and three Avenue Segment Studies have been completed along Sheppard Avenue East. Additionally, the ConsumersNext Study is underway. There are 'gaps' in the built form guidelines along the full segment of the corridor between these areas. The City should consider completing Avenue Studies to fill in these 'gaps', in particular at the intersections of Pharmacy Avenue and Birchmount Road.

2. Appropriate Density, Form, and Character of Development

While the western half of the corridor benefits from the existing Avenue Study at Warden, Avenue overlay and the Agincourt Secondary Plan, the remainder of the corridor lacks detailed built form guidelines. If intensification is to occur outside of these areas, it would benefit from a careful consideration of the physical characteristics of the Sheppard Avenue East corridor which include:

- Wide right-of-way (36m planned as per the OP);
- LRT stop spacing that is wider compared pre-war streetcar routes;
- Relationship with employment districts (either across Sheppard Avenue East or adjacent);
- Tower-in-the-park sites that share the characteristics outlined in Tower Renewal; and
- Surrounding stable neighbourhoods.

Transit-supportive densities should be considered in certain locations along the corridor which could include minimum heights and/or densities. There is also the potential to reserve areas along the corridor for higher density built forms (e.g. mid-rise and taller buildings) once the market becomes favourable for this type of development.

3. Opportunities for Infill or Redevelopment

There are opportunities for increased density and intensification through infill and/or redevelopment, particularly around existing malls, in Mixed Use Area sites (first priority) and some apartment sites (second priority). Recent residential intensification efforts in the city have led to increased benefits for existing and future residents.

The City of Toronto's *Toward Healthier Apartment Neighbourhoods* report outlines a number of site specific strategies to consider to better support the health of apartment residents and of the residents in the surrounding communities. These strategies may be applicable to other sites that can accommodate infill or redevelopment including malls sites and other *Mixed Use Area* sites. These strategies support successful intensification and can help to achieve improved access, increased housing options, and a better built environment for residents and the surrounding community. These strategies contribute to successful infill development and include:

- Provision of access to green space, parks and natural areas through the removal of obstacles and providing linkages (e.g. walking paths and entry points)
- Improved opportunities for gathering by providing a variety of intimate to community-scaled gathering spaces, connected by well-defined path systems

- Removed physical barriers to active transportation to provide a better experience for pedestrian travel
- Improved cycling networks and infrastructure by formalizing existing ad hoc trails; providing bike storage and parking
- Provision of amenities to support diverse households in high-rise living including fresh food shops, community kitchens, children's play areas, etc.
- Adapted units for growing families and changing households which can include providing balcony enclosures, ground floor terraces, and larger units
- Expanded housing choice: tenure options and a variety of infill housing forms which can serve to diversify the housing stock, allowing people to 'age in place'

Further, successful infill development should generally be developed in a comprehensive fashion to ensure benefits are directed to new and existing residents. Infill and/or redevelopment should improve and better define the open space network; create space for new retail or amenity functions; and also be linked to transit by a clearly defined public realm network.

4. Robust Public Realm

The existing public realm along the Sheppard East Corridor is often lacking pedestrian infrastructure, tree planting, storm water management, and cycling infrastructure. Many segments of the corridor lack 'active frontages', while crossings are often far apart. Opportunities exist to address these concerns, while also improving local connections and overall networks in ways that support both the existing communities and new LRT infrastructure.

A comprehensive Public Realm Plan that considers key origins and destinations within 500m of the corridor would provide a framework for the full integration of the LRT into the existing and planned communities. A Public Realm plan can provide guidance on the design of streets, parks, opens spaces, bicycle routes, public art and community buildings so that they are responsive to the local context and to community interests and needs.

5. Support of Employment Uses

The Employment Lands policies found in the Toronto Official Plan are strong and supportive of the preservation of employment lands throughout the corridor. With the introduction of higher order transit along Sheppard Avenue East and associated development pressures that will promote more distant commuting to places of employment, it will prove beneficial to explore streetscape improvements to these employment areas to provide safe, comfortable and accessible pedestrian connections.

6. Integration with Adjacent Uses

Connections between the LRT itself and adjacent neighbourhood and/or employment uses can be strengthened through the provision of improved bus services, streetscape improvements, and/or cycling infrastructure.

7. Area-Specific Considerations

There is a significant opportunity for transformative planning along Sheppard Avenue East should the Scarborough subway extends through the area between Brimley Road and Markham Road. Understanding the impact of this potential major infrastructure and how it may affect surrounding neighbourhoods will prove beneficial in the long run in determining the vision for this corridor and how it may develop in the future.

5.0 SUBMARKET AREAS

The Sheppard Avenue East corridor has been divided into six Submarket Areas.

They include:

- Submarket Area 1: Consumers Road
- Submarket Area 2: Warden
- Submarket Area 3: Agincourt
- Submarket Area 4: McCowan/Markham
- Submarket Area 5: Neilson
- Submarket Area 6: Water Tower

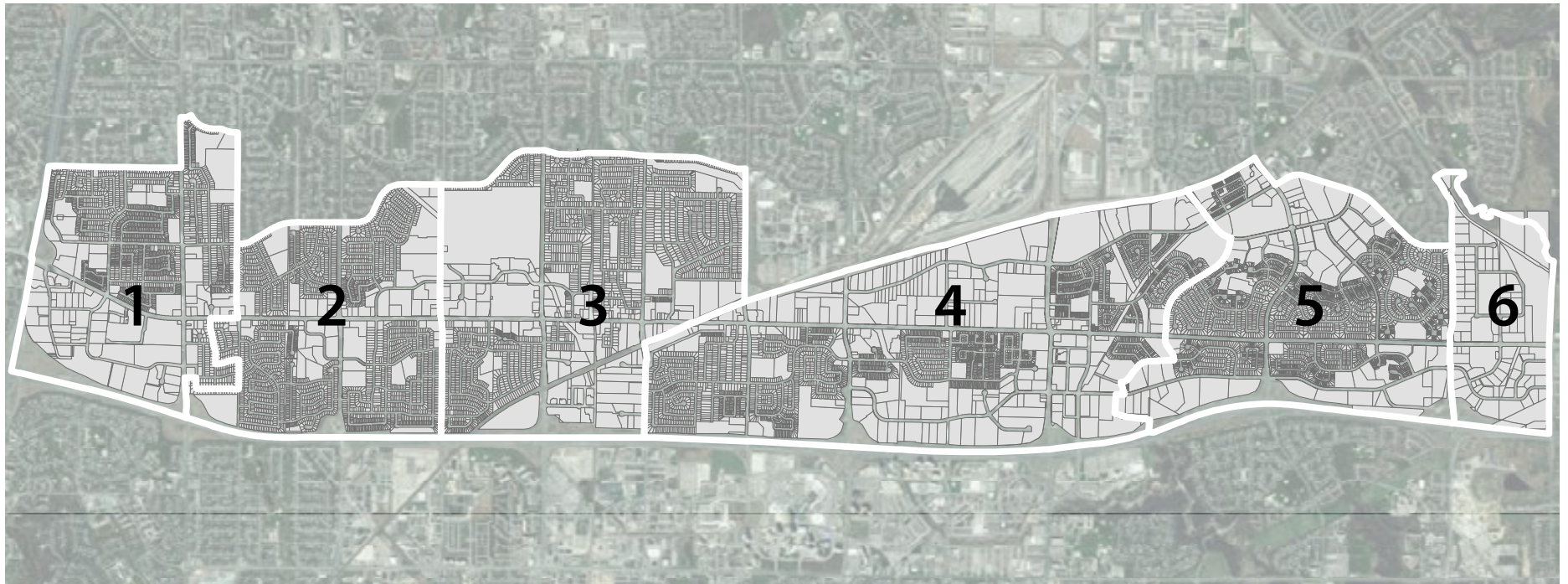


Figure 6. Sheppard Avenue East Corridor - Submarket Area Key Map

[This page intentionally left blank]

SUBMARKET AREA 1: CONSUMERS ROAD

Existing Physical Context

- Submarket Area 1 is bounded by Corinthian Boulevard to the north, Pharmacy Avenue to the east, Highway 401 to the south, and Highway 404 to the west.
- The Submarket Area consists of a variety of land uses north of Sheppard Avenue East, primarily single detached residential houses with high rise apartments along the main arterials. Additionally, there are few parks and some *Mixed Use Areas* along Victoria Park Avenue. In the southern portion surrounding Consumers Road Business Park Area, there are employment lands that contain of higher density office towers, surface parking lots, and larger parcels.
- Highways 401 and 404/DVP provide access to the regional markets, but also isolate the neighbourhood from the adjacent areas by limiting pedestrian circulation.

Existing Policy Framework

- The Submarket Area has several land use designations including *Neighbourhoods*, *Apartment Neighbourhoods*, *Mixed Use Areas*, *Parks*, and *Employment Areas*. The majority of the *Neighbourhoods* lands are north of Sheppard Avenue East, with pockets of *Apartment Neighbourhoods* at Highway 404 and Victoria Park Avenue and Sheppard Avenue East. There are also *Mixed Use Areas* concentrated along Victoria Park and along the southern side of Sheppard Avenue East. Lands south of these *Mixed Use Areas* along Sheppard Avenue East consist primarily of *Employment Areas*.
- Sheppard Avenue East and the southern portion of Victoria Park Avenue are identified Avenues in the City of Toronto Official Plan. No *Avenue Studies* have been completed at this time for these lands.
- There is an apparent lack of planning direction including a well-articulated open space plan in this car dominated street environment that likely needs improvement for the area to meet its full market potential. The ConsumersNext study that is currently underway is intended to deal with these matters and others impacting the business park area.
- The ConsumersNext Study was initiated in May 2015 and covers lands in the Consumers Road Business Park and areas around the Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue intersection.
- As per OPA 231, lands located on the Sheppard Avenue East and Victoria Park Avenue frontages around the Consumers Road Business Park have successfully been converted from *Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas*.

Market Outlook

The accessibility and exposure to 400 series highways and the DVP initially underpinned the success of the Consumer Road Business Park Area. The introduction of the Sheppard Subway at Don Mills Station has helped support high-density residential development in this area.

This submarket supports a significant number of jobs and is considered relatively stable, experiencing some reinvestment and renovation in the existing office buildings and increasing overall employment between 2001 and 2011. While demand for new condominiums in the area has recently dropped off due to what appears to be an oversupply condition, these current conditions do not detract from the market fundamentals that have and will continue to drive demand in this area.

The introduction of the new, connecting LRT service is likely to enhance the market demand for new high density developments in this area. The CRBPA also has new commercial investment and demand for the existing office buildings appears stable. The enhanced transit service and well-located proposed stops at Consumers Road and Victoria Park Avenue will improve the accessibility of the area, supporting demand for office and related uses.

In general, the western segment of the LRT corridor is beginning to emerge as a more complete community with a healthy mix of high density employment and residential uses. This emerging close live-work relationship is a positive factor that can support both office and residential developments as individuals seek to shorten commuting times.

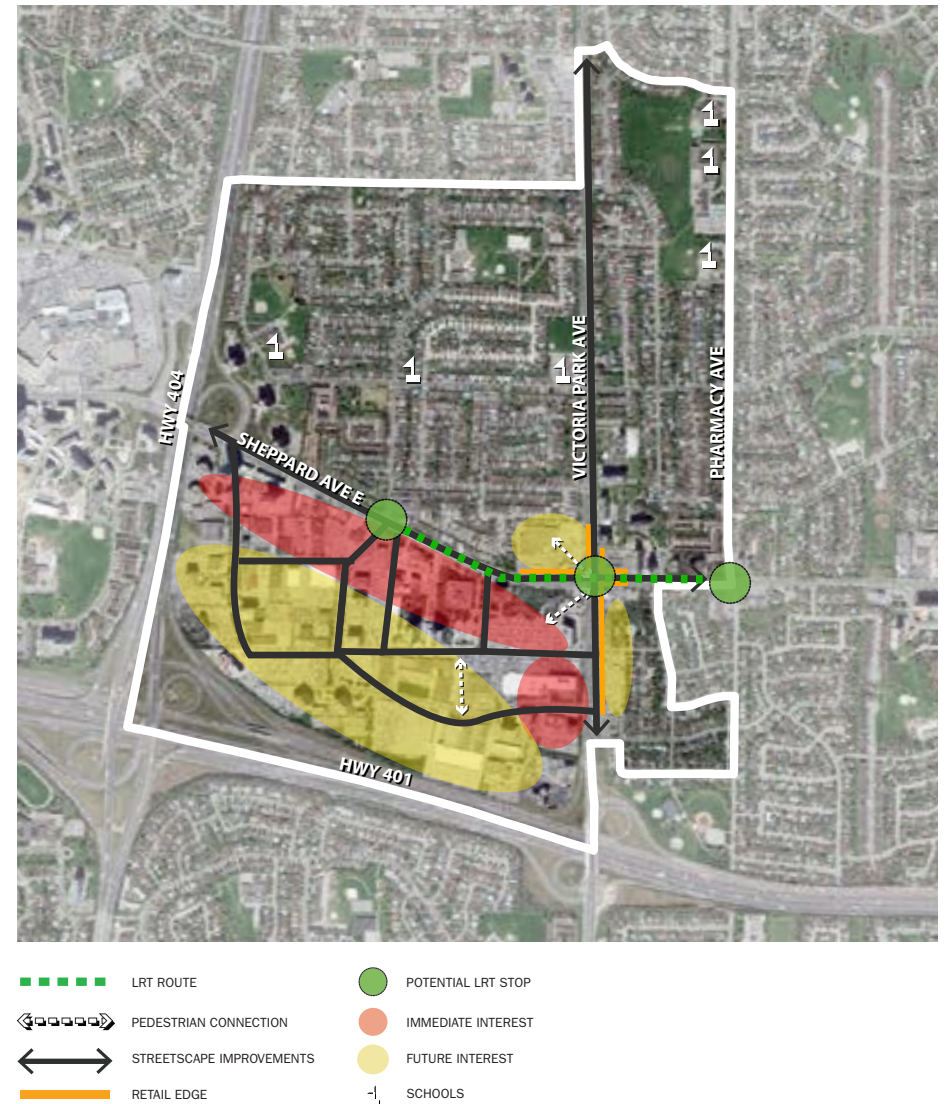
Key Considerations

Short Term (<5 Years)

- Along Sheppard Avenue East, explore opportunities for improved pedestrian crossings and streetscape enhancements to support future growth and connections to the LRT. This could include bike lanes, etc.

Longer Term (>5 Years)

- Through the ConsumersNext study:
 - Examine the potential for public realm improvements in Employment Areas, including the provision of sidewalks, street crossings, and park space.
 - Investigate opportunities to introduce green spaces.
 - Investigate market pressures and the impact on transit created by the conversion of *Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas*.
 - Evaluate built form types to guide future development in the area (buildings with active frontages, incorporating a mix of uses, etc.)
 - Conduct a Community Services and Facilities Study
- Implementation of the recommendations from the ConsumersNext Study.



Submarket Area 1: Consumers Road Key Considerations

SUBMARKET AREA 2: WARDEN

Existing Physical Context

- Submarket Area 2 is bound by Huntingwood Drive to the north, Birchmount Road to the east, Highway 401 to the south, and Pharmacy Avenue to the west.
- The area is centred around the intersection of Sheppard Avenue East and Warden Avenue, which is located on the higher table lands between branches of Highland Creek. The main intersection includes: commercial plazas, gas stations, and surface parking lots. There are high rise apartments located around Sheppard Avenue East and Birchmount Road as well as row townhouses on the south-west side of Warden Avenue and Sheppard Avenue East. There is a small natural area to the west of the plaza that is on the northwest corner of Sheppard Avenue East and Warden Avenue. A large proportion of Submarket Area 2 consists of single detached houses, six neighbourhood parks and seven schools.
- There is infill residential development of single and semi-detached homes along a former Hydro Corridor north and south of Sheppard Avenue East.

Existing Policy Framework

- The Submarket Area includes several land use designations including *Neighbourhoods*, *Apartment Neighbourhoods*, *Mixed Use Areas*, and *Parks*. The majority of land is designated *Neighbourhoods*, with *Apartment Neighbourhoods* concentrated along Sheppard Avenue East. *Mixed Use*

Areas are found at the centre of the Submarket Area at Sheppard Avenue East and Warden Avenue.

- This segment of Sheppard Avenue East is identified as an *Avenue* in the Official Plan. A Sheppard Avenue East Avenue Study was completed in 2011 to assess the lands anticipating future growth around Warden Avenue. There is a need to conduct further studies along portions of Sheppard Avenue East identified as an *Avenue* that do not have completed Avenue Studies.

Market Outlook

Submarket 2 roughly extends from Pharmacy Avenue to Birchmount Road and will accommodate five of the planned LRT stations. While development over the past 25 years has been limited, there have been a number of applications for significant new investments in this area. However, sales of these units have had mixed results, including affordable pricing and slow sales absorptions. Submarket 2 shows all the indications of a market that is on the verge of viability for high density uses. This area is likely to receive a significant market boost for high density residential development as a result of the LRT. Demand for office uses is unlikely to emerge given the attractiveness of the nearby Consumers Road Business Park Area. Commercial services and retail that depend on a growing population will benefit from incoming population but will have to compete for land or incorporate into more urban forms, perhaps via mixed-use buildings.

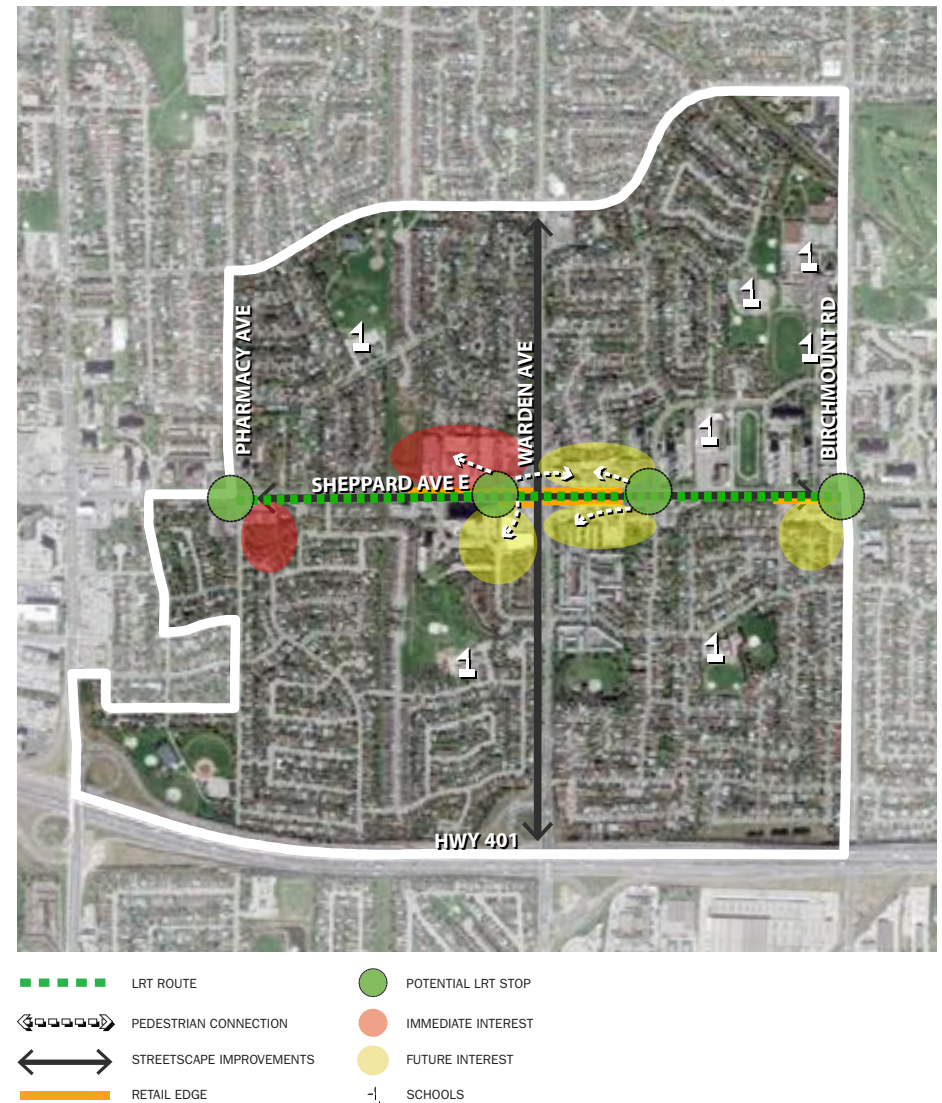
Key Considerations

Short Term (<5 Years)

- Potential pedestrian crossings and streetscape improvements should be considered, especially for the areas around the mixed use plazas surrounding Warden Avenue where anticipated growth and pedestrian activity will take place.
- Along Sheppard Avenue East, explore opportunities for improved pedestrian crossings and streetscape enhancements to support future growth and the LRT. This could include bike lanes, increased permeability for pedestrians, etc.
- Investigate opportunities for an improved open space network which could include: parkettes, plazas, amenity spaces and pedestrian links

Longer Term (>5 Years)

- Determine extent for additional planning analysis and guidance that is required. Additional investigation could take the form of the completion of an Avenue Study outside of the completed Sheppard Avenue East Avenue Study.
- Implementation of the recommendations from the Sheppard Avenue East Avenue Study.



Submarket Area 2: Warden Key Considerations

SUBMARKET AREA 3: AGINCOURT

Existing Physical Context

- Submarket Area 3 is centred at the intersection of Sheppard Avenue and Kennedy Road, and bounded by Birchmount Road to the west, Huntingwood Drive to the north, Highway 401 to the south and Brimley Road and Midland Avenue to the east.
- This area is characterized by predominantly low-density residential neighbourhoods, with medium to high-density built-form types such as townhouses and high-rise apartments concentrated around major intersections and transit corridors. The large residential Metrogate development is located at Kennedy and Highway 401 and includes residential towers and townhouses. Most of the stable neighbourhoods were developed in the post-war period. A majority of the older apartment buildings are in a concrete slab style.
- The main commercial core of the neighbourhood is Agincourt Mall, located on the northwest corner of Sheppard Avenue East and Kennedy Road. Another neighbourhood-scale commercial and institutional hub is located at the intersection of Sheppard Avenue East and Midland Avenue and extending eastward to Glen Watford Drive. The area around this intersection was the historical centre of Agincourt, marked by the Knox United Church and a surrounding cemetery where many early settlers are buried. The church and cemetery remains today, surrounded by neighbourhood commercial plazas,

the Agincourt Recreation Centre on Glen Watford Drive, and the Agincourt Collegiate Institute just north on Midland Avenue. The Agincourt GO station is located at the site of the original CN station in the area. The Agincourt neighbourhood also contains a pocket of industrial uses situated north of Highway 401 and east of Midland Avenue.

- There is a significant system of parks and open space areas within this segment. The Tam O'Shanter Golf Club is located just north of Agincourt Mall. The West Highland Creek traverses across the area, linking the golf course to multiple public open spaces and parks.

Existing Policy Framework

- The majority of the land uses are designated as Neighbourhoods. Adjacent to Sheppard Avenue East, there is a mix of *Apartment Neighbourhoods* and *Mixed Use Area* designations. *Employment Areas* are concentrated south of the CP Rail line and north of Highway 401.
- The segment of Sheppard Avenue between Birchmount Road and Brimley Road is identified as an *Avenue*. No Avenue Studies have been completed for Sheppard Avenue East within this Submarket Area.
- The Agincourt Secondary Plan (1999) applies to a portion of the study area around the intersection of CP Rail and GO Stouffville/CN Rail and includes the Agincourt Mall (refer to Site and Area Specific Policy 5). The Secondary Plan was developed with the Sheppard Subway as context, however the subway was only built to Don Mills and has been replaced by the Sheppard

East LRT. The Secondary Plan also does not include the area north of Sheppard Avenue, including the current Agincourt GO Station. The Secondary Plan should be updated to reflect the updated location of the LRT, existing GO station and potential intensification/infill in close proximity.

- The Secondary Plan sets out development densities for the area based on a number of road network improvements which included: widening of Sheppard Avenue East; Bonis Avenue to Sheppard Avenue East connection; a new connection from Reidmount Avenue south to Village Green Square (formerly Sufferance Road); extension of Lamont Avenue south to Emblem Court; east-west connection to Midland Avenue; and an extension of Sufferance Road (Village Green Square) to the GO Transit/Metrolinx rail line (complete).
- A Feasibility Study was recently completed to assess the possibility of a future road link and multi-use purpose pedestrian/cycling connections between Sheppard Avenue East/Agincourt GO Station and Village Green Square, including a future underpass at the Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail tracks.
- As per OPA 231, employment lands located at 2035 Kenned Road (Delta East hotel site) and all lands on Cowdray Court owned by TransMetro have successfully been converted from *Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas*.
- A Special Policy Area has been identified within the West Highland Creek floodplain between Sheppard Avenue East and Highway 401. The Official Plan prohibits development within the floodplain except for the lands designated in those Special Policy Areas. It should be noted that these

Special Policy Areas are not in force and effect and are subject to OMB approval. However, decision by the OMB has not yet been determined on this matter.

- Site and Area Specific Policy 262 applies to multiple low-density residential parcels along Midland Avenue, Huntingwood Drive, and Brimley Road to permit only detached dwellings and semi-detached dwellings.
- The residential neighbourhood on the northwest corner of Sheppard Avenue East and Midland Avenue, as well as the Knox United Church lands are identified for a potential heritage conservation study district study. This study has not been initiated.

Market Outlook

Within a renewed planning policy context and sustained market fundamentals the potential confluence of GO Transit, SmartTrack and LRT could have a transformative impact on the demand for land for a range of higher density uses. Evidence of the market positioning itself for the transit investment and expected urbanization is already apparent in the area through development activity, land purchases, and development applications. The Metrogate development has proven that buyers are prepared to invest now and wait for transit.

A significant amount of development potential is present at the Agincourt Mall and other sites along Sheppard Avenue East, as well as some sites south of the planned LRT alignment on Kennedy Road. As the transit improvements become closer to reality, the pressure for redevelopment is expected to be significant in the Agincourt area.

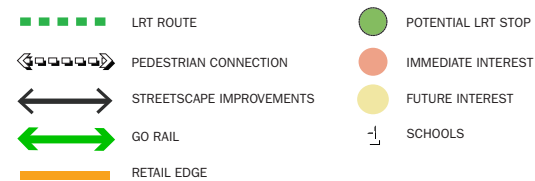
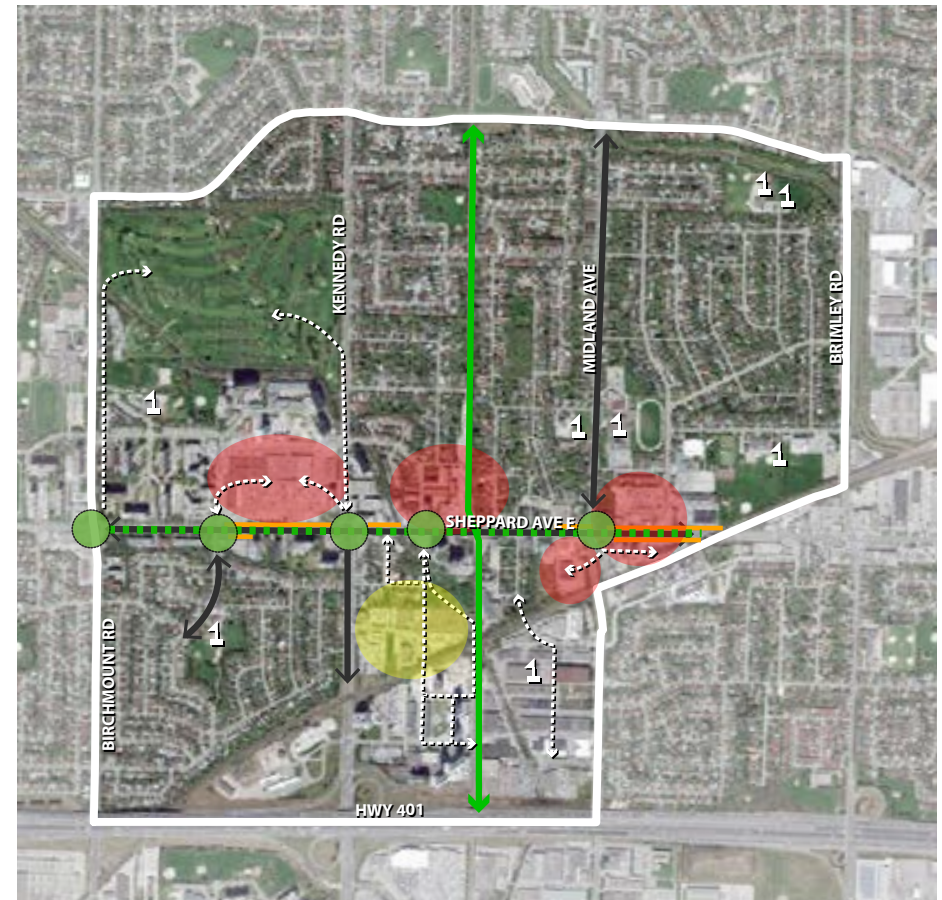
Key Considerations

Short Term (<5 Years)

- Explore existing and future connections between the LRT stations and the natural heritage and open space network.
- Understand pedestrian movement between the future LRT station, Agincourt GO station, TTC bus stations, and surrounding uses.
- Enhance pedestrian connections between existing and newly developed residential areas to the south and the LRT station.
- Assess the existing pedestrian connections along Sheppard Avenue between the LRT station and Agincourt Mall, and the neighbourhood hub at Sheppard Avenue East and Midland Avenue; identify the need for streetscape improvements for enhanced pedestrian connections between those key nodes.
- Conduct a comprehensive public realm plan that will improve connections between existing and proposed high-density developments along the 401 and the proposed LRT stops.

Longer Term (>5 Years)

- The future GO-LRT node along Sheppard Avenue should be considered in addition to all other future development.
- The Agincourt Secondary Plan should be made a priority and re-visited to include the planned LRT station at the existing Agincourt GO station, and explore potential intensification and/or infill of areas around the LRT station in the long term.
- Complete an Avenue Study to understand the built form types and scale appropriate for Sheppard Avenue East and densities that can support the future LRT.
- Initiate the Agincourt heritage conservation study to preserve existing heritage resources and to provide additional design standards for future development to complement the heritage character of the neighbourhood.
- Implementation of the revised Agincourt Secondary Plan.



Submarket Area 3: Agincourt Key Considerations

SUBMARKET AREA 4: MCCOWAN/MARKHAM

Existing Physical Context

- Submarket Area 4 is bounded by the CP rail (and associated rail yards) to the north, Tapscott Road to the east, Highway 401 to the south, and Midland Avenue to the west.
- The majority of the land north of Sheppard and along Highway 401 are employment lands. Between these *Employment Areas* are low-density residential neighbourhoods comprised primarily of single detached homes, with pockets of townhouses and apartment buildings along Midland Avenue and Markham Road. Houses along Sheppard Avenue are all back-lotted.
- Along Sheppard there are areas of *Mixed Use Areas*, with retail concentrated at Kennedy Road, Midland Avenue and Markham Road.
- The area has very limited space devoted for parks and open space, although there are *Natural Areas* within the submarket area.
- The CP rail, and associated rail yards, contribute to a disconnected road network to the north.

Existing Policy Framework

- Lands south of the CN railway and north of Highway 401 are designated as *Employment Areas*. Between these employment lands along Sheppard Avenue are lands primarily designated as *Neighbourhoods*. *Apartment Neighbourhoods* are located along Midland Avenue and Markham Road. *Mixed Use Areas* can be found at the intersections at Kennedy Road, Midland Avenue and Markham Road.

Market Outlook

Submarket 4 contains a significant supply of industrial and manufacturing uses on the north side of Sheppard Avenue East, which comprises a portion of the extensive Tapscott/Marshalling Yard Employment District. The submarket, which extends from approximately Brimley Road to Washburn Way, also contains some retail and office uses, low-rise residential, and apartment blocks.

Beginning at Submarket 4 and continuing east along the future LRT corridor, the residential market and socioeconomic data begins to show signs of weakening.

Market Outlook (Continued)

Submarket 4 contains a limited number of parcels that possess, from a physical planning perspective, good development potential for high-density residential and commercial development. However, aside from the area surrounding Markham Road, the existing real estate market has generally not supported new investment or shown evidence of significant market interest. The only significant activity has been an application for an office development on the southeast quadrant of McCowan Road and Sheppard Avenue, which is a positive sign.

Transit may offer some market benefits to the existing commercial and industrial tenants in terms of improving accessibility to employees, especially for lands that front Sheppard Avenue. However, the character of the area, the nature of the land use pattern, and weak market rents are challenges to significant reinvestment in this sector of the corridor. The City's IMIT program may be beneficial in overcoming such challenges.

The strong base of industrial employment uses from approximately Brimley Road to Markham Road also creates some market issues that could negatively impact on the ability of the south side of Sheppard Avenue to redevelop for more intensive forms of development.

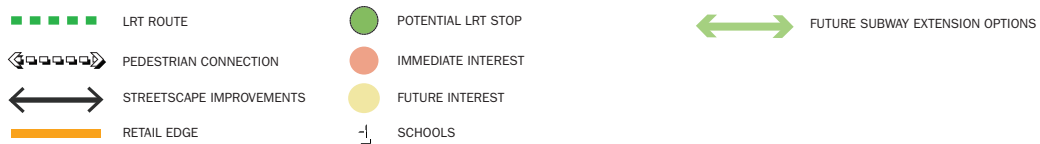
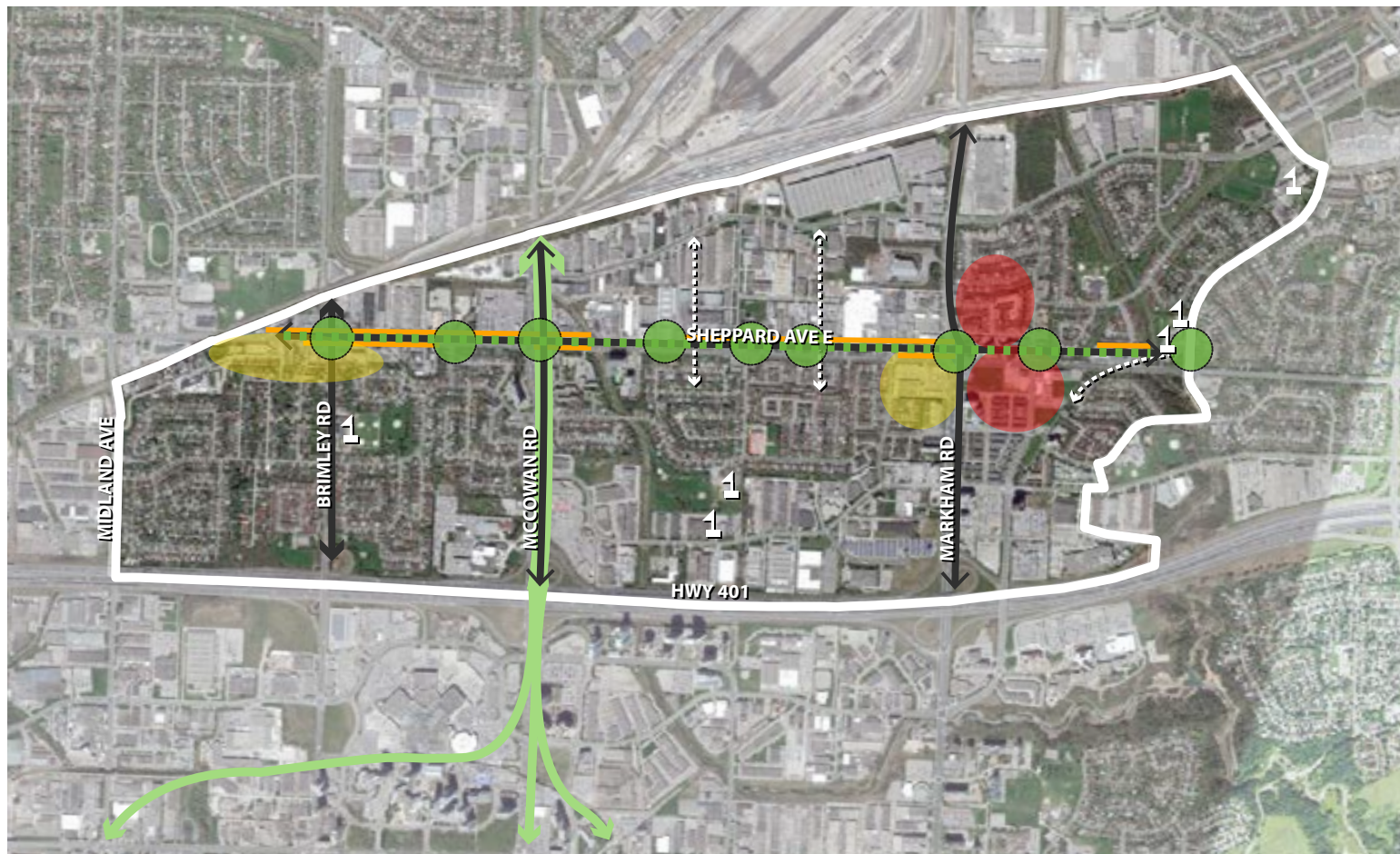
Key Considerations

Short Term (<5 Years)

- Examine the potential for public realm improvements in *Employment Areas*, including the provision of sidewalks and street crossings.
- A review of the existing and projected uses within the *Employment Areas* could identify potential improvements to the public realm and traffic improvements.

Longer Term (>5 Years)

- Investigate the built form and design of an asymmetrical street where employment uses are on the north side of Sheppard Avenue East and residential uses are on the south side of Sheppard Avenue East.
- Explore potential increases in height and density permissions within *Mixed Use Areas* along Sheppard Avenue.
- Consider proposed Scarborough Subway routing in tandem with any additional planning for the submarket area to best ensure that the transformative nature of a new subway is maximized.



Submarket Area 4: McCowan/Markham Key Considerations

SUBMARKET AREA 5: NEILSON

Existing Physical Context

- Submarket Area 5 is bounded by CP rail to the north, Morningside Avenue to the east, Highway 401 to the south and Washburn Way to the east.
- The area is centred on the intersection of Sheppard Avenue and Neilson Road, however the commercial core and focus of development interest is located north along Neilson Road between McLevin Avenue and Tapscott Road which includes Malvern Town Centre and townhouse and high-rise apartment buildings.
- The majority of the lands north and south of Sheppard Avenue are low-density residential neighbourhoods comprised of single and semi-detached homes. Houses along Sheppard are all back-lotted.
- Further south are large *Employment Areas* blocks adjacent to Highway 401.

Existing Policy Framework

- Generally the majority of the lands in Submarket Area 5 are designated as *Neighbourhoods*. North of Sheppard Avenue along Neilson Road there is a concentration of *Mixed Use Areas* and *Apartment Neighbourhoods*. *Employment Areas* are located adjacent to Highway 401.
- No area specific planning or urban design guidelines exist in the area.

Market Outlook

Submarket 5 contains a limited number of development opportunities due to lot patterns, including reverse lotted homes along Sheppard Avenue. The majority of the area is designated *Neighbourhoods* aside from the *Employment Area* south of Sheppard along Highway 401 and the *Mixed Use* and *Apartment Neighbourhood* areas surrounding Malvern Town Centre. Due to the development and policy restrictions along Sheppard Avenue, nearly all of the development in the area has occurred north of the future LRT alignment around the Malvern Town Centre.

The employment land to the south has remained relatively stable, with no significant new development expected as a result of the LRT.

The Malvern Town Centre area has experienced significant residential and commercial development in the past, and this is expected to continue moving forward. While the area is not within easy walking distance of the future LRT, demand has been strong in this location for stacked townhomes and within the older rental buildings surrounding the area.

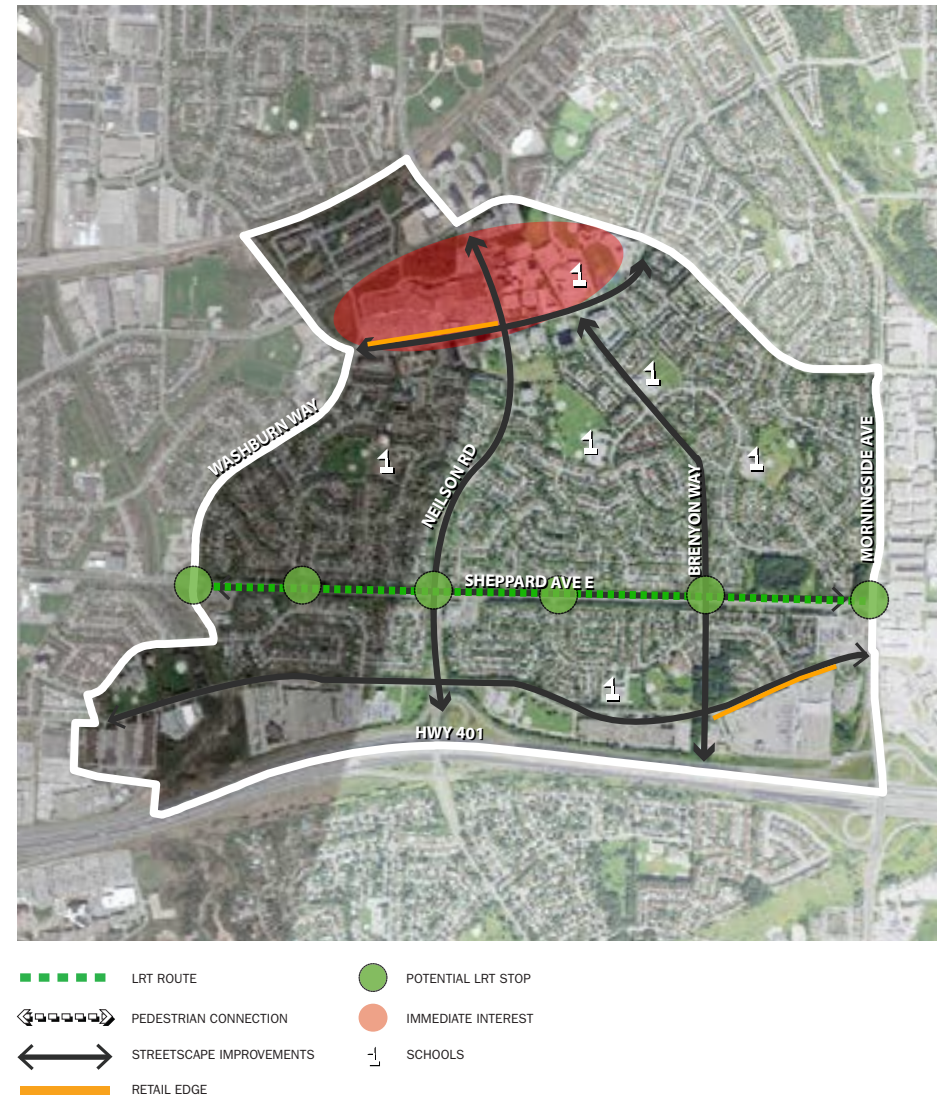
Key Considerations

Short Term (<5 Years)

- Explore what the character of the streetscape will be along this stretch of Sheppard Avenue East given the unique context (existing reverse-lotted houses). There is the potential to develop a unique “parkway” type of streetscape that includes an increased amount of permeable soft landscaping.
- Explore the potential for pedestrian crossings and streetscape improvements to improve access – e.g. bike lanes.
- Consider how north-south connections between the proposed LRT and the Malvern Town Centre can be improved.

Longer Term (>5 Years)

- Understand how the employment lands may evolve in the future (as per OPA231) and how this will affect the surrounding areas.



Submarket Area 5: Neilson Key Considerations

SUBMARKET AREA 6: WATER TOWER

Existing Physical Context

- Submarket Area 6 is bounded by Natural Heritage System to the north, Conlins Road to the east, Highway 401 to the south and Morningside Avenue to the west
- The submarket area is characterized by large industrial parcels with some big box retail.
- A portion of a hydro corridor crosses through the southern portion of the submarket area.
- The proposed Sheppard Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) is proposed for the north side of Sheppard Avenue East, within Employment Areas and adjacent to the a school and park to the east, and the Toronto Zoo and Rouge Park to the north.

Existing Policy Framework

- The entire submarket area is designated as *Employment Areas* with a portion of Utility Corridor crossing through in the southwest of the submarket Area. There is also a small portion of *Natural Area* that lines the northernmost edge of the Submarket Area and further south of Sheppard Avenue.

Market Outlook

Submarket 6 is the eastern terminus of the future LRT and will contain the maintenance and storage facility for the LRT vehicles. The area consists entirely of employment uses, such as manufacturing and warehouse uses as well as big box retail south of Sheppard Avenue East. This area is a relatively stable and healthy employment district.

Submarket 6 does not currently contain any major development opportunities of a significant scale. Higher density commercial developments such as major office will not be attracted to this location of the city, with the majority of development activity likely to be for large format retail and industrial uses.

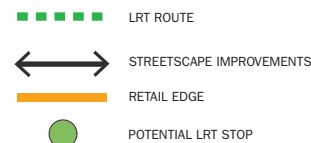
Key Considerations

Short Term (<5 Years)

- Ensure that appropriate access into the employment areas will be achieved through different modes of transportation including pedestrian and cycling routes.
- Ensure that the Maintenance Storage Facility is designed as a 'civic' building that aims to address some of the deficiencies in the existing public realm.

Longer Term (>5 Years)

- Understand the long term projections of the employment lands, and how the uses of the existing buildings may change over time.
- Provide amenities within the neighbourhood that will support a wide range of future employment uses, including the potential for service retail.



Submarket Area 6: Water Tower Key Considerations