

Our Scarborough Centre

Visioning Workshop

Summary Report



June 3, 2021
6:30-8:30 PM

Background

City of Toronto staff are updating the Scarborough Centre Secondary Plan, which was approved by Council in 2005. A Secondary Plan is a tool that guides change in a particular area of the City through detailed policies promoting compatibility and coordination among buildings and development, parks and public spaces, transportation, community services and facilities, and land use.

A lot has changed in Scarborough Centre since 2005, including a number of new residential towers, a new park and a new library. The future Scarborough Subway Extension will bring increased growth along with new station entrances and changes to the bus terminal.

The “Our Scarborough Centre” Study Area is bounded by Highway 401 in the north, Bellamy Road North in the east, Ellesmere Road in the south and west of Brimley Road in the west. The Study has four phases. Phase 1, completed in April 2019, resulted in an updated vision, [preliminary public realm plan](#), and [information report to Scarborough Community Council](#). We are currently in Phase 2, looking to better understand the issues, strengths, and opportunities facing Scarborough Centre. Phase 3 will launch in fall 2021.

Workshop Overview

On Thursday, June 3, 2021, staff from City Planning were joined by Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson (Ward 21) and Councillor Paul Ainslie (Ward 24) for a Virtual Visioning Workshop for the OurSC Study. Based on the expert advice of the City’s Medical Officer of Health to practice physical distancing to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and City staff, the event was held online and phone-in only via WebEx.

The workshop was promoted on the City of Toronto website and through the City’s social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) and Councillors’ communication channels. In addition, notices were delivered to over 14,700 addresses. Interested participants were invited to confirm their attendance via email up to one week before the workshop. All those who RSVP’d were sent a [Participant Workbook](#) for review and completion at their leisure.

Over 70 participants joined the meeting, including members of the public, representatives from Councillors’ offices, members of the Study team, and City staff. Participants were invited to complete a poll on WebEx to indicate their interest in the Study as Scarborough Centre residents, business owners, developers/landowners, current and future residents, and individuals who spend time in the Centre (see Figure 1).



We invite you to get involved!
Join us for a virtual Visioning Workshop and help shape Scarborough Centre's future – how it looks, how it feels, how people move within and through the Centre and the opportunities it provides in terms of jobs, community services, parks and open spaces and more.

Our Scarborough Centre

Virtual Visioning Workshop

Based on the expert advice of our Medical Officer of Health to practice physical distancing to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and our staff, this meeting will be online only.

Meeting Details

Thursday, June 3rd, 2021
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

RSVP required
See details on reverse

The City of Toronto Planning Division is undertaking a focused review of the Scarborough Centre Secondary Plan, which was approved by Council in 2005. The intent of the Study is to update and further articulate a clear and compelling vision, planning framework, and policies in the Secondary Plan to guide future development and support positive change and place-making over the coming decades in Scarborough Centre.

The Study is being undertaken in four phases and we are currently in Phase 2. The Study is expected to be completed in mid-2022. Background information and previous consultation summaries are available on the Study website (<https://www.toronto.ca/ourscarboroughcentre>). The Study Area is illustrated on the map below.

Join us on June 3rd at our virtual Visioning Workshop to learn more about the Study and participate in developing a plan for Scarborough Centre. Together with your fellow residents, business owners, landowners and City Planning, you will help shape the future of Scarborough Centre. You will help determine:

- the Vision and Guiding Principles for Scarborough Centre;
- where people will live, work and play;
- what kind and sizes of new buildings should be in Scarborough Centre;
- key components of the public realm, including where parks and open spaces will be located;
- how existing and new streets will look and function;
- what community services are needed and where; and
- what community features are needed for Scarborough Centre.



CityPlanTO @CityPlanTO · May 24

Do you live, work, shop, play or travel through Scarborough Centre? Tell us your ideas for parks, community facilities, buildings and transportation at our virtual Visioning Workshop on June 3. RSVP ourSC@toronto.ca by May 25. toronto.ca/ourscarborough...

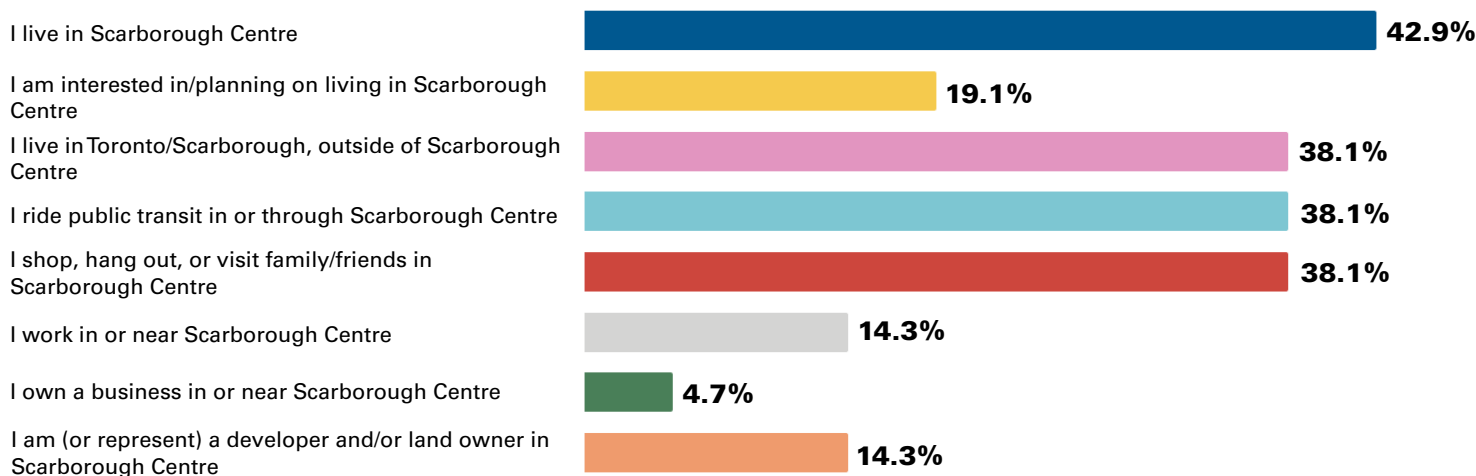


Image 1-2: Mail notice and sample social media post promoting the workshop



Figure 1 What brings you to the meeting today? Select all that apply.

n = 21 responses



Following opening remarks by Deputy Mayor Thompson, an overview of the Study was provided by Kelly Dynes, Senior Planner, Toronto City Planning. Next, lead consultant John Gladki of Gladki Planning Associates presented a summary of background research and key messages from consultation to date, as well as a draft Vision and set of Guiding Principles for Scarborough Centre. Urban design consultant Brent Raymond of DTAH presented the updated public realm plan and draft opportunities for the area. The full presentation is [available](#) on the project website.

Comments & Feedback

Participants were then divided into private breakout rooms for small-group discussions with the Study team. Workshop attendees provided feedback on the draft Vision and Guiding Principles as well as their thoughts regarding:

- the types, sizes, and locations of parks, public spaces, and associated amenities that should be in Scarborough Centre;
- the types and locations of retail, services, and community facilities that should be in Scarborough Centre;
- how mobility and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists can be improved in Scarborough Centre;
- where the tallest buildings should be located in Scarborough Centre; and,
- which built form elements and criteria are most important for Scarborough Centre.

Facilitators and notetakers guided and documented the discussion in each breakout room. After the workshop, five completed Participant Workbooks were also submitted to the Study email address. A high-level summary of responses is provided.



Draft Vision

“Scarborough Centre is envisioned as evolving from a car-oriented to a **transit-oriented community, and civic and economic hub**. Anchored by the new subway station and Scarborough Civic Centre, the Centre will be characterized by a **vibrant public realm, pedestrian and bike-friendly streets, with a mix of live-work-play uses in close proximity, a robust network of local parks and public open spaces, and diverse housing options** supported by easily accessible community services. **Sustainability and inclusivity** will be the cornerstones of all new development in the area.”

- Many participants said they found the draft Vision **compelling**, with a sufficient range of important topics. They were encouraged by its use of words like “**vibrant**” and “**diverse**” and the emphasis on a connected, **transit-oriented** community
- Improving the **public realm** was emphasized as a very important component of the draft Vision, as well as **accessibility** and attractive, well-maintained pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure
- Participants suggested that key components missing from the draft Vision include:
 - **Affordability**
 - Specific use of words like “**growth**” and “**expansion**”
 - **Ethno-cultural** diversity
 - **Safety**
 - **Current employment uses**
 - **Uniqueness** of Scarborough/the Centre’s geography and history
 - **Microclimate** of Highway 401 as an extremely windy barrier to walking and cycling, and contributor to the divide between North and South Scarborough
 - **Engagement** of community ideas and proposals for the Centre



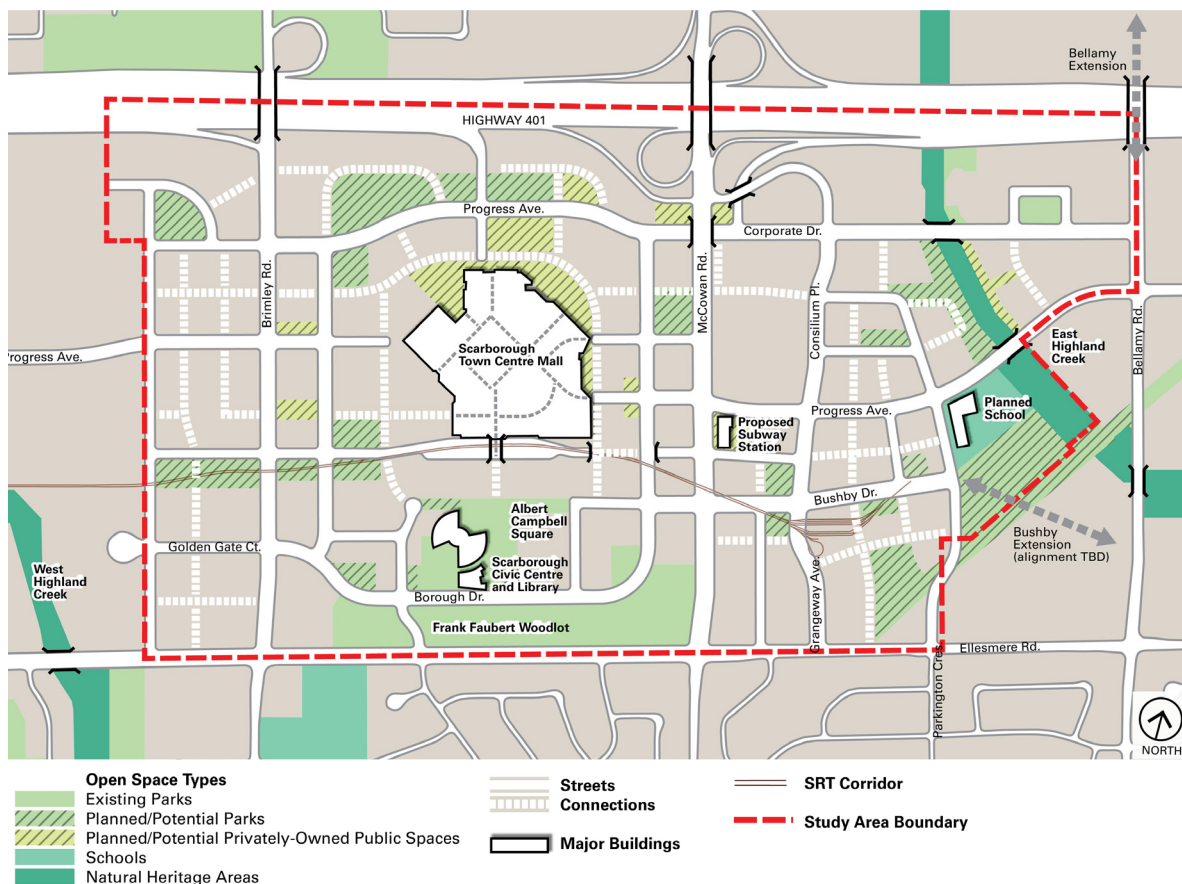
Draft Guiding Principles

1. Create **Distinct Neighbourhoods** with a **Varied Urban Form**
2. Make Scarborough Centre a **Vibrant and Exciting Place**
3. Create **Great Streets** with an Attractive Public Realm
4. Create a **Complete Community** with a Diverse Mix of Activities
5. Create **Quality Parks and Open Spaces**
6. Plan for **Active Transportation** and Improved **Mobility and Connectivity**
7. Build a **Sustainable and Resilient Centre**
8. Enrich **Community Services and Facilities**

- There was strong support from participants for the following principles:
 - Making Scarborough Centre a **vibrant and exciting** place
 - Creating **great streets**
 - Creating a **complete community**
 - Creating **quality parks and open spaces**
 - Planning for active transportation and improved mobility and **connectivity**
 - Building a sustainable and **resilient** Centre
 - Enriching **community services and facilities**
- Some participants found the guiding principles **too vague** or aspirational and suggested they should be **more specific** in addressing key issues
- Participants suggested that components missing from the draft Guiding Principles include:
 - Responsibility to **Indigenous communities** and their principles
 - **Green**
 - Boldness and **variability in architecture**/built form
 - **Seniors**
 - **Wayfinding**
 - Job creation and **employment**
 - **Accessible** and animated open spaces for all ages, incomes, and levels of ability

Park Types

- The majority of participants indicated that **large, programmable parks** (i.e., 3-5 hectares in size) are needed in Scarborough Centre. They suggested these parks be located near the future subway station, planned school site, and Scarborough Town Centre Mall
- Small- and medium-sized parks could be located north of the mall or near West Highland Creek
- Parks should be positioned in sunny locations, **away from arterials and highways**
- Parks should have **multiple uses** for mixed ages, income levels, and abilities in **all seasons**. Participants felt there is limited existing parkland for small children or elderly people
- There should be a combination of **active and passive parkland**, appealing to those who live and play in Scarborough Centre as well as those who work in Scarborough Centre
- The park system should be **linked and connected** rather than segmented. This can be achieved through bridges and dedicated walking and cycling paths
- Other suggestions included green roofs on buildings, a dedicated greenway for cycling, and adaptive reuse of the elevated portion of the SRT





Parks and Open Space Amenities

- Many participants emphasized that **public washrooms** are needed in Scarborough Centre
- Improved pedestrian connectivity including paths, walkways, benches, and **seating areas** is needed throughout Scarborough Centre, especially on Bushby Dr and Borough Dr
- Participants suggested the following amenities be included in Scarborough Centre parks:
 - **Outdoor fitness** facilities
 - **BBQ areas**
 - **Basketball, tennis, and pickleball courts**, particularly near the planned school/park area
 - **Playing fields** near the planned school/park area
 - **Skating rink** near the Civic Centre
 - **Skateboard park** west of Brimley Road
- All facilities must be **accessible**
- **Public art**, including sculptures that reflect the area's Indigenous and cultural history, should be located throughout the Centre, especially near the subway
- **Community gardens** are an opportunity to improve food security and foster cohesion. It was suggested to locate them near Corporate Drive, the planned school site, or the Civic Centre
- There was support for an additional park north of the Civic Centre
- **Dog parks** should be placed east of McCowan Rd, north of Progress Ave, and north of the Civic Centre
- Good **lighting** is needed in parks and open spaces to facilitate visibility but also controlled to prevent light pollution
- Open spaces like Albert Campbell Square could be improved to support **more animation and activity**
- Some participants think swimming pools are not needed in the Centre
- Naturalized parkland could be positioned near the future school site. The Frank Faubert Woodlot should be protected



Local Services and Facilities

- Many participants indicated that **child care centres** are needed in Scarborough Centre, to be located east of Brimley Rd and near the planned school site
- **Social service organizations** should be positioned near the future subway station and Civic Centre
- **Food and beverage retail** (e.g., cafes, bakeries, restaurants, LCBO) should be **locally-owned**, featured in building podiums, and near the Civic Centre area and future subway station
- An **arts venue** would work well near the Civic Centre, future subway station, or towards the north end of the Centre boundary
- Scarborough Centre needs all-day activity, including night life. There should be **flexible open space** for events like outdoor markets and movies in the park
- **Public art and lighting** were suggested as a means to attract people to the Centre
- An additional **library branch** could be located towards the north of the Centre near Progress Ave
- **Offices** should be close to the future subway station
- Care should be taken to **sustain existing businesses** in the area
- Brimley Rd and McCowan Rd were seen as key streets for grocery stores, service retail, and small-scale retail, while Progress Ave could feature medical offices/clinics
- Some participants felt a **community recreation centre** would be well placed at Corporate Dr & Consilium Pl or Grangeway Ave & Bushby Dr
- It was also suggested that the area could use a **tech hub**



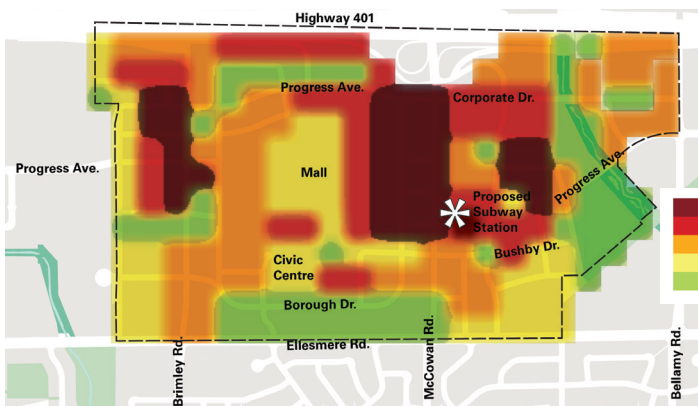
Active Transportation Network (Pedestrian & Cycling)

- Improvements are needed to **north-south connectivity** (e.g., crossing Highway 401, Scarborough Town Centre Mall to the public library via stroller/mobility device)
- **Protected bike lanes** are crucial to encourage more bike travel and protect cyclists from traffic
- The cycling network should **connect to surrounding cycling infrastructure** outside the Centre's boundaries
- Bike facilities should be in close **proximity to the mall and subway**. Several participants noted that Progress Ave should have bike infrastructure
- **Toronto Bike Share** stations should be expanded to Scarborough Centre
- Improvements are needed to **sidewalks** on Progress Ave, McCowan Rd, and Borough Dr in particular
- Safe connections are needed through and to/from the Centre, including **crossings from the future subway station** to the community amenities and parks west of McCowan Rd
- There were suggestions to include **bike tune-up stations, bike lockers, and water refill stations** throughout the Centre
- Several participants cited an opportunity to reuse space from **old SRT infrastructure** as a future elevated linear park, linked to other parks along its route
- **Better seating, lighting and visibility** is needed throughout the Centre and in the Frank Faubert Wood Lots
- West and East Highland Creek could be **more inviting to walk** and **better connected** with surrounding parks and the hydro corridor
- Areas west of McCowan Rd near the future subway station, and those on the Borough Dr-Progress Ave "loop" could be **pedestrian-focused** to promote vibrant foot traffic and improve safety
- One participant suggested that each precinct in the Centre should have **electric vehicle charging stations** to accommodate future residents' electric vehicle ownership

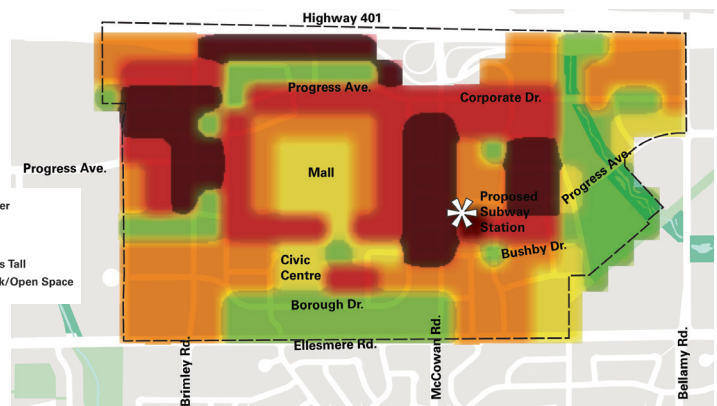


Height Locations

- The majority of community members prefer that the tallest buildings in Scarborough Centre be located **close to the future subway station** near Progress Ave
- Several participants indicated a preference for **height peaks in multiple locations** that would encourage people to walk through the Centre, such as along north-south corridors (e.g., Brimley Rd, McCowan Rd)
- There was also support for concentrating buildings **along Highway 401**, away from parkland and low-rise areas to the south in order to protect views and sunlight
- Participants emphasized that there needs to be a **mix of building types and heights** with both **residential and office uses**
- Children and families should be able to **walk to the planned school** from residential buildings
- There is **concern about density putting pressure on amenities**
- Participants want to see **dynamic built form and materials**, not “cookie cutter buildings”
- There was some discussion about how the Scarborough Town Centre Mall may change/redevelop within the next 30-50 years, and potential uses for those lands
- There is some concern about existing building heights and congestion



Single Main Peak option (Transit Node)



Multiple Peak option



Built Form

- The top 3 elements that participants considered most important to built form placement and design were:
 - **Sunlight on parks and open spaces**
 - **Sunlight on the sidewalk**
 - **Views** to open space and sky
- Sunlight access was cited as a key contributor for encouraging walking and biking
- Many participants also rated the following criteria as important:
 - Easy **access to parks and open spaces**
 - Creative building form and **interesting skyline**
 - Mix of **different building types** (mid-rise, high-rise, etc.)
- It was important to participants that built form have **high-quality design elements** (e.g., variety of materials on building facades)
- Some participants considered the following characteristics important:
 - **Light and privacy** for my dwelling
 - **Communal spaces** between buildings
- There was some discussion about individual preferences with respect to tower placement, separation, and building floorplates
- Larger setbacks will compromise the intimacy of street-level retail
- Participants emphasized the need for built form types and uses that promote **active, all-day activity** in Scarborough Centre (e.g., restaurants, arts & culture facility, recreation spaces, community event spaces)
- There is some concern that existing built form has set **precedents** that will limit varied urban form in the future, making it challenging to create distinct neighbourhoods in Scarborough Centre



Next Steps

Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson and Councillor Paul Ainslie delivered closing remarks, thanking participants for joining the Virtual Workshop and encouraging continued participation in the Study process. Phase 2 Public Consultation continues with the [Little Scarborough Centre](#) children's activity and the [#ShowUsSC](#) photo challenge. Consultation events are planned for Phase 3 beginning in fall 2021.

You can continue to contact City staff to provide your comments or ask questions directly. Please direct your feedback to ourSC@toronto.ca and visit the [Study website](#) for more information, materials, and meeting notices.