

Our Scarborough Centre

Landowners and Business Owners Virtual Open House

Meeting Summary



December 9, 2021
2:00-3:30 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 approved Scarborough Subway Extension will bring increased growth along with a new station and 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](#). Phase 2, completed in August 2021, included a virtual community [Visioning Workshop](#) and resulted in an analysis of existing conditions and development of preliminary development concepts, captured in a [background report](#). We are currently in Phase 3, focused on the analysis and testing of development concepts. Phase 4, in 2022, will include final design and Secondary Plan development.

Meeting Overview

On Thursday, December 9, 2021, staff from City Planning were joined by representatives from Deputy Mayor Thompson (Ward 21) and Councillor Ainslie’s offices (Ward 24) for a Virtual Open House for Landowners & Business Owners 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 Open House was held online and phone-in only. The purpose of the meeting was to present the development concepts that were generated based on the feedback received in Phase 2, answer questions and receive feedback from Scarborough Centre business owners and landowners.

Over 39 people joined the meeting, including 31 public participants as well as members of the Study team and City staff. Following opening remarks, consultants John Gladki of Gladki Planning Associates and René Biberstein of DTAH delivered a presentation that provided background on the previous Study phases and shared draft development options for Scarborough Centre, including strategies for building heights, land uses and density. The presentation is available on the [project website](#).

Toronto Community Consultation Meeting
Virtual

We invite you to get involved!
Join us for a Virtual Open House and learn more about the Our Scarborough Centre Study and help plan the future of Scarborough Centre.

Our Scarborough Centre
Landowners & Business Owners
Virtual Open House

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** and **phone-in** only.

Meeting Details
Thursday December 9, 2021
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Information and participation instructions provided on the next page.
Online materials available in advance at www.toronto.ca/OurScarboroughCentre

Background / Proposal
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. Phase 1, completed in May 2019, focused on synthesizing work completed to date, developing an updated vision and planning principles and creating a Draft Preliminary Public Realm Plan. Phase 2, completed in October 2021, focused on further development of Phase 1 work, preliminary development ideas and concepts, a visioning workshop and a detailed Background Report. All materials can be found on the study website.

Join us at the Landowners and Business Owners Virtual Open House to participate in Phase 3 of the Study, which will include:

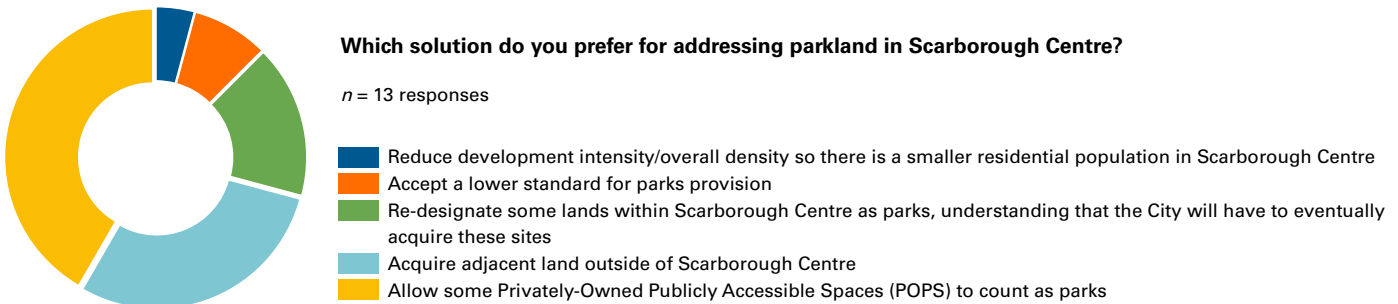
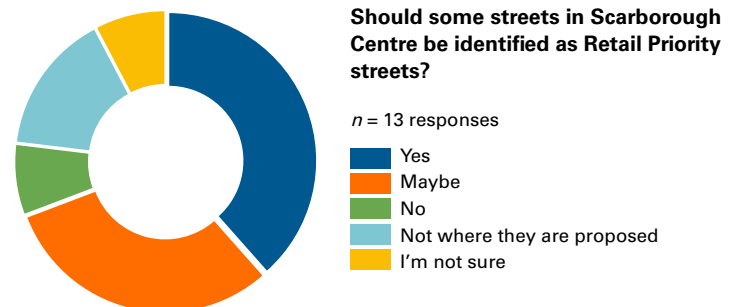
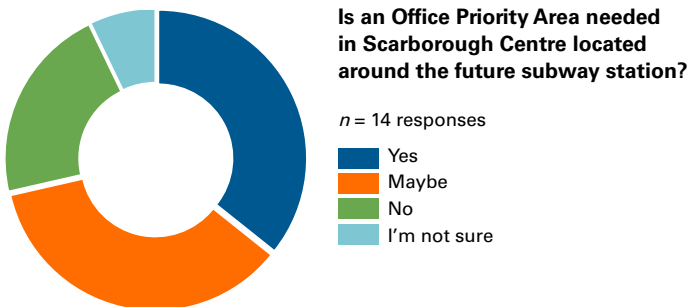
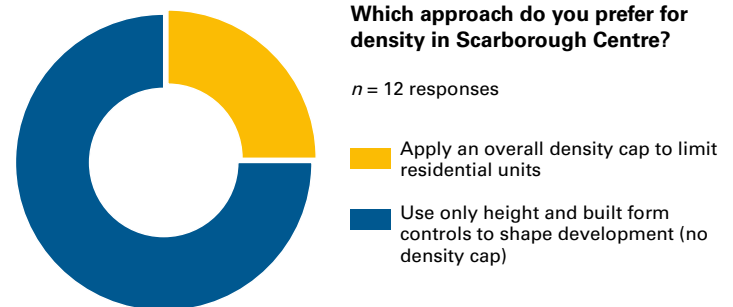
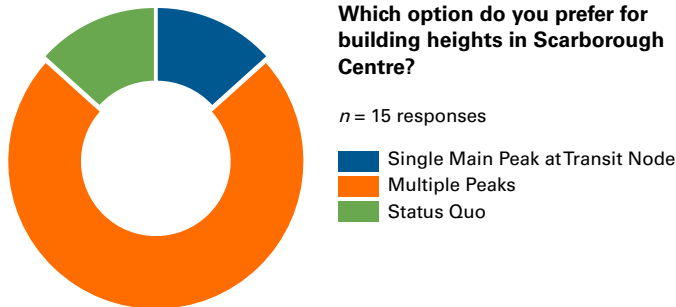
- an update on the status of the Study;
- three potential building height options;
- open space, land uses and built form strategies;
- opportunities for businesses and landowners to provide feedback; and
- next steps for the Study.

SCARBOROUGH CENTRE STUDY AREA

[Mail notice promoting the meeting](#)



During the presentation, participants were polled to understand their preferences on the preliminary development concepts. The poll results are presented below:



Participants then had an opportunity to ask questions and share their thoughts. Feedback was accepted in writing through the Q&A function on WebEx and verbally through the Raise Hand function. Over 22 questions and comments were received.

Questions & Answers

The participants asked a number of questions in the Q & A portion of the event. These are categorised by the following themes:

- Transportation
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Retail
- Miscellaneous

A full list of the questions received is below, accompanied by answers.



Transportation

- **Will there be protected bike lanes in the neighbourhood and will they be connected with the city's bike network?**

Yes, there will be protected cycling infrastructure in Scarborough Centre. [Slide 19 of the presentation](#) shows dedicated cycling connections creating a network of protected cycling infrastructure throughout the Study Area, augmented by trails/pathways (shown on the slide in green) and connecting to the larger existing and future City cycling network.

- **A couple of maps in the presentation show the Bellamy Road North extension going over Highway 401 (to Milner Avenue). Is this still part of the current plan for the area?**

Yes, the Bellamy Road North extension over Highway 401 (to Milner Avenue) is still part of the plan. It was recently reconfirmed as part of the completed [Scarborough Centre Transportation Master Plan](#) and it continues to be part of the plan in this Study as well. This extension will provide an additional and safe connection to and from the surrounding community, particularly for active modes of transportation, as there would not be highway on/off ramps proposed.

- **The location of the proposed new subway station and bus terminal is on McCowan whereas the SRT station is right next to Scarborough Town Centre Mall and Scarborough Civic Centre. Can you please elaborate?**

City staff did not select the location for the future Scarborough Centre subway station and bus terminal. However, we recognize the importance of these blocks in the Study Area. We are actively discussing how to facilitate connectivity between the future subway station and the mall to create a positive experience for movement between the spaces. Much of the site planning and design considerations will occur at a later stage when development applications are received for those blocks (for example, there could be a formal pedestrian station entrance with adjacent open space on the mall lands). In the meantime, City staff on the Scarborough Subway Extension team are working hard to coordinate with Metrolinx and others to ensure there are appropriate connections to, through and around the future transit terminal and surrounding area.

- **Could you elaborate on how the subway location can create employment opportunities and public realm opportunities (e.g., improving access to Albert Campbell Square)?**

This is beyond the scope of the Our Scarborough Centre Study. However, staff are working closely with Metrolinx to ensure the public realm remains high on the priority list and transit-oriented development is provided on top of the future subway station and bus terminal, integrated within our vision for all of Scarborough Centre.

- **Is there a design for the future subway station and bus terminal? Currently Scarborough Centre has many bus routes terminating there. Will the same be the case for the new station?**

The planned bus terminal and subway station are on the same property, known as 120 and 140 Grangeway Avenue. This bus terminal will replace the existing one and accommodate bus



routes. The design of the station is beyond the scope of the Our Scarborough Centre Study. Metrolinx will engage the public in consultation soon; more information can be found [here](#).

- **What planning is involved for parking in the new retail frontage areas?**

This level of detail is beyond the scope of the Our Scarborough Centre Study. The City of Toronto is undertaking a review of parking requirements city-wide; more information can be found [here](#).

- **With the increase in high density residential, especially on the northern perimeter of Scarborough Centre (north of the mall), what planning is there to handle increased traffic on Progress Avenue and surrounding roads?**

As this area grows, it is expected that a shift in travel behaviour by Scarborough Centre residents and workers will change the modal share. With approved developments soon to be built, current transportation patterns cannot be sustained: the capacity of the road system is finite. Given trends occurring elsewhere, we anticipate a shift from car use to other more sustainable transportation options such as walking and cycling locally and taking transit for longer distances. Our transportation specialists indicate that sustainable modes, particularly transit (for example, the future Scarborough Subway Extension), will be able to accommodate the increase in population to the overall transportation system.

Parks and Open Spaces

- **Would it be possible to address the parkland shortfall with a park on the old SRT track (similar to the High Line in New York City)?**

In addition to the parks presented in the development concepts, we will be looking for other spots to address the parkland shortfall. We are hoping to make use of some of those lands in the SRT corridor in the future. Parkland in this location could connect well to the planned linear green area just to the west (see [slide 48 of the presentation](#)).

- **I understand the area has a lack of potential parkland space. Have you tried counting the POPS (privately-owned publicly accessible spaces) in the calculation of parkland to see how they might improve the ratio of parkland per person? Does this bring the ratio closer to what has been planned for other Centres in the GTA? Depending on how those POPS are designed, they could work as the equivalent of parkland and achieve a closer target.**

POPS contribute to open spaces in the Centre, but including them in the parkland ratio still does not get us close to the target. We are short by the equivalent of 3.6x the footprint of the Scarborough Town Centre Mall site. It is important to remember POPS are privately-owned publicly accessible spaces and serve a different function than public parkland.

- **Are there areas in the City that actually do meet the parkland target, or is the target unrealistic in general?**

Considering the City as a whole, the average parkland per person is higher than the target in the Official Plan. It is difficult achieving this target in the *Centres* where there are higher



densities and existing developments. Residents living in these multi-unit dwellings do not have access to front yards and backyards like those living in lower density areas, so it can be argued that the demand for and importance of open space is even higher.

- **Regarding the provision of parkland, could you expand the boundaries to look, for example, further east or south for additional space?**

Our first priority is to try and solve the parkland challenge within the boundaries of the Scarborough Centre Secondary Plan Study Area, but we are exploring all options and welcome feedback on the different alternatives we have presented.

- **What cash in lieu would result from the proposed density scenario?**

This cannot be determined at this point in time. Current Official Plan and Secondary Plan policies indicate a preference for actual land dedicated to parks, not cash in lieu of parkland, and this is always the first approach taken with development applications. In Scarborough Centre, we are identifying realistic potential sites for future parks so that we may protect them. The mechanisms for achieving this are being explored City-wide as the City reviews its parkland dedication by-law and cash-in-lieu rate.

- **With POPS, it depends on how you design them and integrate them into the surrounding area and uses. These spaces can serve as open spaces for residents (e.g., a plaza). Does the City have a way of defining how POPS should be used from a legislative or urban design point of view?**

The City has [guidelines](#) on the design of POPS and corresponding legal agreements. POPS represent a valuable amenity space; however, we are limited in the types of uses that they can provide. Public parkland must serve the wider interests of the population and can include a wide variety of different purposes such as a soccer field, baseball diamond, passive park or splash pad.

Retail

- **Will there be mixed use in Scarborough Centre, like retail at ground level and other uses (like residential) on top? Is this what would be planned for Retail Priority Streets?**

Yes. Our vision for Scarborough Centre is a high-density area that includes mid-rise and tall buildings. Storefronts and active frontages cannot be located everywhere in the Centre, so our proposal for Retail Priority Streets suggests where these can be concentrated. Indeed, retail would primarily be located at the podium level (ground floors).

- **In retail uses, will there be prioritization for local businesses vs. chains? I don't want a bunch of Shoppers Drug Mart/Tim Horton's!**

The City cannot dictate what kind of retail will locate in any particular location – that is entirely up to the market. However, our team can look at successful main streets in the city and elsewhere to identify what works well and is geared to the needs of the local business you describe (for example, certain sizes of retail storefronts, street patterns on a typical main street).



Miscellaneous

- **Will you construct noise barriers on the 401? That section of the Centre is plain-facing with not much there yet.**

This is beyond the scope of the Our Scarborough Centre Study. However, the overall plan for Scarborough Centre includes identifying types of uses and built form that are appropriate along Highway 401; there may be noise compatibility studies and mitigation measures required, depending on the type of use that is adjacent to Highway 401.

- **How do plans by Oxford Property Group affect the Secondary Plan and vice versa? Is there agreement/alignment?**

City staff cannot speak on behalf of Oxford Properties; however, staff have engaged in conversations with Oxford for a number of years about their ideas and thoughts for all of their land holdings in Scarborough Centre. Oxford submitted an application for an Official Plan Amendment and are looking to set up specific policies to guide development on their lands. A preliminary report will be considered at Scarborough Community Council in January 2022. As part of that preliminary report, City staff are recommending that Oxford's application be considered concurrently with the Our Scarborough Centre study to help ensure that policies and direction to guide development in Scarborough Centre are consistent.

- **What is the intent with regard to existing uses, especially employment uses? Where higher-density built form is proposed, it seems to imply that those employment uses will disappear.**

Scarborough Centre is already designated a mixed-use area, and we are working with and building on that designation. We recognize that along the edges of Scarborough Centre, there are some employment uses. We expect they will remain for the foreseeable future and do not intend to expand into those adjacent *Employment Areas*. However, we can speculate on what may happen on those lands if/when they develop in the very long term, based on the mixed-use designation. We are looking at how we can facilitate future connections beyond the Centre to both East and West Highland Creek, and considering what type of built form can occur within the Centre and on its periphery as well.

- **Will there be any intensification in the surrounding area? Seems a bit odd to not consider allowing even mid-rise zoning for the area south of Ellesmere.**

Scarborough Centre is one of four *Centres* identified City of Toronto Official Plan where significant growth is anticipated over time. We are not looking at intensification beyond the boundaries of Scarborough Centre as part of this Study. The lands south of Ellesmere are designated as *Neighbourhoods* under the City of Toronto Official Plan.

- **Do we need an additional school constructed in the area, given the increase in development? I have seen other places where a school is built on the podium of a site with a tower above.**

As part of this Study, we are undertaking a review of community services and facilities for the area. We will be sharing our preferred developing concept and potential future population



growth with our sector partners so that they can identify their needs going forward. With respect to schools, there is a site on the east side of the Centre at 705 Progress Avenue that is jointly owned by the City of Toronto and the Toronto District School Board. It has always been anticipated that this site would house a future school and park.

Comments & Feedback

In addition to the Q&A, the following comments were shared by participants during the meeting:

- If the City sees Consilium Place as a road with street-fronting retail, I think this will necessitate some improvements to the existing public realm. I understand the City works with developers to do this as they come forward with applications, and want to iterate that corridor work on the whole street will be necessary to create a natural retail street where retailers can see the potential. Doing it block-by-block or project-by-project will not bring momentum and interest by retailers – you need an interesting public realm and lots of pedestrian circulation. The City should study how projects can start creating public realm aspects while still requiring developers do their part.*
- We completed a POPS in Liberty Village recently. It is designed as a plaza and has become a nice anchor in the area. If you were to ask a resident if it is considered the equivalent of park space, it would, from their point of view, as it allows them somewhere to sit and chat over a cup of coffee. At the end of the day, if it is an actual park belonging to the City or a privately-owned area that is open to the public, it serves the same way and should be justifiable from a parkland ratio perspective.*

Next Steps

Tyler Hughes, Planner with Toronto City Planning, concluded the meeting by explaining the next steps of the Study and outlining how landowners and business owners can continue to provide their feedback, including through the [short online survey](#) or via email to ourSC@toronto.ca. Please visit the [Study website](#) for more information, materials, and meeting notices.