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collective

Danforth Avenue Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis

**Prepared for the City of Toronto Economic
Development and Culture Division**

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Three Sixty Collective was retained by the City of Toronto Economic Development & Culture Division to undertake a Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis of Danforth Avenue as a component of a more comprehensive Complete Street and Planning Study. The Study Area was defined by the boundaries of the four BIAs along the Danforth and extends generally from Broadview Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue.

A broader context for the study is provided by the Toronto Main Streets Study (The Current State and Future of Toronto 's Main Streets) that Three Sixty Collective completed in January 2020 (note the research related work was gathered in 2019). It identified general trends, strengths and issues impacting main street small businesses including those along Danforth Avenue Study Area.

The following data were collected in January and February 2020 and analysed:

- Business mix and vacancy along the Danforth,
- Retail property sales and rental data,
- Number of people visiting a selection of businesses on different days of the week and time of day,
- Cell phone mobility data to determine Danforth visitors' postal codes and trade area analysis,
- Demographic and expenditure data for the trade areas and neighbourhoods within walking distance of the Danforth and the 65% visitation trade area.

In addition, a workshop was held with representatives from the four BIAs:

The study was to have interviewed pedestrians along the street in May 2020 to identify the method of transportation used to reach the Danforth and additional qualitative information (origin/destination survey). However, this component of the research had to be cancelled due to the impact of COVID-19.

It is important to emphasize that most of the data was collected by the end of February 2020, just before the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact Toronto and lock-downs and business closures were mandated (which started on March 13, 2020). The research provides a picture of the state of area's retail vitality pre-COVID. Some commentary is offered in the body of the report as to how the pandemic may have altered the situation. We were able to analyse cell phone data for the second half of March 2020 in comparison to January and February. This showed that visits to the Danforth decreased by about 33% from the average levels between January 1 and mid-March. One might reasonably speculate that April data would have shown further a decrease since additional



business categories were required to close. However, a full assessment was beyond the scope or time frame of this study.

The key findings are summarized below:

Retail Vitality

Overall, Danforth Avenue is a stable main street with low vacancy.

- The Danforth Avenue Study Area has fairly continuous linear retail frontage on both sides of street.
- The collective business community benefits from a good mix of strong support from the immediate neighbourhood plus significant draw from the broader region.
- The retail mix is complemented by other neighbourhood-servicing amenities, such as day care centres, schools, houses of worship, parks, etc.
- Many of the Study Area's businesses are busy throughout the day and across the days of the week.
- Overall, these characteristics provide a resilient foundation for the street to adapt to changing markets and trends without a huge impact.

There is quite a bit of variation in the business mix and structure along the street that is summarized in the body of the report. To summarize at a high level, the areas east and west of Jones Avenues function differently from each other in terms of physical structure, business mix, neighbourhood demographics and trade area draw. This brings a different set of opportunities and challenges to these different sections of the street.

Greektown stands out in being highly dependent on food services in its business mix (accounts of 26% of commercial floor space). This sector has been transitioning away from a strong Greek and a significant late evening focus in recent years, and unlike most other areas of the city, food services haven't been increasing in this area. Even before the impact of COVID-19, there were some signals that this sector needed adaptation.

Another reality is that many businesses are reliant on Danforth Avenue for their loading and servicing requirements, especially those located on the south side of the street west of Jones.



Trade Area

Analysing cell phone mobility data indicated that each BIA serves quite different trade areas.

- Only Greektown attracts significant visitors from the entire study area.
- Broadview Danforth has diminished appeal to residents living east of Jones.
- Danforth Mosaic and Danforth Village have diminished appeal to residents who live west of Jones but do draw from Scarborough (especially Danforth Village).

People living within walking distance account for a high proportion of visits, especially in Broadview/Danforth.

Demographic Characteristics of Neighbourhoods within Walking Distance

As noted, the neighbourhoods east and west of Jones Avenue (approximately) have quite distinct characteristics. In addition, income levels south of the Danforth tend to be higher than north of the Danforth.

In general, the western neighbourhoods have a stable and older population with above average household income levels.

- There is a very low rate of population increase.
- While relatively well off financially and strongly attached to the local neighbourhood, this segment of the population does not tend to spend as much on some retail goods and services as younger families with children or urban singles/couples with no children.

The eastern neighbourhoods are more dynamic and in transition.

- Younger families with children are increasing around Danforth Mosaic.
- Danforth Village is experiencing redevelopment and housing intensification.
- Danforth Village's immediate neighbourhood is quite different from other areas. It has a low average household income, more first generation Canadians and higher proportion of people with non-English mother tongues.

Neighbourhood residents all along the Danforth show strong propensity to use transit to commute to work. Businesses near subway stations benefit and are quite busy weekday late afternoons and early evenings, especially those selling local neighbourhood convenience-oriented goods and services or providing places to gather and socialize. The western neighbourhoods also bicycle and walk to work to an above average extent.



A high proportion of people using public parking spaces along the Danforth live in the immediate neighbourhood. People are driving to the Danforth from the local area to a significant extent. Unfortunately, it's not possible to identify the proportion of total visitors who drive versus walk, bicycle or use transit to reach the Danforth since the survey of pedestrians had to be cancelled due to COVID-19.

Key Opportunities:

Danforth east of Jones has significant intensification opportunities and is benefiting from increasing support for local neighbourhood-oriented shopping. Intensifying offers the opportunity to strengthen the existing retail clusters. Gaps in the retail frontage would be good locations for non-retail neighbourhood amenities such as small urban parks and gathering places and community facilities.

Many of the blocks east of Jones are longer than is ideal for cross-shopping. The commercial fabric would be strengthened if it were feasible to add traffic lights and/or pedestrian crosswalks at key locations as ways to increase accessibility into the nearby neighbourhoods and to improve pedestrian flows.

Key Threats:

The neighbourhoods west of Jones may begin to experience a bit of stagnation in retail expenditure growth. Businesses may need to develop new markets, products and services to adapt.

Greektown's reliance on restaurants already has been mentioned. This sector was already facing some challenges before the pandemic. A major decrease in the area's restaurant sector could dampen its vitality and potentially increase vacancy rates in at least the short term.

Conclusion:

On the whole, the Danforth Avenue Study Area, pre-pandemic, was a strong, resilient main street with good connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods. COVID-19 is creating major challenges for its business community, as it is for retail businesses and shopping districts throughout the city and around the globe. Multi-faceted actions are necessary and are in the process of being implemented to ameliorate the impact and support the survival and recovery of the business community. In that it started from a position of strength with a resilient and diverse business mix, we feel that Danforth is well positioned to recover its former retail vitality.



1.0 Introduction

Three Sixty Collective was retained by the City of Toronto Economic Development & Culture Division to undertake a Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis of Danforth Avenue as a component of a more comprehensive Complete Street and Planning Study. The Study Area was defined by the boundaries of the four BIAs along the Danforth and extends generally from Broadview Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue.

A broader context for the study is provided by the Toronto Main Streets Study (The Current State and Future of Toronto 's Main Streets) that 360 Collective completed in January 2019 (research was conducted in 2019) (<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/public-consultations/retail-main-streets-study/>). The Study identified general trends, strengths and issues impacting main street small businesses. The Study's analysis of global trends impacting retailing and main issues impacting main street small business are summarized in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report. The global trends summary includes comments about how the current COVID-19 pandemic may be influencing this context.

The following data were collected in January and February 2020 and analysed:

- Business mix and vacancy along the Danforth,
- Retail property sales and rental data,
- Number of people visiting a selection of businesses on different days of the week and time of day,
- Cell phone mobility data to determine Danforth visitors' postal codes and trade area analysis,
- Demographic and expenditure data for the trade areas and neighbourhoods within walking distance of the Danforth and the 65% visitation trade area.

In addition, a workshop was held with representatives from the four BIAs:

Appendices 3 through 6 outline the methodology that was used and summarize and interpret each of the data sets.

The study was to have interviewed pedestrians along the street in May 2020 as part of an origin/destination survey to identify the method of transportation used to reach the Danforth and additional qualitative information. However, this component of the research had to be cancelled due to the impact of COVID-19.

It is important to emphasize that most of the data was collected by the end of February 2020, just before the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact Toronto and lock-downs and business closures were mandated (which started on March 13, 2020). The research provides a picture of the state of area's retail vitality pre-COVID. Some commentary is offered in the body of the report as to how the



pandemic may have altered the situation. We were able to analyse cell phone data for the second half of March in comparison to January and February. This showed that visits to the Danforth decreased by about 33% from the average levels between January 1 and mid-March. One might reasonably speculate that April data would have shown further a decrease since additional business categories were required to close. However, a full assessment was beyond the scope or time frame of this study.

2.0 Context

The **Current State and Future of Toronto's Main Streets** report identified a number of drivers that have been impacting the retail sector around the world. The drivers are grouped into three themes:

- Changing consumer shopping behaviours and technology;
- New retail experiences; and
- Retail and community building.

COVID-19 has impacted many of the drivers. The extent to which the impacts will be lasting is unknown at the present time and a comprehensive analysis is beyond the scope of the current study. It does seem clear that COVID-19 is:

- Accelerating consumers' use of digital technology and making it more essential that businesses implement digital strategies to survive. This shift is likely to be long term.
- Reducing sales productivity per unit floor space, at least until physical distancing requirements are removed. In the short term, this is making rents negotiated before the pandemic unaffordable. In the longer term, there could be a dampening impact on rental levels and the value of retail real estate if social distancing requirements remain necessary for a protracted period of time.
- Constraining the social aspects of the retail experience as well as dampening previous trends towards sharing and re-using goods will be greatly constrained until people feel comfortable congregating again.
- Accelerating innovation and experimentation with new business practices. Many new business concepts are being launched, some of which will have staying-power.
- Pop-up and modular retail spaces may well increase in the post-COVID recovery period to animate and utilize vacancies and enable retailers to test new business lines or locations with minimal investment. They may also be part of a strategy to help entrepreneurs who lost their businesses during COVID regroup and start up again.



The **Current State and Future of Toronto's Main Streets** report confirmed the significant role that main streets and their independent businesses play in the Toronto economy and quality of life. Recent trends are summarized, including a general decrease in traditionally defined retail stores and an increase in services, especially food, recreation and amusement services. The research identified critical factors for business success and challenges that main street businesses are experiencing. Recommendations were made for how the City could better support this sector. The study was updated in the summer of 2020 to consider the impact of the first few months of the pandemic. It is available at <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/public-consultations/retail-main-streets-study/>. The City has advanced action on several of the fronts identified in the report as part of its COVID-19 business support response.

The pandemic has shone a light on main streets. Now that so many businesses are shuttered, people, governments and organization in Toronto, Canada and around the globe have become vividly aware of the value they contribute to communities.

3.0 Overview of Findings

The Complete Street and Planning Study Area includes the majority of properties in the four BIA areas along Danforth Avenue between Broadview and Victoria Park Avenues:

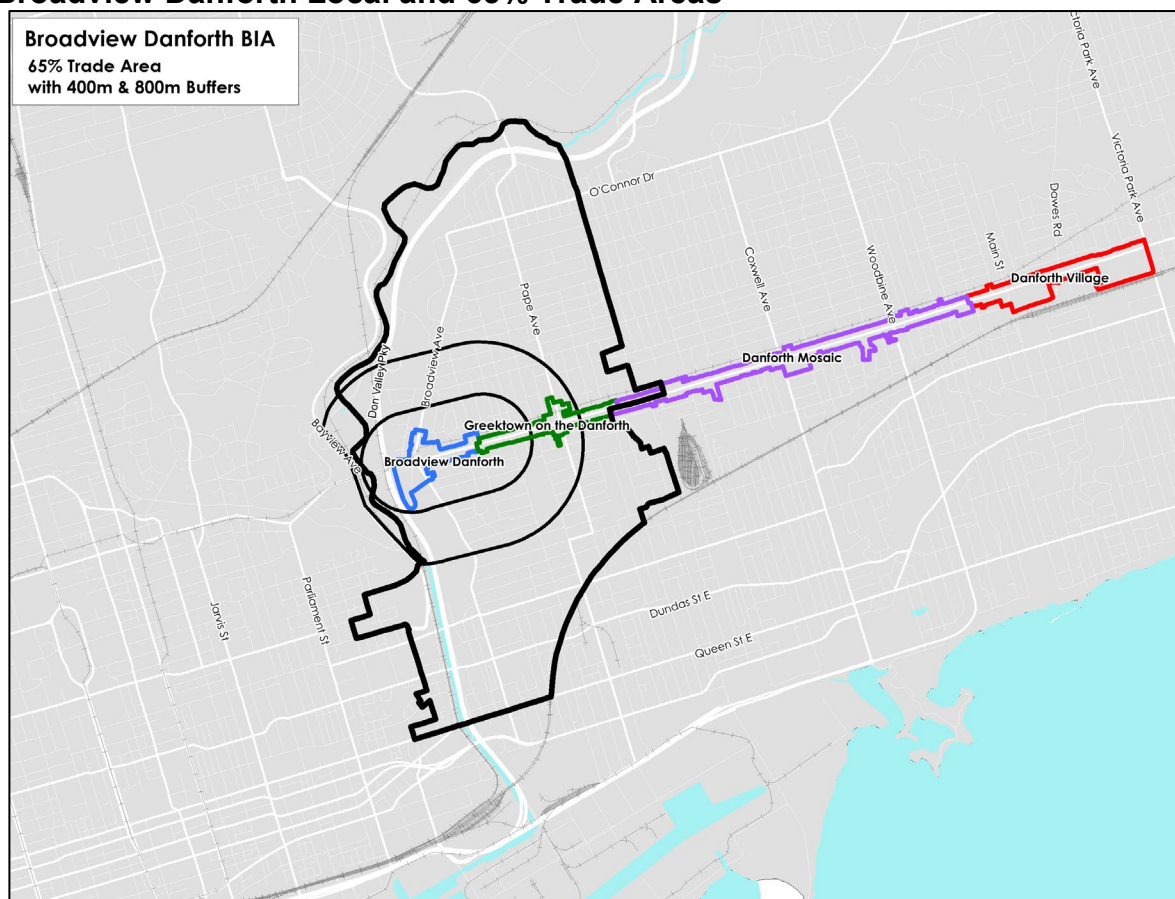
1. Broadview Danforth BIA: between approximately Broadview and Hampstead,
2. Greektown on the Danforth: centred on Pape between approximately Hampstead and Jones,
3. Danforth Mosaic: between approximately Jones and Westlake, and
4. Danforth Village: Westlake to Victoria Park.

It was determined that the Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis should use the actual BIA boundaries so that the findings could be more relevant to these organizations. This has resulted in some minor differences in the detailed data about properties and businesses from the Complete Street and Planning Study, but does substantially affect the findings.

The following maps show the BIA boundaries as well as the neighbourhoods within a 400 m and an 800 m radius (approximately five and ten minute walking distance) and the 65% visitation trade area. As is discussed below, the 400 m and 800 m zones provide a high proportion of the market support for the businesses along the Danforth.

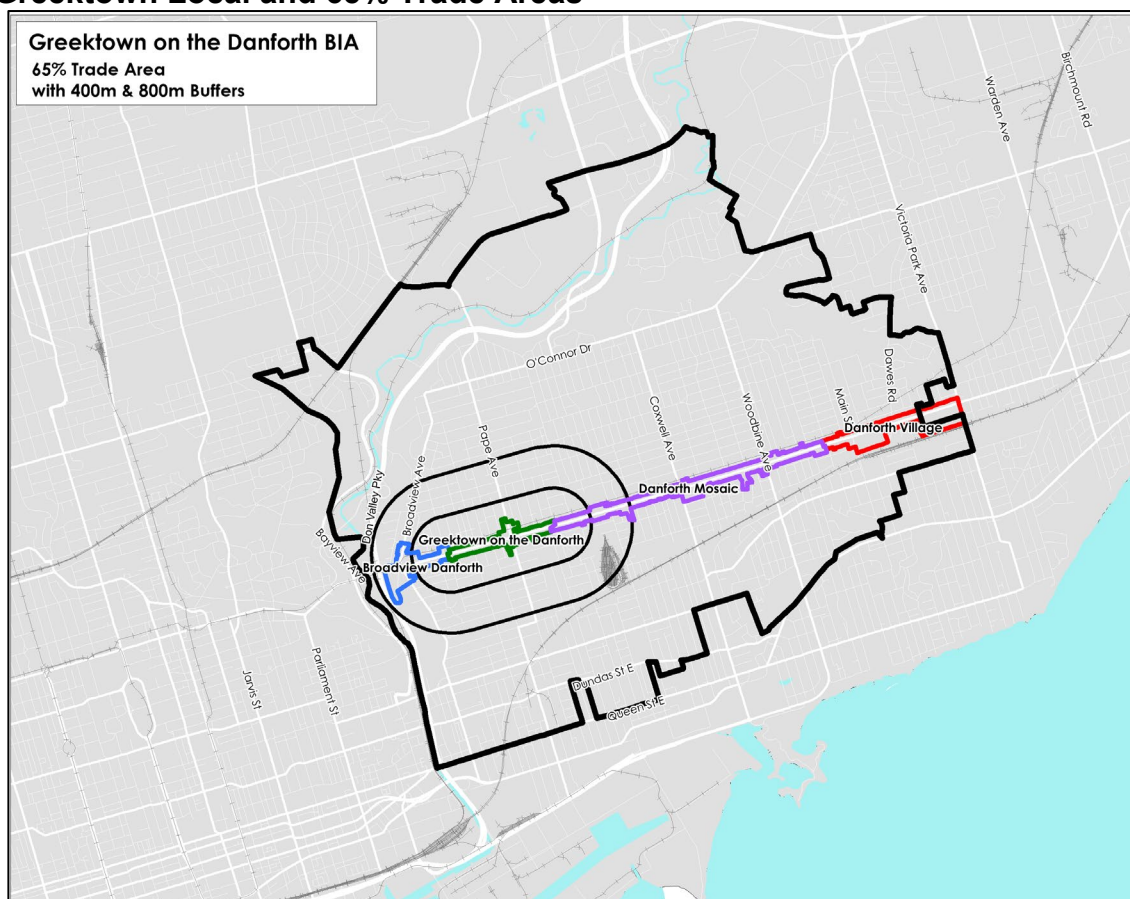


Broadview Danforth Local and 65% Trade Areas



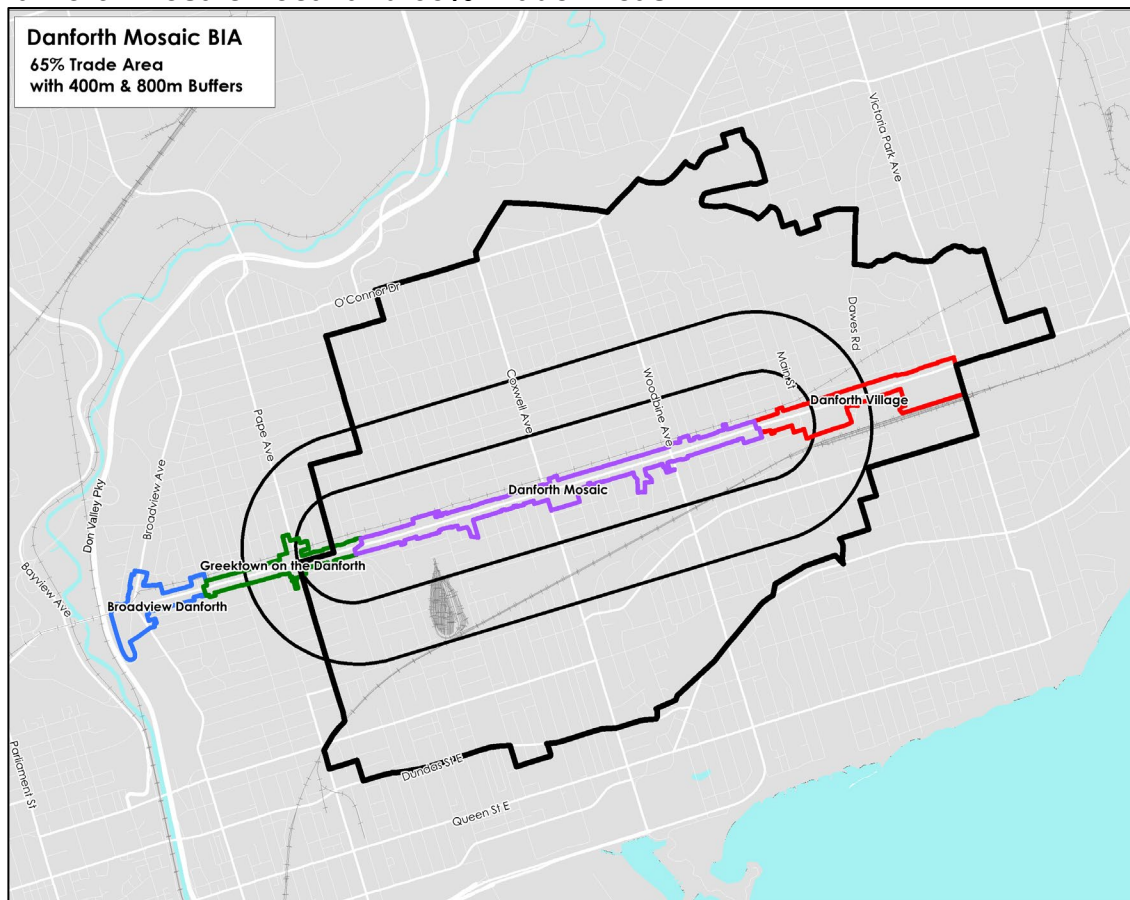


Greektown Local and 65% Trade Areas



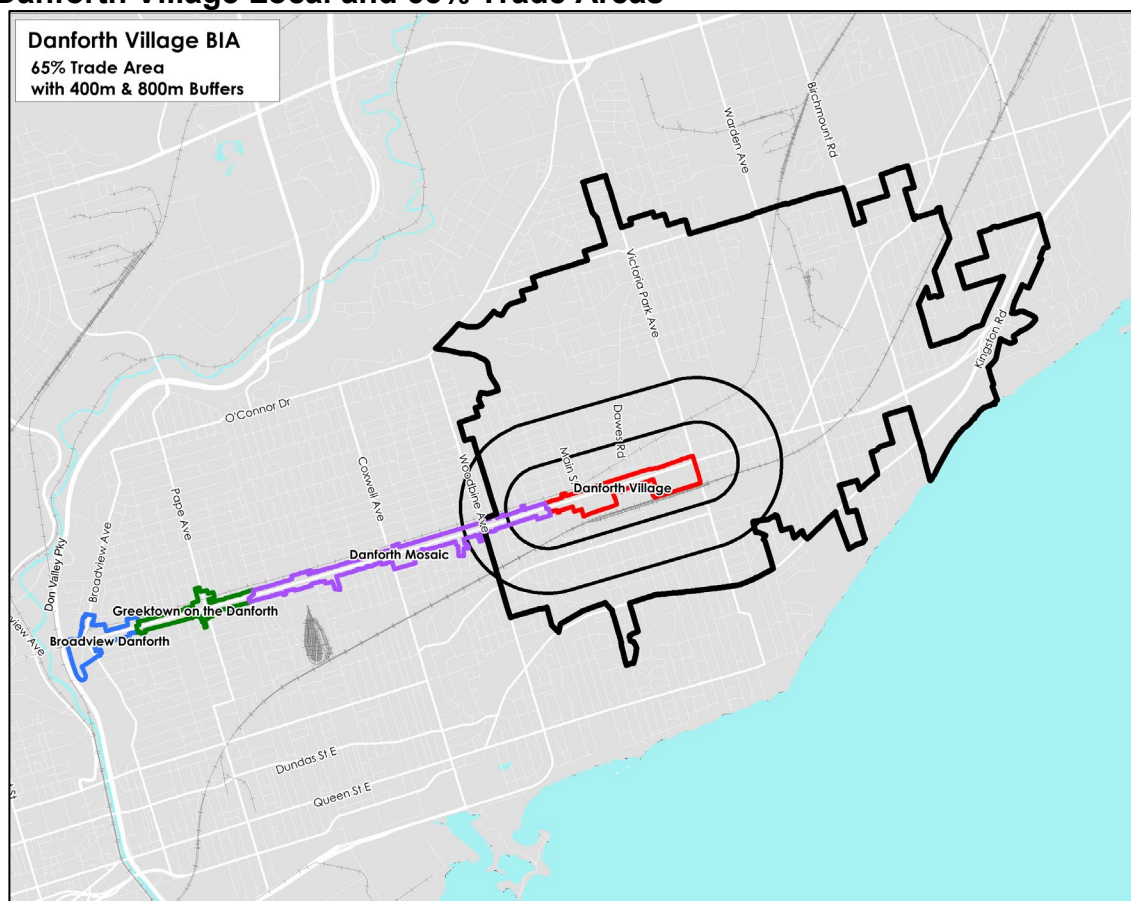


Danforth Mosaic Local and 65% Trade Areas





Danforth Village Local and 65% Trade Areas





These sections of Danforth Avenue total 6 km in length, most of it lined with continuous commercial frontage on both the north and south sides of the street. In February 2020, the four BIAs included 1563 businesses comprising about 200,000 square metres (2,152,400 s.f.) gross leasable area of floor space.

Key features are summarized in a “BIA Summary Profile” table near the end of the report. The following paragraphs provide an overview.

Physical Character

Most of the street is lined with two and three storey buildings with retail and other consumer service uses on the ground floor. The western blocks (approximately those included in Broadview Danforth and Greektown BIAs) are quite fine-grained, with entrances spaced an average 3.8 metres (12.5 feet) apart.

A high percentage of the north side businesses have good access to rear laneways. The laneways on the south side are narrower and less continuous, meaning that many of south side businesses rely on access from Danforth Avenue for their loading and servicing needs.

The character of the street begins to transition east of about Jones Avenue. Many of the blocks are longer than west of Jones and there are more frequent gaps in the commercial frontage, for example:

- east of Jones to a block west of Greenwood,
- east of Coxwell for a couple of blocks, and
- about half way between Woodbine and Main Street (around Brookside) where there is a cluster of car dealerships and other automotive uses as well as residential buildings.

Proceeding east from Main Street, freestanding large format stores with surface parking become more common, especially on the south side of the street. The Shoppers World Shopping Plaza occupies the southwest corner of Danforth and Victoria Park.

The clustering of retailing interspersed with gaps of other uses or less intensive activity is a common pattern on long main streets. It is related to walking distance. People generally prefer to complete their shopping trip within a distance of about 800 to 1000 metres. If major destinations (such as a supermarket, library, cluster of shoe stores, etc.) are further apart than comfortable walking distance, there typically will be a lull in shopping activity.

The average business establishment size ranges from 184 square metres (1,979 s.f.) in the Danforth Village BIA to 101 square metres (1,093 s.f.) in Danforth Mosaic. There was a very slight increase in average business size between 2011 to 2020 (from 126 to 128 m²), reflecting a shift towards fewer but larger stores in



the clothing and other non-food retail categories as well as some personal services.

Business Mix

About half of the retail floor space along the Danforth Study Area is occupied by service uses. Food services (restaurants, bars, cafés, etc.) are the most prevalent, accounting for 14% of total floor space. Health services (10%) and personal services (8%) also are common.

Retail stores account for about 38% of floor space. Food stores are the largest category, accounting for 10% of total floor space.

Automotive uses form a significant cluster in the Danforth Mosaic BIA. They are absent from the two western BIAs.

Miscellaneous uses (e.g. daycare centres, non-profit agencies) account for 6% of total space.

Five percent of the floor space is vacant. This is quite a low overall vacancy rate. However, vacancy is clustered in some blocks and some business units have been vacant for a few years.

The Danforth Study Area has a mix of commercial uses that serve the local neighbourhood as well as strong specialty nodes that draw customers from further afield. Food shopping, health and personal care stores, personal services and recreational services are fairly evenly distributed along the street. These types of uses tend co-locate near one another, forming several discrete neighbourhood shopping clusters (that don't align with BIA boundaries). Specialized functions in each BIA are summarized in the "BIA Summary Profile" table. Especially noteworthy is the concentration of food services in Greektown and Danforth Mosaic.

The majority of businesses are located on the ground floor. However, upper floor offices and service uses are present, especially in the Broadview Danforth and Greektown BIAs. This creates a greater intensity of activity and higher rents. Business employees provide an additional market for local stores and restaurants. The sidewalk environment is more animated and pedestrian-oriented if some office uses are located on upper floors instead of in storefronts.



Distribution of Visitation

The number of people visiting Study Area businesses throughout the day, evening and throughout the week was analysed. Many businesses are busy during multiple periods of the day and week. This shows that they rely on a variety of customers and trip purposes, making them more resilient to change in any single factor. The impact of commuting is apparent, with medium to small stores offering local neighbourhood type goods and services. These businesses are very busy 4 to 7 PM on weekdays. The large format retailers are busiest on weekends. It is noteworthy that late night activity has decreased in Greektown and increased in Danforth Mosaic. Greektown restaurants are now busiest between 6 and 9 PM.

Trends

The business mix in 2011, 2016 and 2020 was analysed. On the whole, the area has been quite stable. The average business turnover between 2016 and 2020 was 6.5% per year and only 5% in Greektown. The vacancy rate decreased. As has been the case throughout the city, retail stores have decreased and services increased, especially food services.

Anomalies occurred in Broadview Danforth where clothing retailing held its own instead of decreasing as has happened city-wide, and in Greektown where food services remained about the same instead of increasing.

- Broadview Danforth strength as a regional destination for clothing shopping that has been maintained.
- Greektown's lack of growth in food services could reflect the already strong concentration in the area by 2011. It may also signal a bit of stagnation in the strength of Greektown as a restaurant destination.

As was the case elsewhere in the city, recreation, education and medical services increased, especially in Greektown and Danforth Mosaic. There has been a loss of financial-related businesses such as bank branches and money lenders but floor space has been stable. This suggests a trend towards fewer larger branches.

Retail Real Estate

Generally speaking, both retail rental rates and property sales prices are slightly lower along the Danforth than the City of Toronto average (\$32 p.s.f. and \$488 p.s.f. respectively). The relationship between sales prices and rents suggest that properties are being valued based on their current use as main street retail properties more than for their redevelopment potential.

Greektown is the exception, where properties sold at an average of \$508 p.s.f. during the first quarter of 2020, 4% more than the city average. These values



are a bit higher than can be supported by current rental levels. This both creates an upward pressure on rents and signals that redevelopment is being anticipated by some property buyers.

The rate of increase since 2013 is similar to the city average for both rents (1.7% per year) and property sales prices (4.2% per year). Prices were fairly stable between 2018 and February 2020.

Property ownership is concentrated in small landlords except in Danforth Village. This is especially the case in Greektown, where small landlords account for 68% of property value. With the exception of Danforth Village, REITs and institutional investors play a relatively small role in the local property market.

Trade Area Analysis

Analysing cell phone data indicates that people visit Danforth businesses from a wide swath of the city, reflecting the region-wide specialty shopping and service role that many businesses perform. However, people coming from further away tend to visit infrequently. The area accounting for 65% of visits to the Danforth define its primary trade area. This area is bounded by approximately the Don Valley Parkway to the west, Dundas to the south, Midland to the East and Thorncliffe Park /St. Clair to the north (Maps are included in Appendix 4 – Visitation Analysis).

Each BIA serves a discrete trade area.

- Broadview Danforth and Greektown BIA trade areas have quite a lot of overlap. Some neighbourhoods west of the Don Valley visit Broadview Danforth but not Greektown. The neighbourhoods east of Jones visit Greektown but not Broadview Danforth.
- Greektown on the Danforth serves the neighbourhoods between the Don Valley and Victoria Park. It does not serve the Beach area south of Kingston Road to a significant extent.
- Danforth Mosaic does not attract many people from the west. Its trade area ends at Pape Avenue and extends beyond Victoria Park to the east. It does not serve the Beach area or Thorncliffe Park.
- Danforth Village attracts most of its customers from Woodbine to the west and the Danforth/Kingston Road area to the east. The northern boundary is O'Connor/St. Clair.

The detailed analysis summarizes the percentage of visitation that lives within 400 m and 800 m (approximately a five and ten minute walk of each BIA on weekdays and weekends for the following categories of uses:

1. Large Retail without parking,
2. Large Retail with parking,
3. Restaurants without parking,



4. Restaurants with parking,
5. Small/medium retail without parking,
6. Small/medium retail with parking,
7. Green P Parking, and
8. Sidewalks.

Observations include:

1. All BIAs are highly reliant on people living within walking distance. Neighbourhoods within a 800 m radius account for 35% to 64% of visits depending on the area, day of the week and type of business.
 - a. Broadview Danforth is very reliant on the local neighbourhood. About one-third of visits are from people living within 400 m and about half from within 800 m.
 - b. Greektown is less reliant on the immediate neighbourhood. People living within 800 m account for about 40% of visits. But this is still a significant concentration of market support. Even its restaurants attract about 45% of their clientele from the local neighbourhood.
 - c. Danforth Mosaic has more variety in its draw. Smaller stores and restaurants without parking are very reliant on the local neighbourhood within 800 m (more than 50% of visits). Large stores and restaurants with parking are less reliant (local area accounts for about 40 to 45% of visits).
 - d. Danforth Village shows a similar variation in its draw. Smaller stores are highly reliant on people living within 400 m. Larger stores are less reliant on the local neighbourhood (about 40 to 50% of visits from within 800 m.)
2. Large stores tend to be less reliant on the local neighbourhood than small/medium stores.
3. On-site parking has an inconsistent impact on trade area size.
4. Neighbourhood residents account for a high proportion of Green P parking lot users on both weekends as well as week days. This suggests that many customers drive even if they live within walking distance.
5. People walking on the sidewalk show a similar breakdown in place of residence as neighbouring businesses.

The visitation pattern for non-commercial uses also was assessed. Houses of Worship were particularly interesting. They attract people from a very wide area, and many of the same people also visit neighbouring businesses. This is particularly true for Islamic-oriented Houses of Worship. Overall, approximately 38% to 50% of visitors to Houses of Worship also visit neighbouring businesses.



Local Neighbourhood Demographic Analysis

The characteristics of people living within 800 m of the Danforth were analysed. Key observations include:

1. **Population Density:** Average is about 92.7 persons per hectare, sufficient to support a good range of local shopping. Broadview Danforth has the lowest population density due to the presence of the Don Valley within the 800 m radius, Danforth Village the highest (See BIA Summary Profiles).
2. **Population Growth:** Below the City average (1.2% versus the 1.9% average) except for Danforth Mosaic (2.1%). 61% of the population has lived in their current residence for at least 5 years.
3. **Age Profile:** Older than the City average. Slight trend to more families with young families in the Danforth Mosaic neighbourhood.
4. **Household Income Level:** \$105,933, below the City average (\$114,947). There is considerable variation throughout the area, with the highest income levels in the west. Income levels in the Greektown BIA neighbourhood are quite polarized. Generally, the neighbourhoods south of Danforth have higher income levels than north of the Danforth. There is an above average proportion of dual income households throughout the area. These are busy households which typically place a high premium on convenience,
5. **Household Expenditure Patterns:** In general, the lower income households spend a higher proportion of their income on staples such as food and personal care whereas the higher income households spend more on their homes and home furnishings.
6. **Mother Tongue:** Predominately English except in the Danforth Village neighbourhood where the percentage with English mother tongues is closer to the city average (53% versus 51% average).
7. **First Generation Canadian:** Much smaller proportion of the population than the city average (50%) except in the Danforth Village neighbourhood where it is 52.5%.
8. **Modal Split for Commuting to Work:** There is a strong preference for using transit. This generates a good market for convenience retail near subway stations. There is a 5.1% rate of bicycle commuting, above the city average (2.5%). The propensity to walk and cycle to work is highest in the west and then progressively decreases to the east.

Overall, the local neighbourhoods within walking distance of the Danforth Study Area are stable with sufficient population density to support a good range of local shopping. From a retail vitality perspective, the older than average age profile, low rate of mobility and slow growth rate may be reducing opportunities for retail growth and innovation. This will change as the older population moves out of the neighbourhood and younger families move in, as has started to happen around Danforth Mosaic.



The neighbourhood around Danforth Village has some significant differences. Its population includes a high proportion of renters, has the lowest income level, and the highest proportion of first generation Canadians and people speaking non-English mother tongues. Significant redevelopment projects are underway that will add new residents to the neighbourhood. Future transition and population growth can be anticipated in the future in both the Danforth Village and Danforth Mosaic neighbourhoods if some of the currently underdeveloped sites are intensified.

4.0 Summary: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The following series of tables summarizes our analysis for the Danforth Study Area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from a retail vitality perspective. There is one table for the Study Area as a whole. BIA-specific SWOTs summarize characteristics that are unique to the area or different from the Study Area as a whole.

On the whole, Danforth Avenue pre-pandemic was a strong, resilient main street with good connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods. COVID-19 is creating major challenges for its business community, as it is for retail businesses and shopping districts throughout the city and around the globe. Multi-faceted actions are necessary and are in the process of being implemented to ameliorate the impact and support the survival and recovery of the business community. In that it started from a position of strength with a resilient and diverse business mix, we feel that Danforth is well positioned to recover its former retail vitality.



LIST OF APPENDICES:

1. Impact of Global Trends on Main Street Businesses
2. Issues Related to Operating a Small Main Street Business
3. Business Inventory
4. Visitation Analysis
5. Visitation by Hours of Operation
6. Trade Area Demographic Analysis



Danforth Study Area BIA Summary Profiles

	Broadview Danforth	Greektown	Danforth Mosaic	Danforth Village	TOTAL
Commercial Structure					
Mean Business Size (m2)	138 m2	107 m2	101 m2	184 m2	128 m2
Mean Commercial Storefront frontage	3.8 m	3.8 m	5.6 m	6.1 m	5.0 m
Floor Space Breakdown (%)					
- Retail (Food)	48% (12%)	22% (5%)	26% (8%)	64% (13%)	38% (10%)
- Service (Food)	35% (11%)	65% (26%)	61% (17%)	28.6% (7%)	49.7% (14%)
- Vacant	4%	6%	6%	5%	5%
Specialized clusters	Clothing Food Retail Health Services	Food Services Entertainment Greek businesses	Automotive Food Services Personal Services Halal products / services	Bengali businesses and immigrant services Larger Stores Food Retail Building Supplies General Merchandise	
Average retail leasing rate (Q1 2020)	\$29 p.s.f.	\$31 p.s.f.	\$28 p.s.f.	\$26 p.s.f.	\$28. p.s.f.
Average retail property sale price (Q1 2020)	\$445 p.s.f.	\$508 p.s.f.	\$444 p.s.f.	\$395 p.s.f.	\$445 p.s.f.



	Broadview Danforth	Greektown	Danforth Mosaic	Danforth Village	TOTAL
Property Ownership (City Average)					
- owner occupied (35%)	27%	29%	23%	18%	24%
-small landlord (34%)	49%	68%	53%	36%	40%
- REIT (15%)	12%	0	12%	46%	28%
- Institutional (14%)	12%	3%	10%	0%	7%
Socio-Economic Profile					
Population (800 m trade area)	17,693	34,913	63,285	46,215	103,230
Population Density (pers/hectare)	70.2	92.8	95.6	106.7	92.7
Annualized Pop'n. Growth Rate 2011 – 2019 (city average 3%)	1.1%	1.5%	2.1%	1.2%	1.2%
Mean 2019 Household Income (city average \$114,947)	\$139,604	\$129,899	\$109,174	\$82,802	\$105,933



	Broadview Danforth	Greektown	Danforth Mosaic	Danforth Village	TOTAL
English Mother Tongue (city average 51%)	76%	70%	68%	53%	63%
1 st Generation Canadian (city average 52.5%)	27%	30%	33%	50%	39%



Danforth Avenue Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis: Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Physical Character	Linear retail frontage is fairly continuous. Storefronts have strong visibility and provide a dynamic and animated environment for pedestrians.	
	Predominately a double loaded commercial street. The street is narrow enough that pedestrians can see both frontages and cross from one side to the other fairly easily.	
	Wide sidewalks throughout most of the area.	
	Many blocks on the north side of the street have back laneways wide enough for loading and servicing needs.	Most blocks on the south side of the street lack sufficiently sized laneways to accommodate servicing and loading. Businesses are reliant on loading access to Danforth Avenue
Business Mix	Rich mix of retail and service uses oriented to the local neighbourhood complemented by region-serving specialty functions.	
	Many businesses are busy throughout the day and week.	
	Low and decreasing vacancy rate.	
	Stable businesses; 6.5% average annual turnover rate.	
	Retail mix is complemented by other neighbourhood-serving amenities such as libraries, houses of worship, parks, community services, etc.	



	Strengths	Weaknesses
Retail Real Estate	Relatively stable retail rents at rates similar to city average.	
	Small landlords own high proportion of property value.	
Trade Area	Draw customers from large swath of east Toronto between Don Valley and Midland.	Trade area orientation is primarily north-south, especially for two eastern BIAs. Only Greektown attracts customers from entire Study Area.
	High share of visitation from within 800 m walking distance, showing strong local neighbourhood support for businesses.	
	Many businesses are able to attract customers throughout the day and week. They have multiple busy periods.	
	High use of neighbouring businesses by people coming to Houses of Worship. Day care centres and subway stations support activity in nearby businesses during commuting times.	
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)	Population density sufficient to support good range of local neighbourhood goods and services shopping.	Low population growth
	Commuters strongly prefer transit. This supports local neighbourhood retail opportunities near subway stations.	
	Rate of bicycle commuting above city average.	
District Management	Strong BIA organizations.	



	Opportunities	Threats
Global Retail Trends and COVID-19	Innovation and experimentation. The Digital Main Street program offers advice and financial support to implement digital technology strategies.	Sudden and dramatic reduction in sales and revenue for most categories of business. Additional costs associated with protective equipment, sanitation and physical distancing.
	Heightened awareness of the importance of main streets and their independent businesses to broader communities. All levels of government and many organizations are actively working to understand the impact of the pandemic and introduce supports for business survival and recovery.	Accelerated use of digital technologies make digital adoption and innovation almost essential for most businesses.
		Rent affordability for many tenants. Reduced revenue from rents for landlords.



Broadview Danforth BIA Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis: Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Physical Character	Narrow storefronts and frequent entrances support walkability.	
	Medium to large sized retail and entertainment units are intermingled with small storefronts, attracting customers and acting as “anchors”.	
	Commercial frontage wraps onto Broadview, creating concentrated cluster and highly visible gateway.	
Business Mix	Strong food retail, clothing, and health services.	
	Low vacancy rate	
Trade Area		Truncated by the Don Valley
		Strongly reliant on people living within walking distance.
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)	High median household income	Low population growth
	Higher density multi-family housing along Broadview	Older age profile



	Opportunities	Threats
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)		While current support for neighbourhood shopping is strong, older population and slow growth of new households may dampen retail market. Businesses may need to develop new markets, products and services to adapt.



Greektown on the Danforth BIA Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis: Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Physical Character	Narrow storefronts and frequent entrances support walkability.	
	Includes some larger lots that can accommodate larger floor plates, adding to the diversity of the uses.	
Business Mix	Growth in recreation, education and medical services is diversifying business mix. (also a trend in other main street areas).	Previous concentration of Greek owned or oriented restaurants and businesses is diminishing.
	Offices and services are occupying upper floors in many buildings.	
Trade Area	Serves neighbourhoods between Victoria Park and Dan Valley north to Thorncliffe Park except for the Beach.	
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)	Enough population density to support good range of neighbourhood shopping opportunities	Low population growth
	Above average household income level.	Older age profile.

	Opportunities	Threats
Business Mix		Restaurants account for high proportion of business mix, suggesting that any significant decline will be visible and potentially difficult to replace with other draws.
Retail Real Estate		Property sales prices are higher and increasing faster than rents, suggesting that properties are



	Opportunities	Threats
		changing hands based on future redevelopment potential. This may create an upward pressure on rents.



Danforth Mosaic Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis: Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Physical Character	Several cohesive nodes of activity.	Commercial nodes are separated by gaps, interrupting east-west continuity.
	Accommodates larger businesses, especially on the south side of the street.	Longer blocks make it harder to shop both sides of the street and decreases accessibility opportunities into the local neighbourhoods.
Business Mix	Transitioning from a region-serving business focus to a more local neighbourhood focus. This is supporting more cross-shopping and strengthening retail clusters.	6.5% vacancy rate, higher than in other BIAs. Some blocks have more significant vacancy
	Large increase in amusement, gaming & recreation services.	
	Late evening bars and restaurants increasing (has negative impacts on neighbourhood ambience although a positive growth opportunity).	
	Vacancy rate has dropped substantially.	
Trade Area		Does not draw many customers from west of Jones or south of Dundas.
		Smaller stores are highly reliant on people living within walking distance.
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)	Good population density to support wide range of shopping within walking distance.	



	Strengths	Weaknesses
	Population is increasing, especially families with young children.	

	Opportunities	Threats
Physical Character	Intensification opportunities.	
Business Mix	Potential for commercial infill. May create new neighbourhood shopping clusters, strengthen east-west customer flow throughout the district and improve walkability.	



Danforth Village BIA Retail Vibrancy and Economic Analysis: Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Physical Character	Accommodates larger stores with parking.	South side of street is less pedestrian-friendly.
		Longer blocks make it harder to shop both sides of the street.
		The rail line to the south limits access points, creates a barrier and negatively affects trade area draw.
Business Mix	Major retail focus (Shoppers World Shopping Centre and several large format stores intermingled with smaller businesses)	
Trade Area	Draws customers from the east as far as the Kingston Rd/Danforth area (about 3 km).	Does not attract many customers from west of Woodbine.
		Small stores outside of Shoppers World are highly reliant on people living within a 5 minute walk.
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)	Good population density to support wide range of shopping within walking distance.	Below average household income levels.



	Opportunities	Threats
Physical Character	Intensification opportunities.	
Business Mix	Potential for commercial infill associated with future mixed use development. May create new neighbourhood shopping clusters, strengthen east-west customer flow throughout the district and improve walkability.	
Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Profile (800 m TA)	Potential for significant population growth.	Potential issue for polarization of neighbourhood by household income and a bifurcation of retail mix.