

## 5 Transportation Challenges and Opportunities

Based on the review of existing conditions, five opportunities to address the transportation challenges were identified:

1. Improving travel connections through a finer street grid;
2. Establishing Yorkdale Shopping Centre as a multi-modal transit hub by improving services, operational reliability, and access to TTC and GO Transit;
3. Improving active transportation connections to promote walking and cycling;
4. Designing streets to safely accommodate all users;
5. Improving access to and from municipal expressways and provincial highways while protecting for the safety of all users; and,
6. Improving streetscapes and the public realm, consistent with the future vision of the area.

### 5.1 Improving travel connections through a finer street grid

Currently, the larger Yorkdale study area is characterized by large blocks of neighbourhoods, employment areas, and mixed-use areas bound by arterial and collector roads, as well as highways and other physical barriers that contribute to the lack of connectivity for all modes of travel.

Internal to the focus study area, the expected redevelopment offers opportunities to eliminate surface parking and establish a finer-grained street network that promotes a walkable block structure. Increasing the grid network density would increase the number of options available to all modes, add road capacity to the network, balance mobility choices for walking and cycling trips within the study area due to improved connections to the larger study area, and improve connections to transit.

In the larger study area, it will be critical to strengthen the travel connections and continuity of the street network by eliminating jogged intersections, provide connections to discontinuous roads, and creating connections through physical infrastructure barriers for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and vehicular traffic.

### 5.2 Establishing Yorkdale Shopping Centre as a multi-modal transit hub by improving services, operational reliability, and access to TTC and GO Transit

Opportunities exist to enhance the connections between the study area and the on-site Yorkdale GO Bus Terminal and Yorkdale TTC Subway Station. Improving services, access, and reliability will help to promote transit use and increase ridership.

### 5.3 Improving Active Transportation connections to promote walking and cycling

Improving travel connections through a finer street grid will help to improve connections to promote walking and cycling. At locations where there are physical infrastructure barriers such as Highway 401, Allen Road and the Barrie GO Rail Corridor, there are opportunities to create new connections/protected crossings to eliminate these barriers for pedestrians and cyclists. Opportunities exist to improve pedestrian connections by providing enhanced public realm and sidewalks on streets that currently do not have sidewalks, creating a more connected and safe walking environment. Within the focus study area, the expected redevelopment offers opportunities to incorporate and provide new sidewalks and cycling facilities to connect with existing and future sidewalks and cycling facilities in the larger study area.

### 5.4 Designing streets to safely accommodate all users

The existing street network does not support different modes of transportation in a manner that is safe and pleasant for people of all ages and abilities. Redevelopment of the area provides an opportunity to develop streets that balance different modes of travel and creates safe connections to other parts of the larger study area.

Yorkdale Shopping Centre is located directly abutting Highway 401 and Allen Road, which positioned the existing transportation network to be designed to accommodate vehicles, lacking adequate facilities for other modes of travel. Due to the volume of highway traffic travelling through the study area, improvements to the street network have to consider and balance pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, drivers, and goods movement.

### 5.5 Improving access to and from municipal expressways and provincial highways while protecting for the safety of all users

Partial interchanges and barriers have resulted in inefficient travel patterns and through trips passing through the focus study area. Improving access to and from expressways and highways without compromising the safety, and operations of the existing provincial infrastructure will help traffic flow and improve safety for all modes of transportation. .

### 5.6 Improving Streetscape and the public realm, consistent with the future vision for the area

Opportunities exist to enhance the existing streetscape and public realm to create a vibrant and active community for local residents. Improving streetscape and public realm will also create a place that people want to visit, bringing support to local businesses.

## 6 Problem and Opportunity Statement

There are long-term plans for development and growth at Yorkdale Shopping Centre and in the surrounding areas that will place increased demands on the transportation network. It is important for the City to develop a plan to address the area’s existing and future transportation needs.

Currently, Yorkdale Shopping Centre, the Project Focus Area, is surrounded by major physical barriers including Highway 401, Allen Road, and Dufferin Street, which causes longer travel times and poor walking and cycling connectivity and access in the larger study area.

To address current problems and meet future needs, there are opportunities to improve the transportation network where:

- A finer street grid will enhance connectivity within the larger study area;
- A variety of mobility options will be offered by establishing Yorkdale Shopping Centre as a transit hub;
- An active community and lifestyle are encouraged through improved connections and facilities;
- Streets are comfortable, accessible, and safe for users of all ages and abilities; and,
- Access to and from municipal expressways and provincial highways are improved.