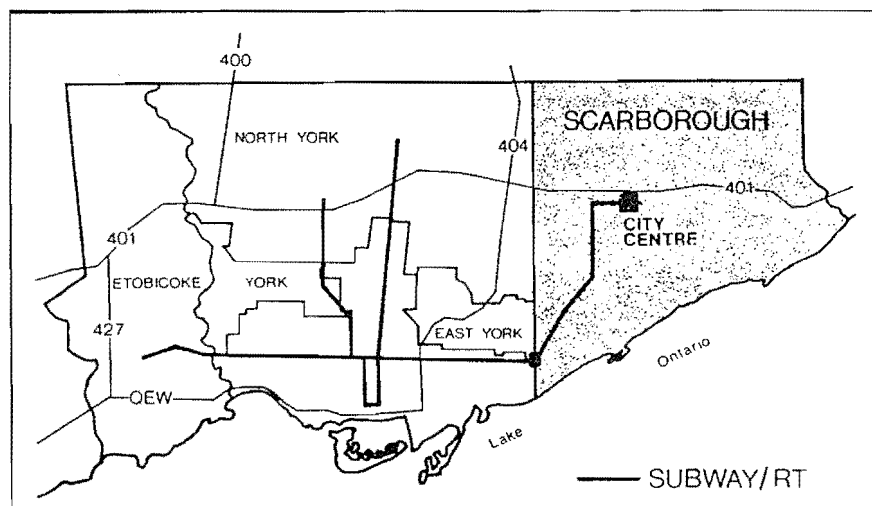


## Is Scarborough City Centre A Transit Village?

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this Master's Report is to determine whether Scarborough City Centre is a Transit Village. A transit village is construed as a community where dense, fine-grained mix of complementary uses is anchored to a transit hub within a walking distance radius (400 to 800 metres). It is and designed with physical features that are conducive to walking, biking and transit riding as viable alternatives to the automobile.

Scarborough City Centre (SCC) is located in the former City of Scarborough, on the eastern edge of the City of Toronto. The City Centre is approximately bounded by Highway 401 to the north, Mc Cowan Road to the east, Ellesmere Road to the south and Brimley Road to the west, north of Ellesmere Road, west of McCowan Road, east of Brimley Road, and south of Highway 401. It is about 23 kilometres by road from the Toronto Central Business District (CBD).



Scarborough City Centre in Context

## City Centre's Contents

The Scarborough City Centre is a mixed-use development with a shopping mall, residential, office, institutional and recreational uses.

**Table E-1  
City Centre Floor Space Distribution**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Floor Space (sq. metres)</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Floor Space</b>
Offices	262,322	40
Housing	225,255	34
Retail and Commercial	169,354	26
Other	5,270	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>662,201</b>	<b>100</b>

Major facilities include:

- *The Shopping Centre*: shopping mall with over 230 stores.
- *The Scarborough Civic Centre*: contains City's Municipal, Education and Health Office.
- *Canada Centre*: Government of Canada office.
- *Albert Campbell Square*: public plaza and public gathering area.
- *Galleria*: a blue frame structure that creates a unique landmark in the city centre.
- *YMCA*: mainly a recreational and fitness facility but also contains a daycare centre.
- *Public Transit*: Scarborough Rapid Transit (currently at capacity in peak hours), TTC, GO, and intercity buses.
- *Other facilities*: Consilium, Trizec, and Bell Canada.

Scarborough Rapid Transit is currently operating to capacity. There is evidence of declining solo driving split. Transit-supportive policies are in place.

**Table E-3**  
**Existing Residential Development (July 2000)**

Project No*	Project Name	Site Area (ha)	Res. Permitted Density (uph)	Permitted Units (Est.)	Built Units	% Permitted Built	Office Density Permitted (FAR)	Com. Development (m2)
10 & 20	Omni, Phase 1 & Forest Mansion I	2.9	366	1,045	523	50%	1.2	1,050 (retail)
11	Blue Danube	0.6	278	166	145	87%	2.0	0
17	Consilium/Tridel	2.6	323	844	1,080	128%	0.0	2,880 (retail)
18 & 21	Hillsb & May Tower	5.1	190	963	996	103%	1.2	0
<b>Total</b>			1,157	3,018	2,744	91%		

\* Project No as indicated in Annex B  
Source: Scarborough Planning Department, July 2000.

The Scarborough City Centre, however, fails several criteria. Despite well-intentioned planning policies the presence of an extensive auto-oriented regional shopping centre and the pattern of land ownership have produced a node that remains essentially suburban. The pedestrian and bicyclist environment leaves much to be desired, with incomplete at-grade connections and uncomfortable winter routes. The outline of uses remains in essence segregated, with mutually exclusive institutional, office and retail precincts. City Centre projects use most of the potential residential density (Table E-3) but are not using the permitted office density. Other than in the mall, retail is available only at a distance over 1,000 metres from the shopping centre as a result of a restrictive covenant placed on the City Centre by the mall. The overall City Centre density is much lower than required to support rapid transit.

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**Table E-4  
Scarborough City Centre Density**

Land Use Type	Total Units/Area		Over 400m		Within 400m		
	Number	Density (pph/uph)	Number	Density (pph)	Number	% Of Total	Density (pph)
<i>Residential</i>							
-Floor Space (m2)	225,255		151,940		73,315	32%	184uph
-Units	8,856	133uph	7,507	127uph	1,349	15%	401pph
-Residents	19,306	289pph	16,365	276pph	2,940		
<i>Office</i>							
-Floor Space (m2)	262,322		25,425		236,897	90%	
-Employment (Jobs)	7,569	288eph	135	53eph	7,434	98%	313eph
<i>Commercial</i>							
-Floor Space (m2)	169,354		4,390		164,964	97%	
-Employment (Jobs)	4,060	239eph	82	186eph	3,978	98%	241eph
<i>Other</i>							
-Floor Space	5,270		0	0	5,270	100%	
-Employment (Jobs)	88	166eph	0	0	88	100%	166eph
Total Site Area (ha)	1,530,000		1,027,000		502,000		
Total Floor Area (m2)	662,201		181,755		480,446		
Total Employees	11,717		217		11,500		
Total Resid. & Empl	31,023		16,582		14,440		
Overall Density		202reph		161reph			287reph
Overall FAR	2.3						

uph = units per hectare; pph = persons per hectare; reph = residents and employees per hectare

In conclusion, the Scarborough City Centre has some ingredients of a Transit Village. However, the whole is different from the sum total of its parts. Until some of the lots that surround the shopping centre are developed with maximum density and urban design content as part of the City Centre's new urban fabric, the City Centre might not retrofit its current auto-oriented suburban character.

## Recommendations

1. Additional market-based, high-density, residential development should be provided within walking distance of Scarborough RT or McCowan RT Stations.
2. Borough Approach to the City Hall and its intersections with Borough Drive and Ellesmere Road should be redesigned for pedestrian safety and a good terminating vista to highlight approach to civic buildings.
3. A clearly defined, safe network of bicycle lanes and other bicycle amenities should be provided.
4. The City should promote more urban art in the city centre.
5. The entrance to the integrated transit facility should be highlighted with signage.
6. Parking for new development or redevelopment should be placed in structures and carefully designed to be visually appealing.
7. In the City Centre, reduced parking provisions should be encouraged by introducing a parking ceiling to deter developers from the common practice of overbuilding parking as a marketing strategy.
8. The car's visual impact should be minimized to the maximum extent possible.
9. High-density mixed-use residential development should be encouraged near the McCowan RT station to reduce its isolation.
10. Future developments within the City Centre should be designed to strengthen Employment and population balance.
11. The TTC should increase the SRT line's capacity while further bettering service quality.
12. In pursuit of a fine-grained mix of uses, the landowner (s) should sell individual parcels to mixed-use developers and relax covenants within the City Centre's boundary.