



Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study

SWOT ANALYSIS & PLANNING REPORT ***Preferred Strategy***

September 2008

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AMEC**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose Of This Study

The Central Ajax Employment Area immediately abuts the west side of the Downtown. In order to promote and accommodate a broader range of uses in the Downtown, it is necessary to improve the land use compatibility at the interface of the Downtown and the Central Ajax Employment Area. The existing industrial character of the Central Employment Area presents challenges to achieving a compatible character with the adjacent Downtown, and to creating an attractive place for new investment in residential and mixed-use developments within the Downtown.

The purpose of this study is to conduct an in-depth examination of the existing land uses, policies, infrastructure and site conditions in the Central Ajax Employment Area and identify measures which can improve the land use compatibility at the interface between traditional employment uses and the residential, commercial and mixed uses in the Downtown.

Existing Users

At the time of this report, there were 22 known businesses in the Study Area, employing 575 employees. Existing businesses are generally of a manufacturing nature, however there are some more prestige employment type uses, such as offices that offer professional services.

SWOT Analysis Findings

An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the Study Area, and surrounding properties were identified for five theme areas:

Land Use

There are already a number of uses that would be compatible with the residential and commercial mixed uses of the Downtown, such as offices, and other professional service providers, particularly along Hunt Street. Uses with unsightly outdoor storage are predominantly located in the west half of the Study Area (and on sites further west of the Study Area), furthest away from the Downtown. However, they do affect the image for the overall area. Uses in the eastern half of the Study Area, which flank the Downtown, are the ones with potentially the greatest impact on the Downtown.

Employment and Economic Development

The Town is expected to experience significant employment growth over the next 20 years with a significant portion of that growth in industrial employment. Industrial employment is anticipated to grow by 42% within the Town by 2021. However, the employment land supply is expected to reach full build-out prior to 2031. As a result, intensification and revitalization of existing employment areas will become increasingly important as Ajax reaches full build out.

Urban Design

The vegetation that already exists in the Study Area is well established, and already provides some mature landscaping. There are several properties that offer potential to introduce outdoor amenity areas, and screening with landscaping. Some properties have large open lawn areas with deep frontages, such as Plasti-fab Ltd., and Sandra Tea and Coffee Ltd. Such properties could help set the tone for the landscaped character of the area.

Overall, most of the buildings are sited parallel to the street, with entrances and office components facing the street. Therefore, there is good opportunity to enhance frontages and the streetscape with landscaping.

Connectivity/Transportation

Considering its proximity to Highway 401, the Study Area offers good access to the Highway and regional roads. Close proximity to the Highway and major arterial roads, the GO Station, the Downtown, retail stores, and labour force are all essential ingredients to attracting employment uses. However, there is opportunity for improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, safety and comfort. Potential improvements include creating more sidewalks and pedestrian crossings and building transit stops that are sheltered and well lit.

In general, the network connectivity and flow of the Study Area is good, with the exception of some congestion points. Disjointed roads such as Station and Fairall Streets, and Hunt Street and Monarch Avenue contribute to congestion during peak hours. There may be opportunity for realignment of these roads at the time of redevelopment of adjacent sites to improve traffic flow.

Ageing Water and Sanitary Infrastructure

There are no known capacity constraints for sanitary and water flows. However, landowners have expressed insufficient water pressure. The Town is also not aware of any current flooding problems or frequent storm sewer failures. The Region has experienced some deficiencies in their system in this area due to the age (over 50 years) and condition of the existing infrastructure, making it susceptible to requiring repair. The Region is currently undertaking a Master Servicing Plan, including hydraulic modeling which is expected to be completed by the end of 2008. The hydraulic modeling will determine capacity issues, including water pressure.

The Steam Plant and District Energy

Most of the existing uses at the interface with the Downtown do not raise significant compatibility concerns for existing or potential future uses in the Downtown, with the exception of the Steam Plant. Through the SWOT analysis, it was determined that one major element critical to the image enhancement of the Study Area is improvement of the Steam Plant property and operation. The Steam Plant supports a number of area industries, and is a positive alternative for energy production. There are clear benefits to maintaining and redeveloping the Steam Plant into a modern district energy facility.

The Steam Plant currently creates visible emissions, lacks aesthetic appeal, has outdoor industrial processes and has visible outdoor storage of wood waste and ash. All these factors contribute to the Study Area's significant compatibility issues with the adjacent

Downtown. Index Energy, a new North American based energy company, plans on redeveloping the existing Steam Plant into a cogeneration facility. Index Energy's redevelopment of the Steam Plant into a cogeneration facility will have addressed many of the land use compatibility issues raised in this report. Specifically, the redevelopment should eliminate visible emissions through proper wood combustion and particulate emission control. Industrial processes, wood waste, and ash will no longer be visible, addressing some outdoor storage issues. Once completed, the proposed steam and electricity provided by the Index Energy Cogeneration Facility would have the ability to help attract industrial, residential and commercial uses to Downtown Ajax.

Preferred Land Use Strategy

Land use incompatibility arises from nuisance factors such as traffic, noise, dust, litter and odour as well as from visual amenity factors. There are a number of mitigating measures that may be employed to improve land use compatibility. These include proximity of land uses, operational limitations, site and building design, and landscaping. In determining the preferred land use strategy, various land use, and design aspects were explored.

Three alternative land use strategies were developed for the Study Area. Each alternative requires a differing level of policy intervention in the Study Area. The alternatives were:

1. Redesignate land uses and amend zoning for the entire Study Area to Prestige Employment;
2. Redesignate land uses and amend zoning to Prestige Employment with permissions for limited outdoor storage and limited retail for targeted properties that abut the Downtown or that border streets that lead to the Downtown; or,
3. Do not change permitted uses, but apply strict design requirements through site plan approval as well as a program to encourage and facilitate specific site design and landscaping improvements.

The preferred strategy is a combination of streetscape, landscape and design improvements coupled with land use restrictions at the interface with the Downtown, as proposed in Strategies 2 and 3. This preferred strategy will improve compatibility with the Downtown while maintaining and improving the viability of the employment area.

Streetscape and landscape improvements are also essential to improving the aesthetics of the Study Area, both in the private and public realms. Stakeholders have pointed out that the Town needs to take leadership to instigate change in the area. Aesthetic improvements beginning within the public realm would yield quick results. This solution could help achieve the goals of improving the image of the Study Area and improving compatibility with the Downtown, while respecting existing businesses.

Recommended Urban Design Improvements

A key objective of this study is to recommend how the *Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines* could be applied to the study area to achieve the objectives of the study.

There are several properties, that offer potential to introduce outdoor amenity areas, and screening with landscaping. Such properties could help set the tone for the landscaped

character of the area. The vegetation that already exists in the Study Area is well established, and already provides some mature landscaping. As well, redesign of the boulevards within the street right-of-ways with coordinated landscaping and continuous sidewalks could create an effective and coordinated image improvement for the Study Area.

Overall, most of the buildings are sited parallel to the street, with entrances and office components facing the street. Therefore, there is good opportunity to enhance frontages and the streetscape with landscaping. While flexibility is a strong foundation of the *Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines*, they are written primarily for new development; more guidance is needed for sites in transition, going through upgrades, or improvement. Incentives for site improvements, such as landscaping, are likely required, to encourage property owners to undertake improvements. This situation is especially true for individually owned sites that are not in the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) area.

Implementation Tools

In order to implement the preferred land use strategy, it is recommended that the Official Plan be amended by re-designating lands abutting the Downtown from General Employment to Prestige Employment. It is also recommended that Area Specific Policy 6.10 be amended to include lands in the Study Area at the interface with the Downtown. The potential permitted uses for the Study Area is a combination of the uses permitted by the Prestige Employment designation and Special Area Policy 6.10 with some adjustments.

Table 1. Proposed Area Specific Policy for Study Area.

Permitted Uses	Current Prestige Employment Designation	Current Area Specific Policy 6.10	Proposed Area Specific Policy (PE designation with amended Area Specific Policy 6.10)
Offices	√	√	√
Research and development facilities	√		√
Manufacturing	√ In wholly enclosed buildings		√ In wholly enclosed buildings
Warehousing	√		√
Distribution centres	√		√

Table 1 continued...

Permitted Uses	Current Prestige Employment Designation	Current Area Specific Policy 6.10	Proposed Area Specific Policy (PE designation with amended Area Specific Policy 6.10)
Retail and Showroom	✓ sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises. Maximum 20% of the total GFA of the building.	✓ sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises. Maximum 50% of the total GFA of the building.	✓ sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises. Maximum 20% of the total GFA of the building.
Automobile dealerships	✓		✓
Financial institutions	✓		✓
Public and institutional, public health facilities, and places of worship		✓	✓
Community facilities i.e. day care facilities and urban squares		✓	✓
Restaurants	✓		✓
Personal service establishments	✓		✓
Athletic clubs	✓		✓
Private recreational facilities	✓		✓
Non-profit clubs and organizations		✓	✓
Banquet facilities	✓		✓
Convention centres	✓		✓
Cultural, entertainment and social facilities		✓	✓

Table 1 continued...

Permitted Uses	Current Prestige Employment Designation	Current Area Specific Policy 6.10	Proposed Area Specific Policy (PE designation with amended Area Specific Policy 6.10)
Hotels and motels and ancillary uses	√		√
Public and private utilities		√	√
Outdoor storage		√ located in a rear yard and screened from view from any street. Also, parent General Employment designation permits a maximum of 50% of the site area provided it is screened from public view.	√ located in a rear yard and screened from view from any street.

Similarly, the lands along the interface with the Downtown, excepting lands currently zoned Automobile Commercial should be re-zoned to Prestige Employment, with the addition of some existing uses, which are currently permitted by the General Employment zone. It is recommended that provisions in Zoning By-law 95-2003 be amended to establish landscape buffers and setbacks for outdoor storage that is located in a rear or interior side yard adjacent to the Downtown. It is also recommended that zoning Exception 4, as amended by By-law 86-2005, be amended to remove the permissions for the Steam Plant as it operates today and establish permissions for a district energy facility.

To initiate streetscape improvements, it is recommended that a CIP program be implemented to provide the necessary incentives for such items as:

- Façade improvements;
- Landscaping improvements;
- Parking lot retrofits and rearrangements; and,
- Screening and fencing.

One strategy could be to expand the Downtown CIP boundary to include the Study Area. An alternative strategy would be to create a separate CIP area and plan for the Central Ajax Employment Study Area.

Also, the site plan review process is an opportune time for staff to ensure any future development or redevelopment proposed within the Study Area enhances the prestige

image of the area and ensures compatibility. Since the Town is currently undertaking an Official Plan Review exercise, it would be an opportune time to add Official Plan policy outlining site plan requirements, under subsection 41(2)(d) of the *Planning Act*.

Next Steps

The next step is to present the preferred strategies in this report to Council, followed with a second public open house. In light of Council, agency, and public comments received on this report, final recommendations will be made and detailed implementing recommendations prepared.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

One of the key policies of the Town of Ajax Official Plan is for the Downtown to become a highly desirable, pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive and mixed use centre – in other words, a true Downtown – where people live, work, shop and play. The Central Ajax Employment Area immediately abuts the west side of the Downtown. In order to promote and accommodate a broader range of uses in the Downtown, it is necessary to improve the land use compatibility at the interface of the Downtown and the Central Ajax Employment Area. On March 26, 2007, Council adopted a staff recommendation to undertake a land use compatibility study for lands designated “General Employment” in the Official Plan abutting Downtown Ajax, and passed Interim Control By-law # 33-2007 to prohibit the use of land, buildings, and structures in the manner set out in the by-law, within the Study Area for a period of one year. On January 8, 2008, Council passed By-law # 18-2008 which amended Interim Control By-law # 33-2007 to extend the period of time in which the Interim Control By-law is in effect from March 25, 2008 to December 31, 2008. The purpose of this study is to conduct an in-depth examination of the existing land uses, policies, infrastructure and site conditions in the Central Ajax Employment Area and identify measures which can improve the land use compatibility at the interface between traditional employment uses and the residential, commercial and mixed uses in the Downtown.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Maintaining employment lands, and attracting new investments and employment opportunities are key goals of the Town. Other key goals are ensuring that the Downtown evolves into a compact, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use centre. To this end, the Town of Ajax recently adopted a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) (enacted April 11, 2005) and an Official Plan Amendment for the Downtown (OPA 20, adopted July 7, 2005). The intent of these planning instruments is to ensure that development reflect and support the Official Plan vision and goals, and encourage maintenance, rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Downtown Area. The CIP is designed to serve as a catalyst for the reinvestment and renewal within the Downtown.

The Central Ajax Employment Area is one of the oldest employment areas within the Town. The area was established as an employment area during the Second World War to manufacture war-related munitions. Some of the original buildings from this period are still in existence in the Study Area (**Figure 1**). The area is designated as a General Employment area and contains a mix of employment uses, including heavier industrial uses, many with outside storage (**Figure 2**).

The existing industrial character of the Central Employment Area presents challenges to achieving a compatible character with the adjacent Downtown, and to creating an attractive place for new investment in residential and mixed-use developments within the Downtown.

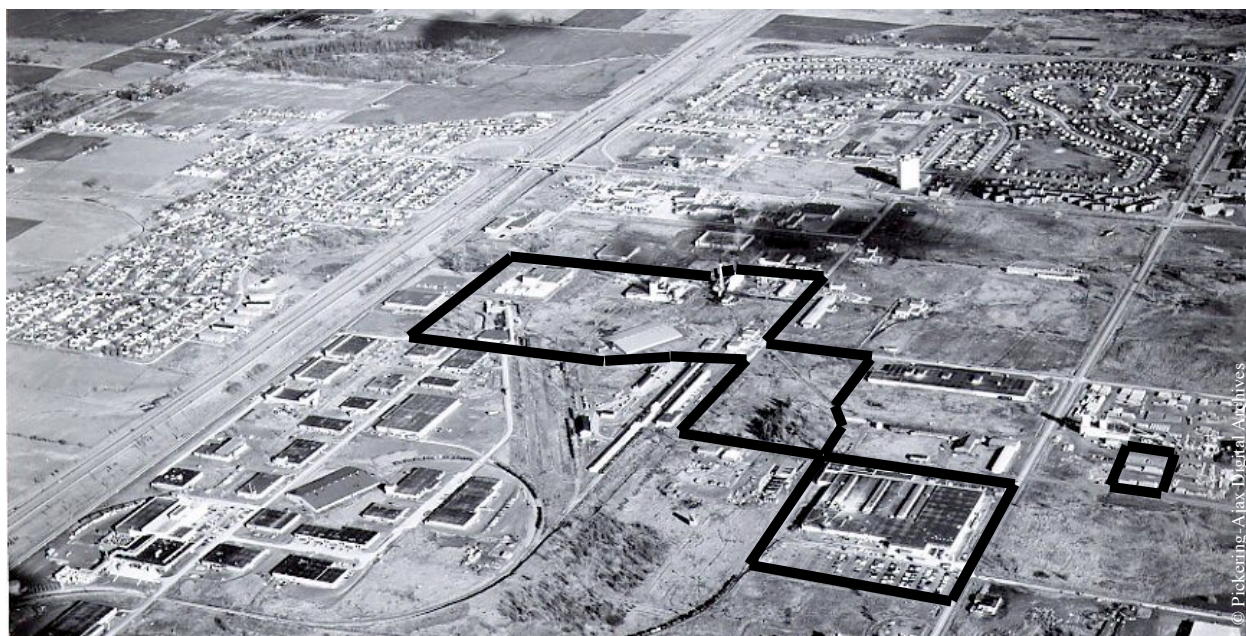


Figure 1. Study Area, 1966 (Source: Pickering-Ajax Digital Archives)



Figure 2. Study Area, 2005. (Source: Town of Ajax)

A means to achieve the disparate goals of maintaining employment areas while encouraging mixed use development in the Downtown is to reinvigorate the Central Employment Area by enhancing its image, strengthening its identity, and improving its compatible relationship with the Downtown.

The primary goal of the Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study is to determine whether there are opportunities to develop the Central Ajax Employment Area into a distinctive business area, complementary to the vibrant and diverse character envisaged for the adjacent Downtown.

The objectives of the study are to:

- Determine an appropriate vision and direction for the Central Ajax Employment Area that would maintain it as an employment area;
- Examine existing land uses to determine whether they are compatible with this vision;
- Identify impediments to investment and renewal;
- Examine the current Official Plan and zoning permissions and regulations to determine whether they are appropriate to achieving the vision;
- Identify streetscape and private realm improvements which can be made to improve the character and image of the area; and
- Recommend effective actions to stimulate investment to achieve the vision for the Study Area including amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law as well as other possible implementation tools.

1.3 CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT

The first half of this report summarizes the understanding of the existing conditions within the Central Ajax Employment Area, and assesses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of the Study Area. The second half contains the planning analysis and preferred strategy in response to the SWOT analysis findings.

Briefly, the contents of each chapter are summarized below:

- Chapter 2 describes the Study Area including its history, the types of businesses that currently exist within the Study Area and surrounding lands through annotated mapping and tables certain characteristics of each property.
- Chapter 3 describes the current policy context for the Study Area including the overriding Provincial and Regional Policies that the Town must conform with.
- Chapter 4 summarizes the SWOT analysis of factors that may affect successful revitalization and diversification of the Central Employment Area.
- Chapter 5 discusses the public process involved during the SWOT analysis, and summarizes public comments.
- Chapter 6 discusses the benefits of district energy facilities, and provides examples of such facilities in urban surroundings.
- Chapter 7 provides an evaluation of land use alternatives for the Study Area.
- Chapter 8 provides specific strategies for urban design and infrastructure improvements.
- Chapter 9 discusses possible planning tools for implementation of the preferred strategies.
- Chapter 10 summarizes findings of this report.

2.0 STUDY AREA DESCRIBED

2.1 STUDY AREA BOUNDARIES

Generally, the Study Area is located south of Highway 401 between Westney Rd. and Harwood Ave. The Study Area adjoins the western boundary of the Downtown Central Area, and is divided into four component blocks:

- 1) The largest and most northerly block is bound by Station St. to the north, Mills Rd. to the east, Hunt St. to the south and Dowty Rd. to the west;
- 2) The second block is the northern half of the block bound by Hunt St. to the north, Monarch Ave. to the east, the former CN rail line between Hunt Street and Bayly Street to the south, and Mackenzie Ave. to the west;
- 3) The third block is located at the northwest corner of Bayly St. and Mackenzie Ave.; and,
- 4) The fourth and smallest block is located on the east side of Mackenzie Ave., one lot south of Bayly St. as shown on **Figure 3**.

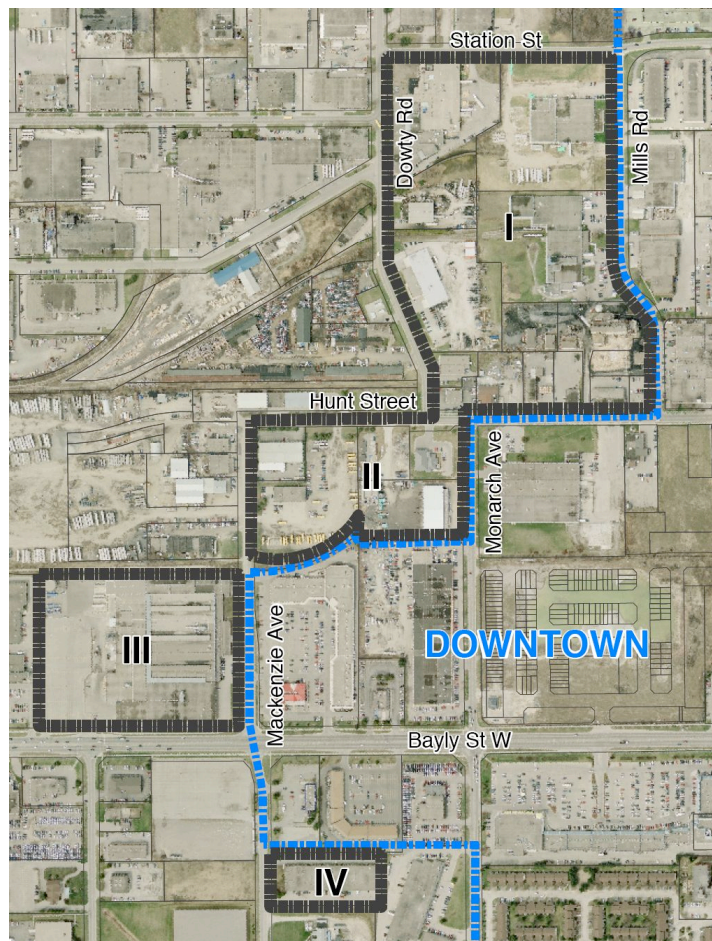


Figure 3. Study Area



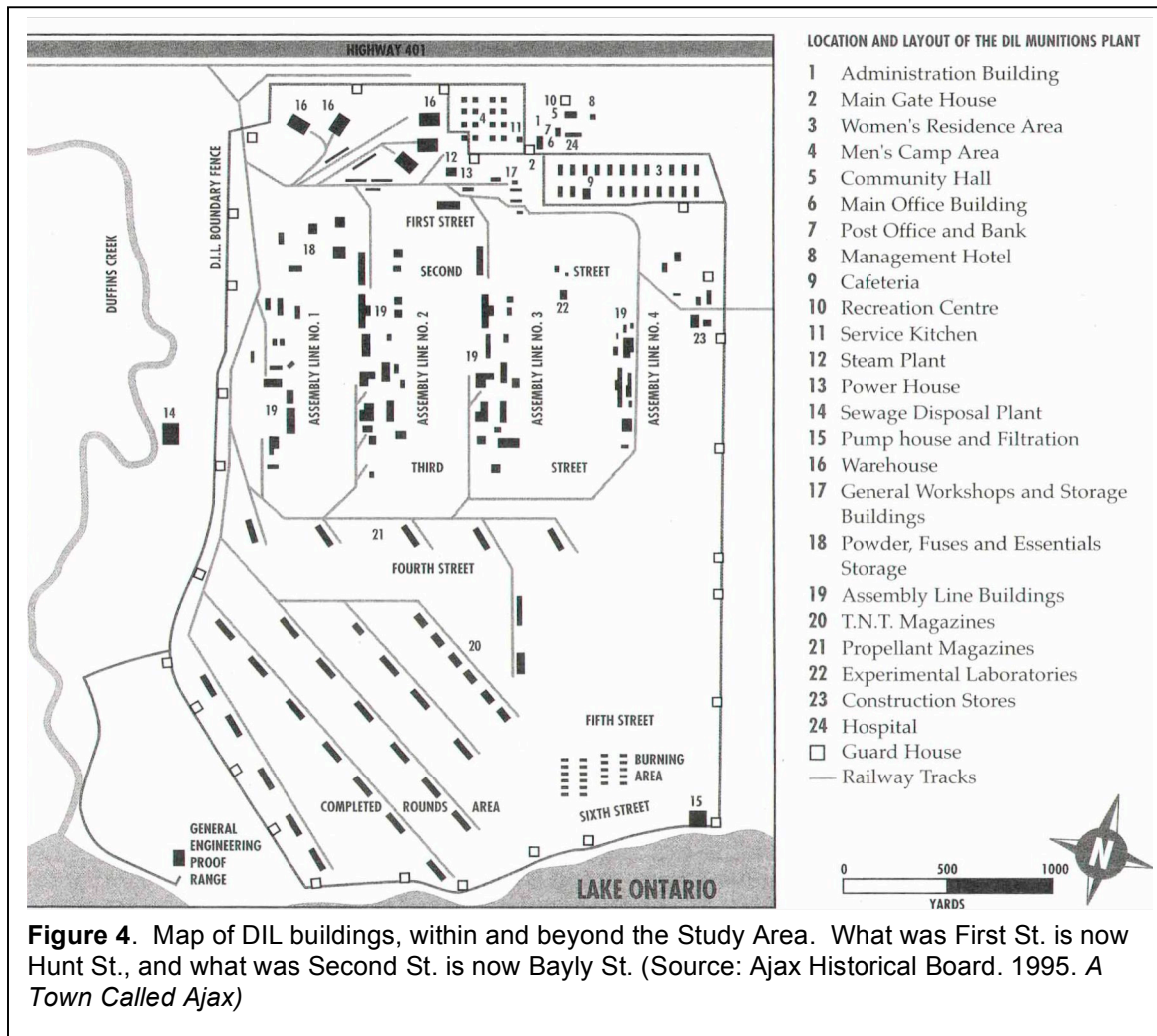
Study Area Block



Downtown Central Area

2.2 STUDY AREA HISTORY

The Town of Ajax was first established in 1941 when Defence Industries Limited (DIL), a munitions plant for World War II was constructed. A town site to house the workers grew around the plant. Through overhead lines that stretched as long as three kilometres, the Steam Plant delivered steam to DIL's production lines and auxiliary buildings; it served all of the heated DIL buildings, except the wartime houses. The Study Area is within the boundary of what was DIL. Each DIL Building was served by it's own railway line spur, some of the lines still exist and can be seen in the Study Area (see **Figure 4**).



At the end of the war a large number of the munitions buildings were leased to the University of Toronto and converted for use as classrooms. In 1949 the University of Toronto vacated the DIL buildings and Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) commenced a long-term development program.

CMHC decided that the DIL plant site, with it's 600 wartime homes and six abandoned productions lines, could be the nucleus of a fully planned model town. George Finley was appointed to create this model town and he persuaded several large successful British firms to

establish Canadian branches in Ajax. Most of these firms began production in one or more of the former munitions buildings. Some of those firms that still exist one way or another today in and around the Study Area are:

- Ajax Magnethermic Canada;
- Ajax Steam Plant;
- Ajax Textile Processing Company Ltd.;
- Ariss Haulage Ltd.;
- Atlas Tag Company of Canada;
- Dowty Equipment of Canada (now Messier- Dowty Inc.);
- Dupont Canada (now Invista Dupont Canada Ltd.);
- Sandra Tea & Coffee Ltd.; and,
- Temuss Products Canada Ltd.

In November 1950, the Improvement District of Ajax was set-up. The area was bordered on the east by Pickering Beach Road, on the north by the CN Rail and on the west by Old Plymouth Road (now Westney Road). The idea behind the Improvement District was to continue the effort to attract more business and industry to Ajax. Ajax was subsequently incorporated as a Town in January 1955.

It would appear that the roads in the northern part of the Study Area were created by extending the roads DIL used during their operation (**Figures 5a, 5b and 5C**). The original DIL road configuration was created to accommodate the alignment of the railway spurs and building locations. The retrofit of DIL's initial road network to accommodate smaller lots for industrial uses has created an irregular road network and lot configurations that still exist today.

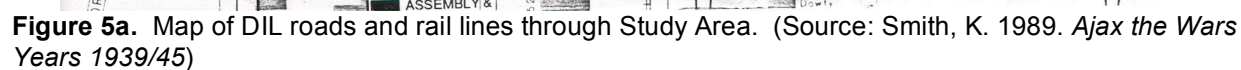
The land use designation for the Study Area in the 1956 Official Plan was Industrial, and the 1959 zoning was Prestige Industrial District (M1) and Special Industrial District (M3) (**Figure 6a and 6b**)

In the Town's 1974 District Plan Consolidation, the intersections of Hunt St., Dowty Rd. and Monarch Ave. were identified as needing intersection improvement. Specifics on those improvements were not part of the Official Plan.

In the Town's 1994 District Plan Consolidation, the portion of the Study Area located north of Bayly Street was identified as a Community Improvement Area (**Figure 7**). An industrial area could be selected as community improvement area if it was characterized by one or more of the following:

- Deficiencies or problems in the sanitary and/or storm sewer and/or water supply systems;
- Conflict with nearby land uses;
- Inadequate off-street parking;
- Dilapidated buildings and/or adverse site conditions due to excessive open storage or lack of maintenance; and,
- Opportunity for improvements, infilling or conversion of obsolete buildings to other uses.

A Community Improvement Plan for the area was never developed.



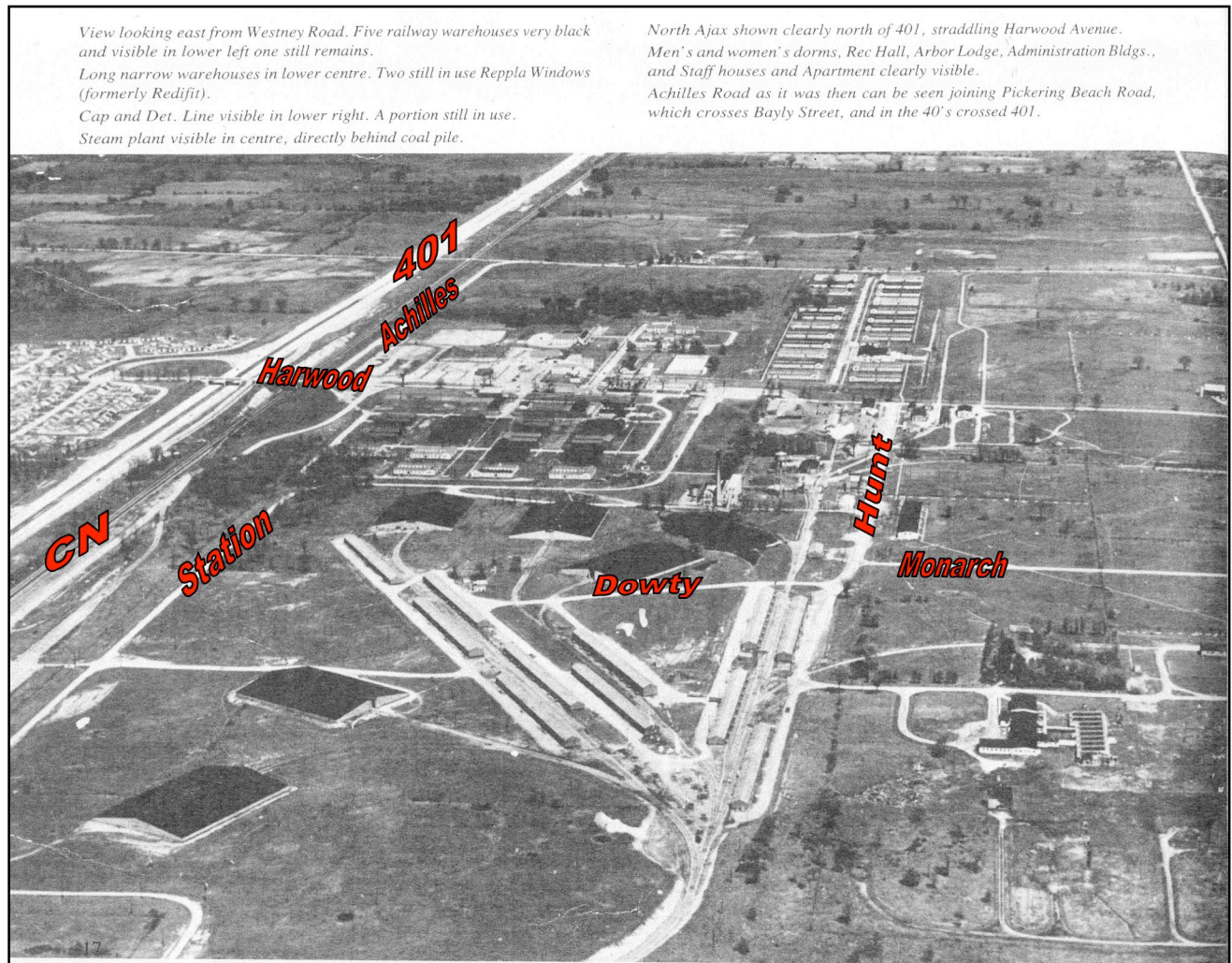
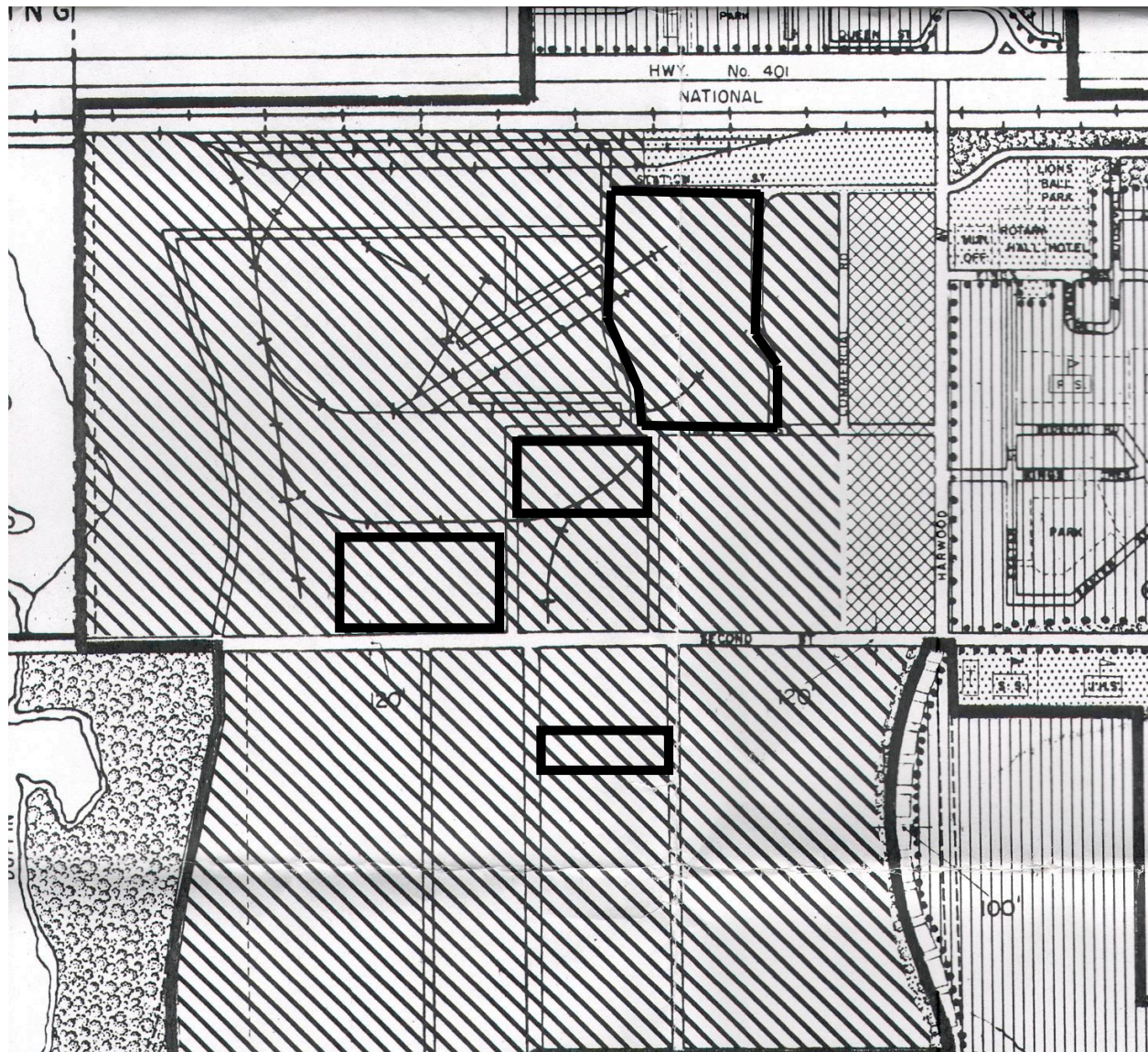


Figure 5b. Air photo of Study Area during DIL years, looking east. (Source: Smith, K. 1989. *Ajax the Wars Years 1939/45*)



Figure 5c. Air photo of Study Area during DIL years, looking north. (Source: Smith, K. 1989. *Ajax the Wars Years 1939/45*)



LEGEND

	RESIDENTIAL		INDUSTRIAL
	AGRICULTURAL		OPEN SPACE & GREENBELT
	COMMERCIAL		PUBLIC & SEMI PUBLIC USES

Figure 6a. The Study Area was designated Industrial in the 1956 Official Plan.

 Study Area

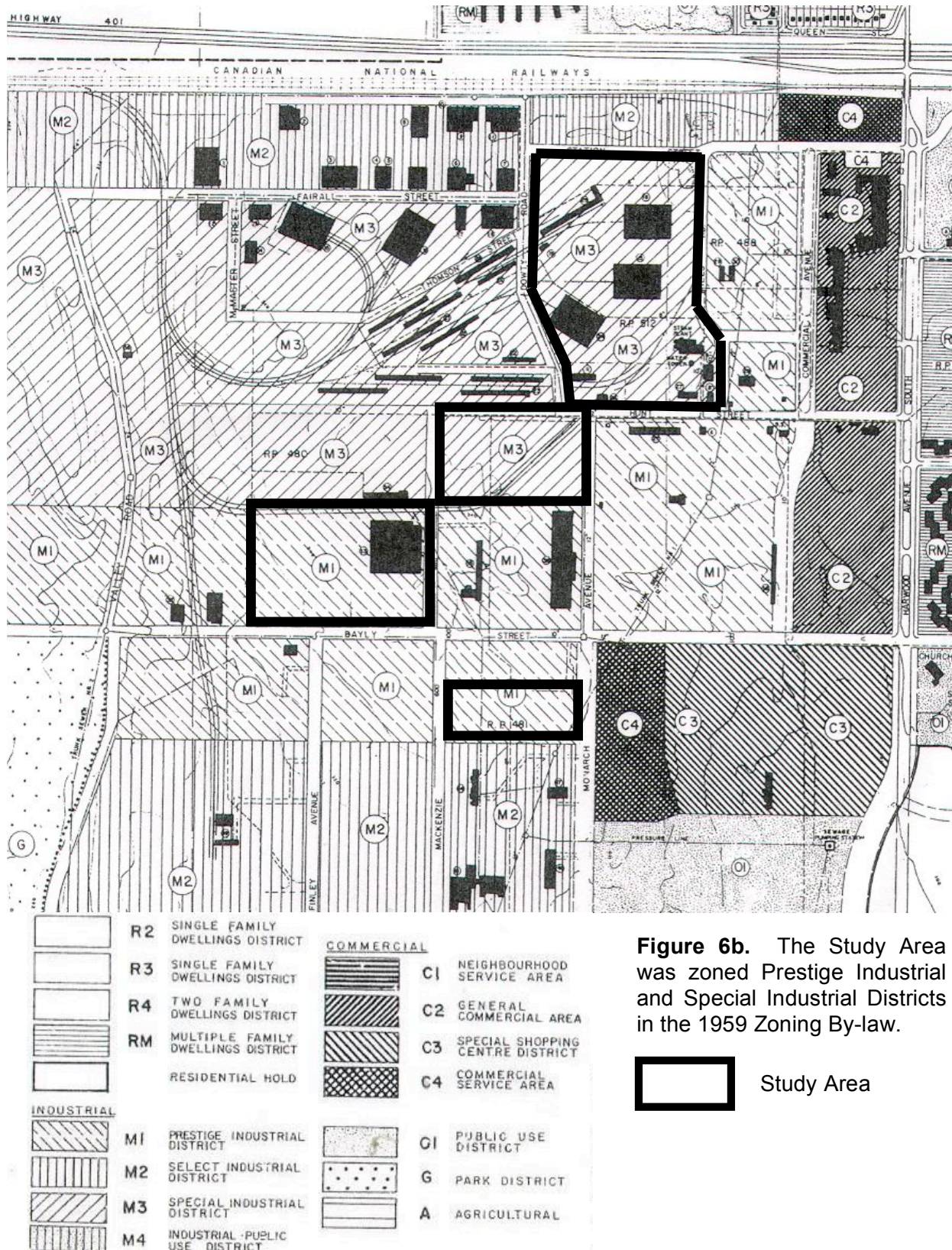


Figure 6b. The Study Area was zoned Prestige Industrial and Special Industrial Districts in the 1959 Zoning By-law.

 Study Area

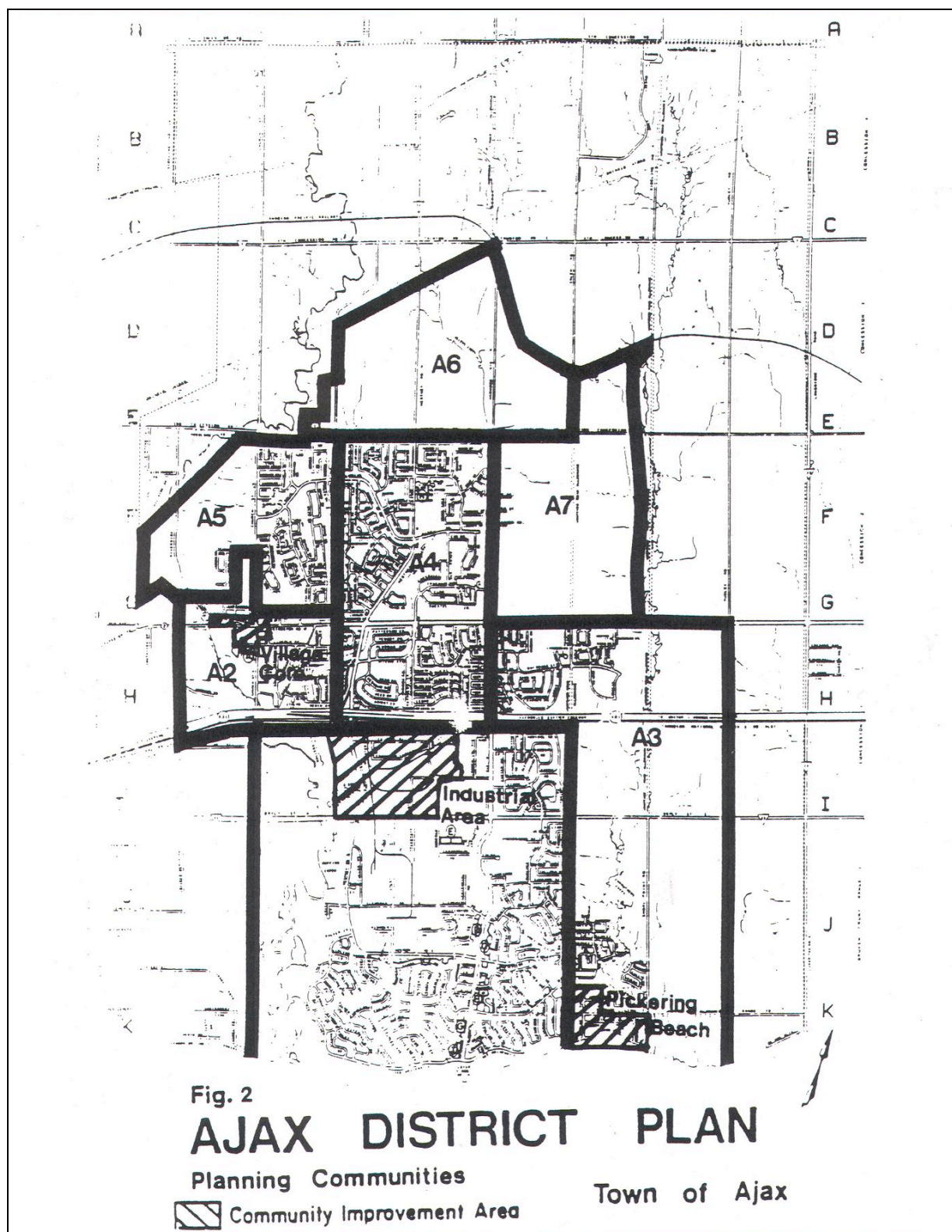


Figure 7. Town's 1994 District Plan Consolidation showing the north part of the Study Area as a Community Improvement Area.

2.3 STUDY AREA CHARACTERISTICS

CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBED

The Study Area involves 22 properties, a total of 21.86 acres (8.85 ha). Based on a site walk, air photos, and background data, an inventory table was completed, listing each property owner, tenant/business description, address, Official Plan designation, zoning, size, Ministry of Environment Certificate of Approval, and heritage information if applicable (**Table 1**). Accompanying the inventory table is an annotated map that provides a profile photo of each property along with a summary of property information (**Figures 8 and 9**).

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The Study Area is surrounded to the west by mainly heavy industrial uses: to the north by smaller industries backing onto Highway 401 and to the south by industrial uses generally in a more modern setting. Further west along Westney Road, retail uses predominate. Also in this vicinity is the Ajax GO Station, which is located approximately 900 metres west of the Study Area at Westney Rd., just south of Highway 401. GO transit buses provide weekday morning/afternoon rush-hour service through the Study Area.

To the east, the Study Area abuts the Downtown. The Downtown includes a range of land uses along its interface with the Study Area including industrial uses along the east side of Mills Rd., and Monarch Ave.; commercial uses on the east side of Mackenzie Ave. and along Bayly Street north of the most southerly parcel; and a new residential area east of Monarch Ave., and north of Bayly St.

Because of the historic beginnings of the Study Area, a number of rail spur lines exist. However, only the siding to Sandra Tea & Coffee (144 Mills Rd.) is still active within the Study Area.



Figure 10. GO bus service during weekday peak hours. (Station St. at Dowty Rd.)

2.4 INVENTORY OF SPACE

All properties are currently occupied with the exception of the Avery Dennison-Fasson Canada Inc. building, located at the southeast corner of Station St. and Dowty Rd. There are a few major tenants that are heavy industrial in nature, such as production of expanded polystyrene products, the Steam Plant, and manufacturing of coffee and tea. However, many smaller tenants that are service-oriented also exist in the Study Area, such as professional service offices, and construction contractors' offices. The rest of the tenants are not necessarily heavy-industry/manufacturing oriented, but do require outdoor storage of trucks, buses and equipment that are not well concealed from public view, despite zoning restrictions to that effect. Refer to **Table 1** for greater inventory and property details.

Table 1. Property Inventory in the Central Ajax Employment Area

#	Owner	Tenant Name (and/or Description)	Business Description / website	Address	Unit	OP Designation	In CIP Area	Zoning	Zoning Exception	Area (ha)	No. Employees	MOE Certificate of Approval	Heritage	Outdoor Storage & Estimated % of site (observed from Town airphotos)
1	Plasti-fab Ltd.	Plasti-fab Ltd.	Mfr. Expanded Polystyrene Products	40 Mills Rd.		General Employment	No	General Employment		2.55	15	Yes - Air	No	
2	Sandra Tea & Coffee Ltd.	Sandra Tea & Coffee Ltd.	Mfr. Coffee & Tea www.mother-parkers.com	144 Mills Rd		General Employment	No	General Employment		2.26	100	No	No	
3	Town of Ajax	Energy Plus 2000 Ltd./Ajax Steam Plant	Central Steam Heating Plant	170 Mills Rd		General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.43		Yes - Air, 1984	No	
4	Energy Plus 2000 Ltd.	Energy Plus 2000 Ltd./Ajax Steam Plant	Central Steam Heating Plant	170 Mills Rd.		General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.71	20	Yes - Air, 1984	Designated/By-law 165-91 - of historic value with respect to Defence Industries Ltd. (DIL) years	
5	Energy Plus 2000 Ltd.	Energy Plus 2000 Ltd./Ajax Steam Plant	Central Steam Heating Plant	170 Mills Rd.		General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.26		Yes - Air, 1984	No	Yes, 45%
6	Balena Daniel Joseph	Schiff & Associates Inc.; Taylor, Ian M. (accountants); Balena Daniel J. (lawyers, notaries public); McDonnell Kent (insurance agents)	Trustee in Bankruptcy, Insolvency Consulting Services, & Turnaround Management	110 Hunt St.		General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.1	6	No	No	
7	Dan Sinclair, Harold Brown, Ray Murray	Alpine Custom Cabinetry & Furniture; Midway Carpet; Christ Church of Today; Ajax Pump, Motor & Pool Service	Mfr. Custom Cabinetry, carpet sales, place of worship, sales & service to electric motor, pump, pools & spa	120-126 Hunt St.		General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.2	6	No	No	
8	Canadian Auto Workers Union	Canadian Auto Workers Union	Trade Union / www.cawlocal1090.ca	140 Hunt St.		General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.26	3	No	No	
9	Hajson Olco & Car Wash	Hajson Auto Centre, Hajson Lube, Olco gas bar & car wash	Gas Station, Lube, Car Wash	158 Hunt St.		General Employment	Yes	Automobile Commercial	#119 - Prohibited uses and development standards	0.28	4	No	No	
10	Sfetiko, Stella	Villariz Martial Arts Centre, Plastic Lumber (decks, patios, & lumber retail), Depot Waste Stream Management (packaging machinery, equipment, & supplies)	Dist. Recycled Plastic Lumber, Boards, Sheeting, Furniture, Curbs, Posts, Benches www.plasticlumberdepot.com	172 Hunt St.	Unit 2	General Employment	Yes	General Employment	#4 - Expanded permitted and prohibited uses, development standards	0.42	4	No	No	Yes, 50%
11	1363848 Ontario Inc.	Ted Gibson Auto Service; Domenic's Auto Sales & Leasing; Mr. Carburetor	Auto Repair	182 Hunt St.		General Employment	No	Automobile Commercial		0.17	3	No	No	

Table 1. Property Inventory in the Central Ajax Employment Area

#	Owner	Tenant Name (and/or Description)	Business Description / website	Address	Unit	OP Designation	In CIP Area	Zoning	Zoning Exception	Area (ha)	No. Employees	MOE Certificate of Approval	Heritage	Outdoor Storage & Estimated % of site (observed from Town airphotos)
12	Ajax Pickering Whitby Association for Community Living	ARC Industries	Subcontracting - Packaging, Collating, Assembly, Transit Shelter Cleaning, Work Placement	177 Dowty Rd.		General Employment	No	General Employment		0.23	10	No	No	
13	Dwight Crane Ltd.	Dwight Crane Ltd (service & rental)	Aerial Equipment & Crane Rentals www.dwightcrane.com	131 Dowty Rd.		General Employment	No	General Employment		1.81	35	No	Of historic value with respect to DIL years, Ajax Warehouse Limited, 1942	Yes, 20%
14	Dowty Estates Inc.	Conex Polymer Inc. (plastics, raw materials powders, liquids, resins, etc.)	Mfr. & Recycle Plastic & Plastic Products	107 Dowty Rd.		General Employment	No	General Employment		0.86	7	No	No	Yes, 75%
15	Fasson Canada Inc.	Vacant	vacant	81 Dowty Rd.		General Employment	No	General Employment		1.77	120	Yes - Air	No	
16	Region of Durham - EMS Station	EMS Station	emergency services	175 Hunt St		General Employment	No	General Employment		0.41		No	No	
17	1268449 Ontario Inc.	Contractor yard		215 Hunt St.		General Employment	No	General Employment		0.44		No	No	Yes, 10%
18	Laidlaw Transit Ltd.	Laidlaw Transit Ltd. (buses - charter & rental)	Charter School Buses	225 Mackenzie Ave.		General Employment	No	General Employment		1.52	120	No	No	
19	Otto Martinek Holdings Inc.	Martinek Custom Furniture Ltd. (furniture design, builders, and retailers); Osso Electric Supplies Inc.	Mfr. Custom Millwork & Furniture	205 Mackenzie Ave.	Unit 1	General Employment	No	General Employment		0.45	10	No	No	
20	1613985 Ont Ltd	Raywall Ltd. (kitchen cabinetry); Bry Ron Contracting Ltd.(construction); Lakeridge Contracting Ltd.(construction); Multi-vac Services (catch basin cleaning services); Ontario Water Products Inc.	kitchen cabinetry, construction services, catch basin cleaning services	270 Monarch Ave		General Employment	No	General Employment		0.97		No	No	Yes, 40%
21	CDA Industries Inc.	CDA Industriels & Sklar Peppler (furniture manufacturers)	CDA Industries: Mfr. Point of Purchase & Trade Show Exhibits; Sklar Pepplar: Mfr. Furniture	274 Mackenzie Ave.		General Employment (north half) and Prestige Employment (south half)	No	General Employment (north half) and Prestige Employment (south half)		4.84	100	No	No	Yes, 5%
22	HA Horning Investments Ltd.	Bardon Supplies Ltd. (plumbing, heating supplies); Bongard Collision Centre; Desjardins Henry Automotive Inc.; Hot Yoga; Intercultural Worship Centre; Islington Engineering (soil testing); R&D Fabricating Consultant (steel); S.B. Simpson Group Inc. (industrial equipment & supplies); Universal Marketing Inc. (computer sales & service)	Whlse. Plumbing, Heating & Industrial Supplies www.bardonsupplies.com , personal service, place of worship, retail, professional service	377 Mackenzie Ave.		General Employment	No	General Employment		0.92	12	Yes - Air for 658553 Ontario Inc. (Bongard Collision Centre)	No	

Figure 8. Land Use Inventory Map: Central Ajax Employment Area – North Portion



Address: 81 Dowty Road
Property Size: 1.77 ha
Occupant: Vacant
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment (GE)
Heritage Property: No
MOE C of A: Air
Inventory ID: #15



Address: 40 Mills Road
Property Size: 2.55 ha
Occupant: Plasti-Fab Ltd.
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment (GE)
Heritage Property: No
MOE C of A: Air
Inventory ID: #01



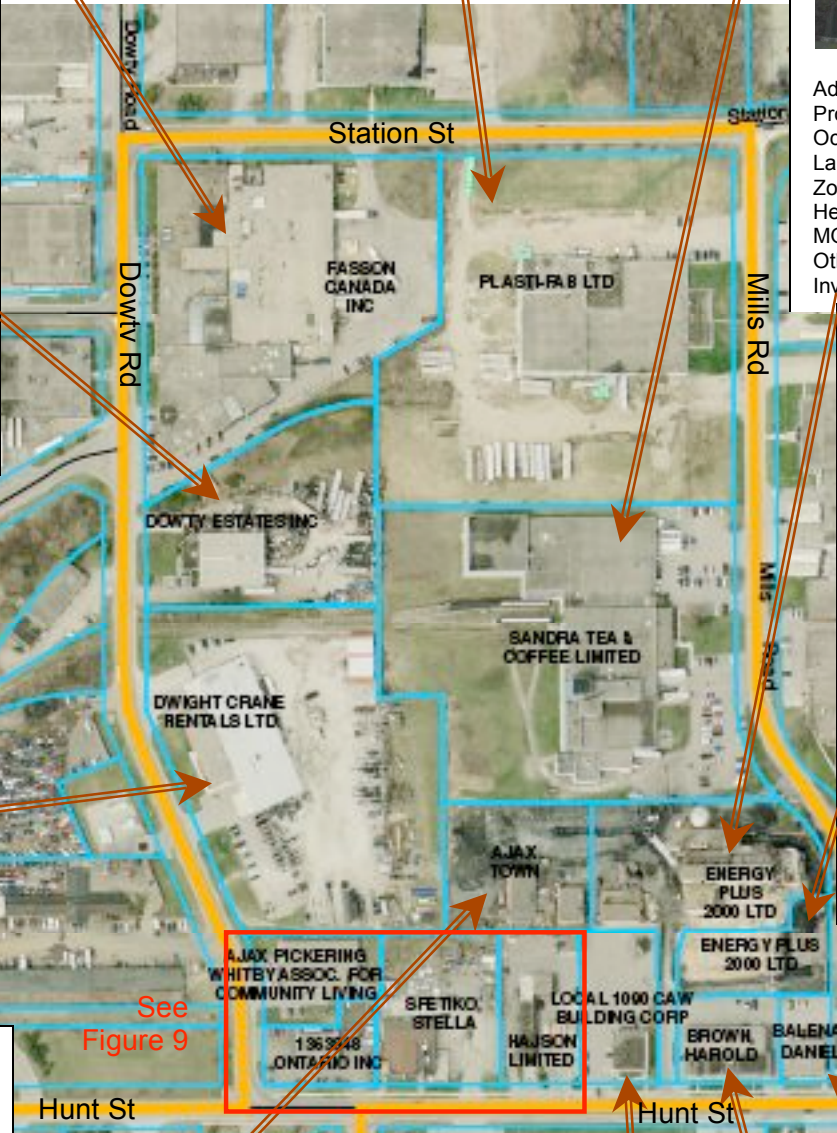
Address: 144 Mills Road
Property Size: 2.26 ha
Occupant: Sandra Tea & Coffee Ltd.
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment (GE)
Heritage Property: No
Inventory ID: #02



Address: 107 Dowty Street
Property Size: 0.86 ha
Occupant: Conex Polymer Inc.
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment (GE)
Heritage Property: No
Inventory ID: #14



Address: 170 Mills Road
Property Size: 0.71 ha
Occupant: Energy Plus 2000 Ltd.
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment-4 (GE-4)
Heritage Property: Designated
MOE C of A: Air
Other: In CIP
Inventory ID: #04



Address: 170 Mills Road
Property Size: 0.26 ha
Occupant: Energy Plus 2000 Ltd.
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment-4 (GE-4)
Heritage Property: No
Other: In CIP
Inventory ID: #05



Address: 131 Dowty Street
Property Size: 1.81 ha
Occupant: Dwight Crane Rentals Ltd.
Land Use Designation: General Employment
Zoning: General Employment (GE)
Heritage Property: Of historic value
Inventory ID: #13



Address: 170 Mills Road
Property Size: 0.43 ha
Occupant: Energy Plus 2000 Ltd.
Land Use Designation: General Employment, Subject to OPA 20
Zoning: General Employment-4 (GE-4)
Heritage Property: No
MOE C of A: Air
Other: In CIP
Inventory ID: #03



Address: 140 Hunt Street
Property Size: 0.26 ha
Occupant: Canadian Auto Workers' Union
Land Use Designation: General Employment, Subject to OPA 20
Zoning: General Employment - 4(GE-4)
Heritage Property: No
Other: In CIP
Inventory ID: #08



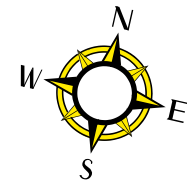
Address: 110 Hunt Street
Property Size: 0.1 ha
Occupant: Multiple tenants – professional services
Land Use Designation: General Employment, Subject to OPA 20
Zoning: General Employment-4 (GE-4)
Heritage Property: No
Other: In CIP
Inventory ID: #06



Address: 120-126 Hunt Street
Property Size: 0.2 ha
Occupant: Multiple tenants – retail, service, place of worship
Land Use Designation: General Employment, Subject to OPA 20
Zoning: General Employment-4 (GE-4)



Heritage Property: No
Other: In CIP
Inventory ID: #07



Data Source:
© First Base Solutions, 2005 Orthophotography
© 2007 MPAC. All rights reserved. Not a plan of survey. © Durham Region GIS Services, 2007, Single Line Road Network. Other info © Town of Ajax. © Sorensen Gravelly Lowes Planning Associates Inc., 2007

Figure 9. Land Use Inventory Map: Central Ajax Employment Area – South Portion



3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Key to attracting investment into an employment area is good accessibility and visibility, an attractive and safe environment, adequate servicing and transportation infrastructure, and a place that will not pose incompatibility issues to businesses in the future. Several policies from all levels of governments promote the creation of viable and vibrant employment areas by providing policies that encourage efforts to achieve these advantages.

A number of provincial, regional, and local policies such as the *Provincial Policy Statement* (2005), the *Growth Plan for The Greater Golden Horseshoe*, the *Durham Regional Official Plan*, and the *Town Official Plan* and *Strategic Plan* support the objectives of this study to reinvigorate investment, diversify the employment base, enhance the visual character of the area, and improve the walkability and safety of the Central Employment Area.

3.1 PROVINCIAL

PROVINCIAL POLICY REQUIRES PROMOTION AND MAINTENANCE OF EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Both the *Provincial Policy Statement* and the *Growth Plan* support efforts to revitalize, diversify, and improve economic competitiveness of the employment area. The *Growth Plan* provides that municipalities will promote economic development and competitiveness by: providing for an appropriate mix of employment uses; protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses; and providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range of choices of suitable sites which support a wide range of economic activities and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses.

EMPLOYMENT AREAS TO BE COMPACT AND TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE

The *Growth Plan* requires that, in employment areas, municipalities facilitate development of transit-supportive, compact built form and minimize surface parking.

NEW DESIGN TOOLS & OTHER NEW POWERS

This Study is timely in that the amendments to the *Planning Act* expand a municipality's authority over building characteristics such as height and density, external building design details, and character and appearance. The *Planning Act* also now includes the promotion of development that is sustainable, supports public transit, and is pedestrian-oriented as a provincial interest. To further this provincial interest, the *Planning Act* allows land dedications for pedestrian pathways, and public transit rights of way.

NEW POWERS IN THE PLANNING ACT NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THE OFFICIAL PLAN

The policy and provisions relating to these new tools must be contained in the Official Plan before a municipality can use them.

3.2 REGIONAL

Regional Council recently adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 114 which amends the Official Plan (OP) based on a recently completed Official Plan review study. OPA 114 was subject to a number of appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board, the majority of which have been resolved. One of the outstanding appeals relates to the conversion of Employment Areas (policy 8C.2.16). Policy 8C.2.16 addresses a number of criteria that need to be established through a comprehensive review to support the redesignation of Employment Areas lands to other urban designations.

The Region is currently undertaking a Growth Plan conformity exercise to allocate population and employment to local area municipalities. It is anticipated that this exercise will be endorsed by Regional Council in mid to late 2009.

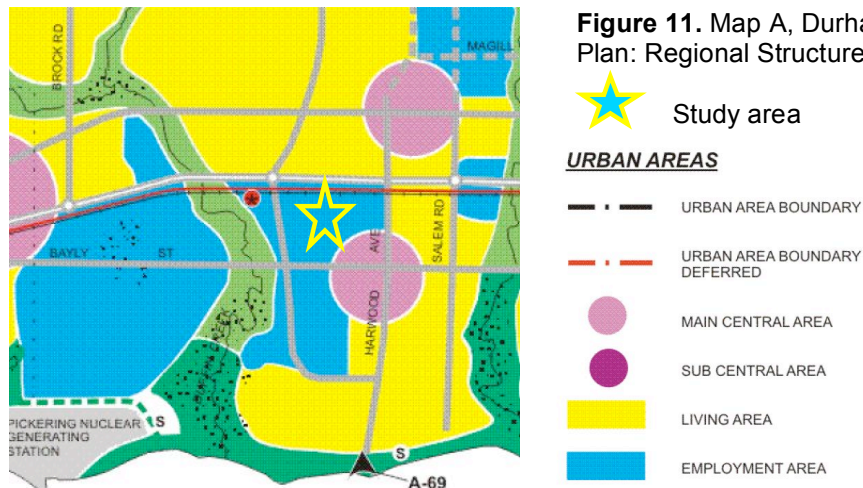
DURHAM REGION OP ENCOURAGES BEAUTIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT AREAS

The Study Area is designated Employment Area in the *Durham Region Official Plan (2004)* (see **Figure 11**), and OPA 114, and is located adjacent to a Main Central Area designation corresponding to the downtown. An Employment Area designation policy “promotes beautification of Employment Areas, particularly those adjacent to major transportation routes” (section 11.2.6 or 8C.1.6 in OPA 114). Additionally, Regional and local Councils and landowners are to cooperate in the beautification of new and existing industrial parks (section 11.3.15 or 8C.2.15 in OPA 114). To implement these policies on beautification, local municipalities are to include urban design guidelines and landscaping standards for Employment Areas in local official plans (section 11.3.16 or 8C.2.17 in OPA 114).

It is a policy that the Regional Council will work with area municipal Councils to promote Main Central Areas and “specific areas within Employment Areas” as attractive locations for higher-order office uses, such as regional, district and head offices of corporations. The Regional Plan does not define the location of “specific areas within Employment Areas”, and leaves it to the local municipal official plan to delineate. However, prestige employment type uses, and in particular, high employment generating uses, and greater architectural landscaping and sign controls are encouraged along Highway 401 and Type A and B arterial roads (section 11.3.10 or 8C.2.10 in OPA 114).

It is also a policy of the Official Plan, that Central Areas and Employment Areas shall be integrated and supportive of each other. Further, that Council of area municipalities shall ensure the inclusion of:

- Policies to achieve efficient and intensive use of Employment Areas;
- Criteria for the location of the various uses allowed in this designation; and
- Urban design guidelines and landscaping standards (section 11.3.16 or 8C.2.17 in OPA 114).



3.3 TOWN

MOST OF STUDY AREA IS DESIGNATED GENERAL EMPLOYMENT

The Study Area lands are predominantly designated General Employment, in the *Ajax Official Plan*. One exception is the southern half of the property located at the northwest corner of Mackenzie Ave and Bayly St, which is designated Prestige Employment as shown on **Figure 12**.

General Employment lands are to be located within the interior of employment areas. General Employment areas permit offices, research and development facilities, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution facilities, and the retail sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on the premises. The General Employment designation permits outdoor storage, which is to be screened from public view, and not exceed 50% of the site area.

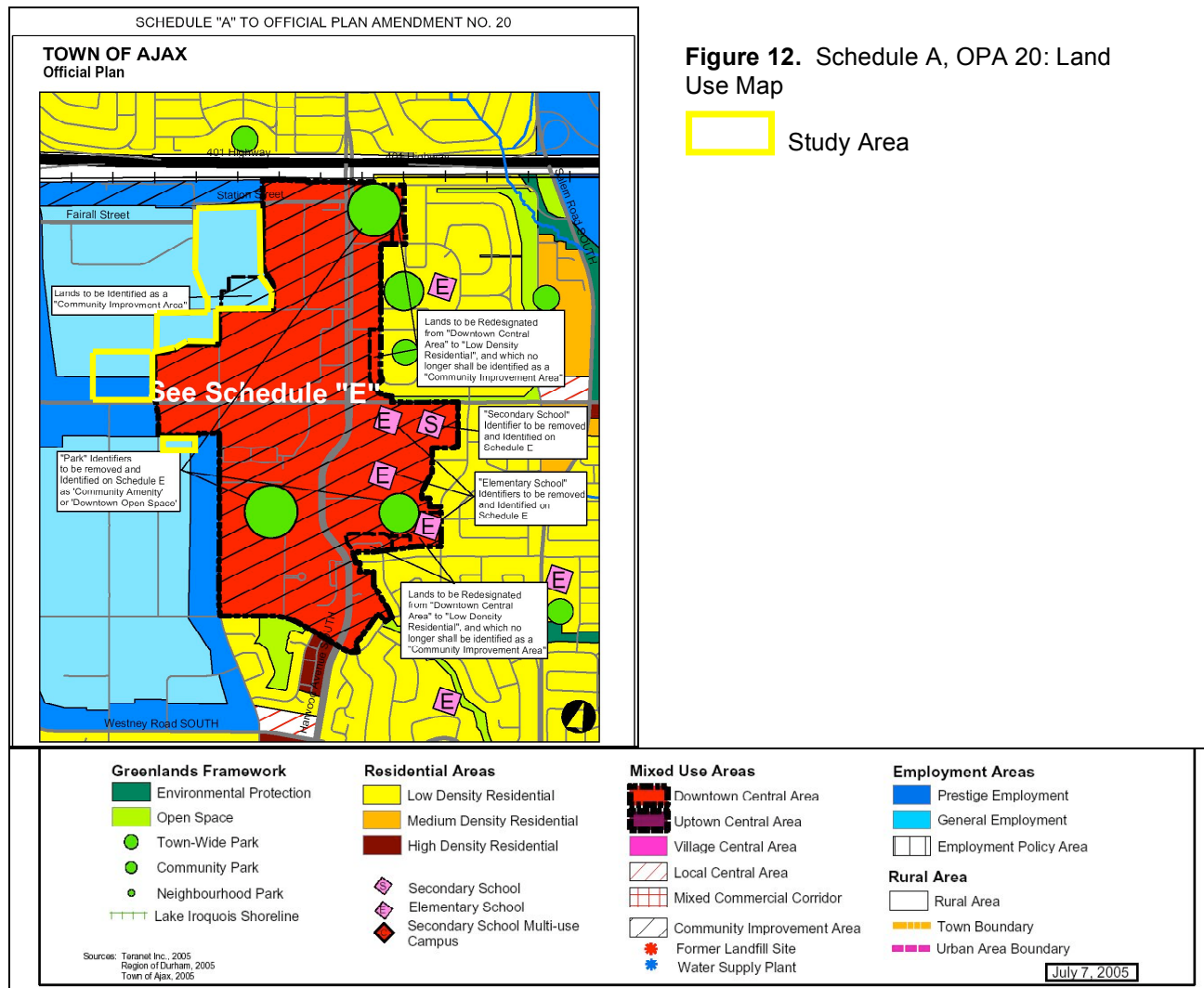


Figure 12. Schedule A, OPA 20: Land Use Map

 Study Area

PRESTIGE EMPLOYMENT DESIGNATION IS TO EXHIBIT A HIGHER STANDARD

Prestige Employment designations generally apply to lands with prime exposure along Highway 401 and arterial roads. It is intended that such designated lands exhibit high standards of building design and landscaping. Prestige Employment areas permit a broader range of uses including offices and professional offices, research and development facilities, manufacturing in wholly enclosed buildings, warehousing, distribution centres, retail sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on the premises, automobile dealerships, financial institutions, restaurants, personal service establishments, athletic clubs, private recreational facilities, banquet facilities, convention centres, hotels and motels and uses ancillary to hotels and motels. Unlike the General Employment Designation, the Prestige Employment Designation does not permit outdoor storage.

INCREASING JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND CREATING FUNCTIONAL, ATTRACTIVE EMPLOYMENT AREAS ARE KEY OBJECTIVES

Industrial and business uses are very important to the economic health and the quality of life in Ajax. The *Ajax Official Plan's* (2005) objectives for Employment Areas include:

- Strengthening the Town's economic base by increasing job opportunities and expanding the assessment base;
- Ensuring that a sufficient supply of employment-generating lands is designated and that those lands are provided with infrastructure in concert with anticipated demand; and
- Establishing urban design guidelines and landscaping standards that will ensure an urban environment that provides for a range of safe, functional and attractive employment areas.

PARTS OF THE STUDY AREA FALL WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

The properties located at the northwest corner of Mills Rd. and Hunt St. fall within the Downtown CIP area.

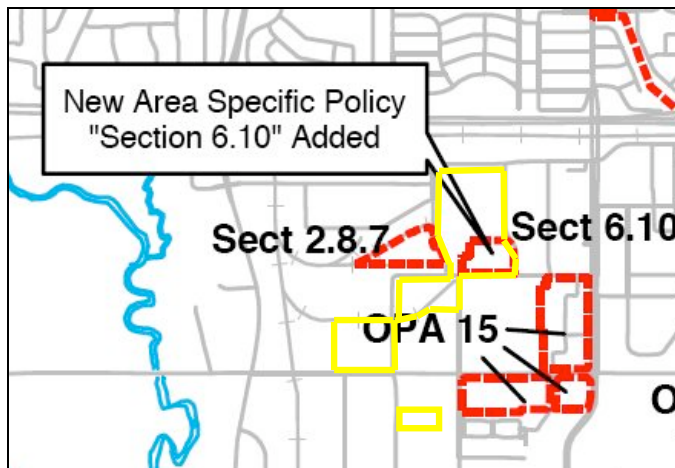
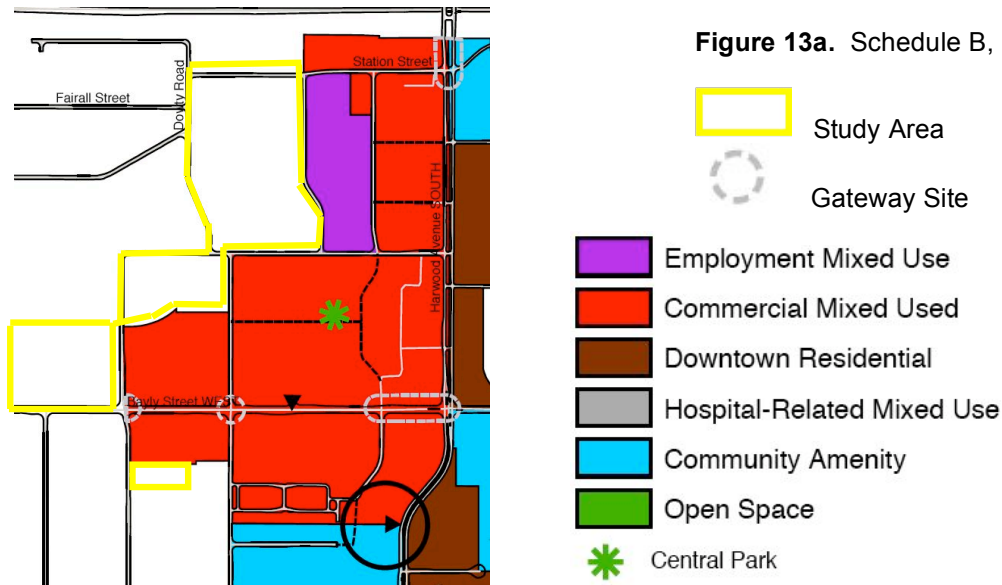
The intent of the Downtown CIP is to encourage and to facilitate redevelopment of the Downtown Central Area. In the past, it was believed the flexibility of "permissive" policies would provide opportunities for a mix of land uses. Instead, the Downtown became dominated with auto-oriented, and sprawling low-scale developments. Consequently, the urban landscape of the Downtown is far from the intensive, urban, mixed-use, and pedestrian-oriented environment envisioned. In 2005, Council adopted a CIP in order to provide landowners financial incentives to redevelop their lands.

NEW DOWNTOWN CENTRAL AREA POLICIES (OPA 20) AFFECT STUDY AREA

The Downtown Central Area is located adjacent to the eastern Study Area boundary (**Figure 12**). The Downtown Central Area Policies (OPA 20) were adopted in 2005, and set out the planning policy and urban design guidelines for the Downtown CIP. Its intent is to ensure fruition of a compact, urban, intensive, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-supportive environment, among other goals. Lands adjacent to the eastern Study Area boundary, on Mills Rd., are designated Employment Mixed Use. Employment Mixed Use areas represent a transition zone between the primary residential/commercial mixed use development of the Downtown and the employment lands of the Study Area. These areas are intended to encompass a mix of transitional uses such as prestige employment and commercial/office uses, characterized by high quality design standards. The rest of the Downtown lands that abut the eastern Study Area boundary, south of Hunt St., are designated Commercial Mixed Use. The Commercial Mixed Use designation encompasses the primary retail areas, and permits mixed-use development including residential. Visual attractiveness is of prime importance in this interface area. In addition, the Mackenzie Ave. and Bayly St. W. intersection is identified as a Gateway Site in Schedule B of OPA 20 (**Figure 13a**). Gateway sites are to create an urban image through buildings and landscape elements, "future buildings...will be sited to frame the intersection and have sufficient height, massing and architectural detail to highlight their visual importance as urban anchors and focal points" (section 4.p).

OPA 20 adds Area Specific Policy 6.10 to the Study Area lands located at the northwest corner of Mills Rd. and Hunt St. (see **Figure 13b**). It applies to General Employment designated properties 110 through 172 Hunt St. inclusive, and 170 Mills Rd. (the Steam Plant). The area-specific policy recognizes these parcels as a transitional area between the residential and commercial mixed use areas of the Downtown and the adjacent employment lands. As such, the uses of this area specific policy are intended to reflect more prestige employment than general employment uses, characterized by high quality design standards. Pedestrian scaled development is required on all lands within this special policy area. Visual attractiveness, sensitive design, and consistent image are of prime importance in this area. The permitted uses

are a mix of prestige employment types, but with provisions for outdoor storage. Service and community oriented uses in addition to the General Employment uses are also allowed, such as offices, public and institutional uses, places of worship, cultural and entertainment facilities, and community facilities. Outdoor storage is restricted to the rear yard and must be screened from view from any street, whereas the General Employment designation is more lenient, requiring that outdoor storage be properly screened from public view and does not exceed 50% of the site area. Section 6.10 also contains more prescriptive building design requirements, and requires the creation of a desirable, pedestrian-oriented environment.



ZONING BY-LAW 95-2003

The majority of the properties in the Study Area are zoned General Employment (GE), with the exception of two properties that are zoned Automobile Commercial (AC) (properties 182 and 158 Hunt St.), and the southern half of 274 Mackenzie Ave. along Bayly St. W., which is zoned Prestige Employment (PE) (**Figure 14**). The majority of the tenants reflect the permitted uses within the zone. The General Employment zone permits accessory retail outlets, dry cleaning establishments, emergency service facilities, light manufacturing, machinery and equipment sales and rental, manufacturing, motor vehicle service establishments such as gas bars and car washes, offices, outdoor storage, public storage facility, service or repair shops, veterinary clinics, and warehouse/distribution centres.

By-law 86-2005, the implementing by-law for OPA 20, expanded exceptions to properties 110 through to 172 Hunt St. and 170 Mills Rd. through Exception 4. The exceptions allow more personal service, and community oriented uses, not permitted in the parent General Employment zone such as restaurants, accessory outdoor patios, banquet facilities, financial institutional, and personal serviced shops among others. They also place greater focus on yard requirements and landscaped buffers than the General Employment zone would normally require. Exception 4 also applies exclusive uses and requirements to 170 Mills Rd. (the Steam Plant). One such requirement, among others, is obtaining a Certificate of Approval from the Ministry of the Environment. The gas bar and car wash site at 158 Hunt St. is subject to exception 119 which prohibits drive-thrus, and applies development standards such as yard requirements and landscaped buffers along the street edge.

EMPLOYMENT AREA URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines (EAUDG) is a Council adopted policy that outlines urban design criteria to be incorporated within proposals for development in the Town's employment areas. The guidelines include both general, guiding principles for achieving the vision for employment lands, as well as detailed, specific requirements to guide all aspects of the employment area environment.

A key objective of this study is to recommend how the *Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines* could be applied. The *Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines* refer to a Town program that establishes "...elements of built form, street furniture and/or landscaping that will establish a unique identity for Ajax". The Guidelines are written with significant flexibility, which will permit alternative measures for improving the design of the Study Area. For example, where buildings are required to be more street oriented, landscaping may be used as an alternative to reinforce the street edge in place of citing the building close to the street. There are a number of opportunities in the study area to apply the guidelines regarding landscaping, building location, aesthetic improvements, and sidewalk improvements. The application of these guidelines to the Study Area is discussed in detail in Section 8 of this report.

Legend



Study Area



Downtown Central Area

Existing Zoning

exception #

PE - Prestige Employment

GE - General Employment

HE - Heavy Employment

DCA/ME - Downtown Commercial Area/
Employment Mixed Use

DCA/I - Downtown Commercial Area/Institutional

MU - Mixed Use

AC - Automobile Commercial

R - Residential

RM - Residential Multiple

OS - Open Space

Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study



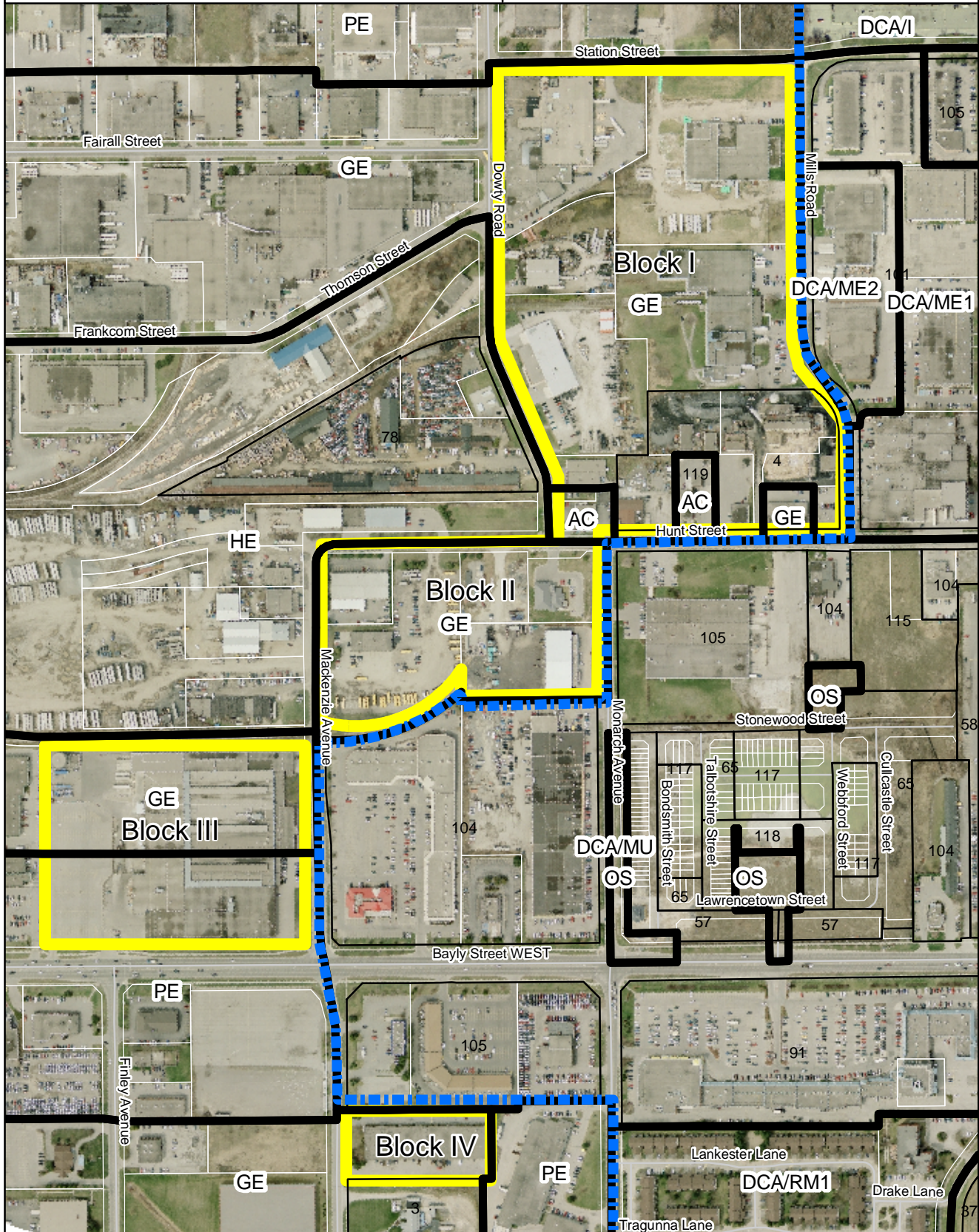
Figure 14 - Zoning Map

0 37.5 75 150 225 300 Meters



SG Sorensen Gravely Lowes
Planning Associates Inc.

August 2008



4.0 SWOT ANALYSIS

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the Study Area and surrounding properties were identified based on discussions with landowners, business owners, public agencies and the general public, and review of background documents such as local and regional municipal servicing infrastructure drawings, Town cultural heritage documents, Town staff reports, and transportation studies. The strengths describe characteristics that contribute to a vibrant, economically healthy, well connected and accessible, aesthetically pleasing and safe employment area. Weaknesses describe issues or problems that reduce, or may reduce the attractiveness of the area, limit growth or introduction of new uses in the area, and affect successful implementation of the objectives of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. The opportunities focus on existing policy tools, land uses and locational attributes that contribute to, or are tools for improvement or resolution of issues. Finally, threats refer to issues that impede or prevent the revitalization and compatibility goals between the Study Area and the Downtown.

The SWOT is organized by five themes:

- Land Use,
- Employment and Economic Development,
- Urban Design,
- Connectivity/Transportation, and
- Water and Sanitary Infrastructure.

Appendix A contains the detailed SWOT analysis in tabular form according to the five themes. The following sub-sections provide a summary of the SWOT findings.

4.1 SWOT SUMMARY

4.1.1 LAND USE

EXISTING LAND USE CHARACTER AND COMPATIBILITY

The Study Area contains a broad mix of industrial uses and is a vibrant long-established employment area. Most of the existing uses at the interface with the Downtown don't raise significant compatibility concerns for existing or potential future uses with the exception of the Steam Plant (**Figure 15**). In fact, there are already a number of prestige employment type uses in the Study Area, such as offices, and other professional service providers, particularly along Hunt Street. Uses with unsightly outdoor storage are predominantly located in the west half of the Study Area (and on sites further west of



Figure 15. View of steam plant from Mills Rd. looking south

the Study Area), furthest away from the Downtown, however they do affect the image for the overall area. For many of the industries, outdoor storage is a key component of their operations, such as the crane rental establishment (**Figure 16**), the Steam Plant (**Figure 17**), and the charter bus operation (**Figure 18**), along with a few contractors' yards. The Study Area also lacks many of the characteristics and qualities of a prestige modern business park including landscaping, screening of outdoor storage, loading docks, parking setbacks etc.

Uses in the eastern half of the Study Area, which flank the Downtown, are the ones with potentially the greatest impact on the Downtown. Fortunately, the Downtown is buffered from existing uses in the eastern half of the Study Area by large retail plazas, or compatible employment type uses.

SURROUNDING LAND USE CHARACTER AND COMPATIBILITY

Some of the lands to the west of the Study Area are occupied by heavy industrial land uses, including a wrecking yard that, even though are outside of the Study Area impacts on the character of the area and the ability to transition the area to a more prestige nature.

The existing low-rise employment uses to the east of the Study Area, (within the Downtown) do not have outdoor storage, and provide a good buffer between the Study Area and the Downtown (**Figure 19**). Furthermore, the Employment Mixed Use designation of these properties may allow this transition area to further evolve.

NEW RESIDENTIAL USES TO THE EAST PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

The recently completed SunDial subdivision at Bayly St. and Monarch Ave., the proposed residential development at 44 Station St., and the existing seniors' housing - Ballycliffe Lodge Ltd. also on Station St. about the Study Area. Also, the Town of Ajax 2005 Housing Report (see **Figure 20**) identifies three potential residential intensification sites adjacent to the



Figure 16. Dwight Crane Rental Ltd. at 131 Dowty Rd.



Figure 17. East view of steam plant on Mills Rd.



Figure 18. Laidlaw Transit Ltd. at 225 Mackenzie Ave.



Figure 19-. Some existing use and built form at the employment area-Downtown interface are appropriate in the transitional area (110 Hunt St.)

Study Area. Increased residential development is a potential threat, as it may detract from the viability of the area for some industries. Industries simply don't want to deal with the potential conflicts. However, it can also be an opportunity to assist in improving the image of the Study Area. As more residential developments occur adjacent to the Study Area, the area will become less attractive to heavier employment type industries. Moreover, the Growth Plan encourages a mix of residential, office, institutional, and commercial development in areas that are within proximity to, and are serviced by transit service. Increased residential population within the Downtown would enhance its viability and vitality.

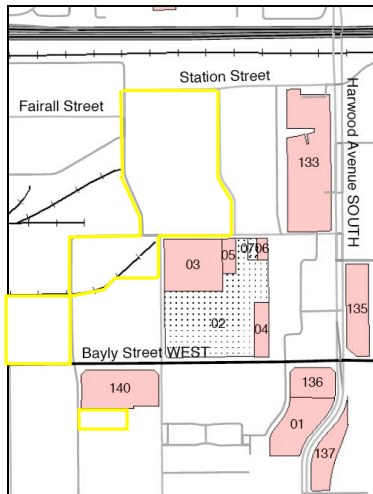
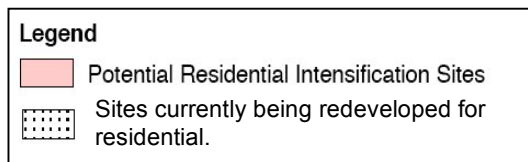


Figure 20. Excerpt of Map 5 (2/2), Town of Ajax 2005 Housing Report



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL HAVE BEEN ISSUED FOR SOME PROPERTIES

A few of the properties within the Study Area have been issued Ministry of Environment Certificates of Approval for air emissions.¹ The properties that were issued certificates for air emissions are Energy Plus 2000 Limited at 170 Mills Rd. (the Steam Plant), Avery Dennison-Fasson Canada Inc. at 81 Dowty Rd., Plasti-fab Ltd. at 40 Mills Rd., and 658553 Ontario Inc. one of tenants at 377 Mackenzie Ave. The Avery Dennison-Fasson site is now vacant, however, the other properties pose potential air emission threats such as visible emissions and effect on air quality, which could affect the ability to transition the area to a more prestige nature.

A number of surrounding properties outside of the Study Area have also been issued Certificates of Approval also for air, which may affect the Study Area. Specifically, since 1996, the properties 375 Bayly St., 370 Monarch Ave., 432 Monarch Ave., 204 Mackenzie Rd., 283 Station St., and 251 Station St. have Certificates of Approval for air emissions.

SOIL CONDITIONS

Due to the long history of industrial use, the possibility for soil contamination exists within the Study Area. For example, former spur lines cause potential for environmental concern.

¹ At this point, only certificates issued after 1996 have been identified because access to certificates that were issued before 1996 require a lengthy freedom of information request that takes approximately 3 months to obtain. The certificate issued for the Steam Plant in 1984 is available because the Town holds a copy in their records.

The Study Area is a mix of various industrial and commercial businesses, and the potential for a variety of commercial and more prestige industrial activities are possible for the area in the long-term future, especially considering its proximity to the Downtown. Even though some areas may be redeveloped from a current industrial activity to a more sensitive use such as commercial, there will not be any requirements under the *Environmental Protection Act* to obtain a Record of Site Condition (RSC) prior to obtaining building permits. However, if future land uses were to include schools, hospitals, homes, parks, etc., these land uses are sufficiently more sensitive than the current industrial and commercial land uses that a RSC would be necessary prior to redevelopment. RSCs can only be prepared if contaminant levels are not above the provincial standards. If contaminant levels are above provincial standards, a risk assessment must be completed and accepted by the Ministry of Environment (MOE) that establishes property specific standards for the site above the maximum measured contaminant levels.

Even if a RSC were not required, best practice for any contaminated site would be to mitigate soil and groundwater contamination so as to ensure that ecological and human receptors are not exposed to unsafe conditions. Such mitigation might consist of removal or destruction of contaminants, implementation of engineered controls to transform existing unacceptable conditions to safe conditions, restricting development of the most severely contaminated areas, and completion of risk assessments to establish site specific environmental standards that would be less stringent than the generic provincial clean up standards promulgated under the *Act*. Mitigative measures of any sort require the expenditure of funds, and may require substantial time (several months to years) to be fully effective.

4.1.2 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

The Study Area is an excellent location for the current industries considering its proximity to the Westney Rd/Highway 401 interchange, and access to other arterial roads that connect this area to the rest of the region. It is part of a well-established employment area, and appears to be thriving.

The Town is expected to experience significant employment growth over the next 20 years with a significant portion of that growth in industrial employment. Industrial employment is anticipated to grow to 42% of the total employment within the Town by 2021.² However, it was found by C.N. Watson that the employment land supply is expected to reach full build-out by 2031.³ As a result, intensification and revitalization of existing employment areas will become increasingly important as Ajax reaches the build out point.

Offices, research establishments and other high intensity employment land uses would offer an attractive means of invigorating the Study Area. However, the market for major offices in Durham Region is low. With industrial being a primary focus of employment growth for the Town, an opportunity exists to market Study Area towards continued industrial uses including more intensive operations.

It is important to note that between 1984 and 2006, a number of businesses, in the Study Area sought development approval for expansion. Most of the expansions were related to plant, warehouse, or storage expansion.

² C.N. Watson and Associates Ltd. (2004). *Town of Ajax Employment Report*. Table ES-1, p.(ii).

³ Ibid. p.(iii)

4.1.3 URBAN DESIGN

Landscaping

There are several properties, that offer potential to introduce outdoor amenity areas, and/or screening with landscaping (**Figure 21**). Some properties have large open lawn areas with deep frontages, such as Plasti-Fab Ltd. (**Figure 22**), and Sandra Tea and Coffee Ltd. Such properties could help set the tone for the landscaped character of the area. The vegetation that already exists in the Study Area is well established, and already provides some mature landscaping. As well, redesign of the boulevards within the street right-of-ways with coordinated landscaping and continuous sidewalks could create an effective and coordinated image improvement for the Study Area.

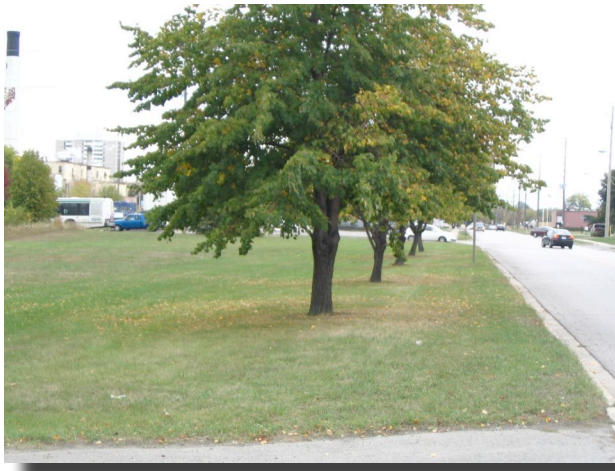


Figure 21. Some properties have deep frontages and mature landscaping. (Hunt St. at Dowty Rd., view on Hunt St.)



Figure 22. Wide boulevards offer opportunity for enhanced landscaping. (Station St. and Mills Rd.)

BUILDING LOCATION

Overall, most of the buildings are sited parallel to the street, with entrances and office components facing the street (**Figure 23**). Therefore, there is good opportunity to enhance frontages and the streetscape with landscaping.



Figure 23. Many of the buildings are sited parallel to the street, with entrances facing the street. (177 Dowty Rd. and 81 Dowty Rd.)

AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENTS

While flexibility is a strong foundation of the *Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines*, they are written primarily for new development; more guidance is needed for sites in transition, going through upgrades, or improvement. Incentives for site improvements, such as landscaping, are likely required, to encourage property owners to undertake improvements. This situation is especially true for individually owned sites that are not in the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) area.

The visibility of industrial processes, open storage, and street loading on some sites may limit improvement efforts by other property owners (**Figure 24**). However, some existing uses require loading docks and access along street frontage in their daily operations; therefore, screening may be difficult. Also, parking and driveways are fixed due to service, access, and truck turning radius needs. The potential for significant built form retrofits is probably limited as building configuration results from functional process requirements. Similarly, screening of outdoor storage, and waste areas with solid masonry enclosures may not be possible due to functionality and access.



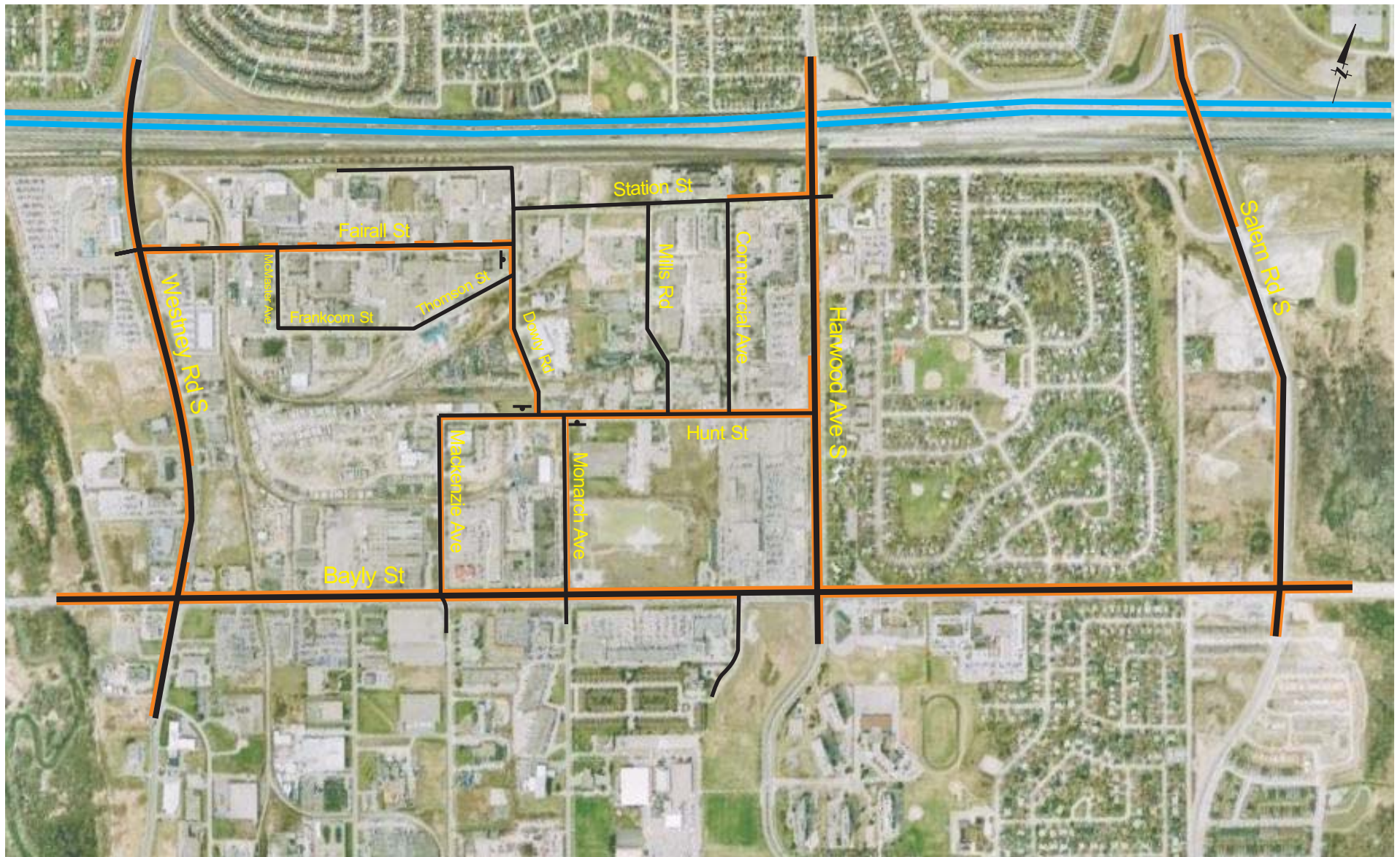
Figure 24. Built form retrofits limited by visible open storage and loading docks. (107 Dowty Rd.)

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks do not follow the full length of the road in some places, or are non-existent on some streets, which creates an area that is pedestrian unfriendly and unsafe (see **Figure 25**). Sidewalks on both sides of the street are only on Bayly Street and a portion of Hunt Street. In some locations, retrofits to add sidewalks around existing buildings and parking lots may be difficult (**Figure 26**).



Figure 26. Parking at street edge leaves limited sidewalk opportunity. Loading at the street edge leaves limited option to screen loading. (Sandra Tea and Coffee Ltd. on Mills Rd.)



Legend

- Sidewalk
- - Discontinuous Sidewalk



Central Ajax Employment Area Sidewalk Locations

Figure 25

4.1.4 CONNECTIVITY / TRANSPORTATION

Sufficient quality public transportation connecting employees in the Study Area to living areas and commercial areas beyond is an attraction for businesses. The Central Employment Area is ideally suited in that regard. As well, considering its proximity to Highway 401, it offers good visibility and good access to the highway and regional roads. Close proximity to the highway and major arterial roads, the GO Station, the Downtown, retail stores, and labour force are all essential ingredients to attracting employment uses.

SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

There is opportunity for the Town to implement several measures that will lead to effective safety, connectivity, and image improvement. Examples are creating more sidewalks and pedestrian crossings. There are already sidewalks on sections of Dowty Rd. and Hunt St. (see **Figure 25**), and there are “call” buttons and stop signs installed at some crossings, but more are needed to improve pedestrian safety.

ON-STREET PARKING

The Downtown Road Policies of OPA 20 provide that Monarch Ave. and Hunt St. will have one travel lane in each direction, and both streets will be designed to accommodate on-street parking. Such policy will assist in ensuring slow traffic in support of pedestrian and cyclist safety, and providing for visitor and employee parking throughout the Study Area. On-street parking may, however, cause incompatibility issues on some roads with transport trucks, depending on the width of the road.

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST FRIENDLY

Nearby commercial establishments provide destinations for pedestrians and cyclists. Providing employees reasons to walk and cycle are equally as important as it is to provide a safe environment in order to encourage “active transportation” (**Figures 27 and 28**).



Figure 27. Opportunity for more sidewalks and bicycle lanes (Station St at Dowty Rd, looking east)



Figure 28. More pedestrian crossings are needed. (Dowty Rd and Fairall St)

PUBLIC TRANSIT STOPS

The GO Highway 2-to-Oshawa Bus provides peak hour service in the Study Area during the week. A number of the transit stop waiting areas are pedestrian unfriendly, and not well defined (**Figure 29**). There is an opportunity to build transit stops that are sheltered and well lit.

Figure 29.

Improvements to transit stops are effective means to improving the streetscape.



Durham Region Transit (DRT) and GO

Transit have routes that pass through the Study Area with limited transit stops. Station St. is a Type C Arterial Road and functions as the main east-west route between the GO Station and the Ajax Plaza. The Ajax GO Station (at Westney and Fairall) and Ajax Plaza (at Harwood) are major stops listed on route schedules with arrival times for both transit operators. However, there are many “frequent, untimed” stops along these routes throughout the Study Area. A passenger would be aware of their locations by calling the transit operators directly, or through observation within the area. The stops are located at:

- Fairall / Dowty,
- Mills / Station,
- Mills / Hunt,
- Hunt / Monarch, and
- Dowty / Hunt.

Figure 30 identifies the location of the stops.



Figure 31. Durham Transit stop along the south side of Station St. Pedestrian comfort, visibility and accessibility can be improved with a transparent shelter, concrete pad and a waiting area that is connected to the proposed sidewalk.



LEGEND

— Durham Region Transit (DRT) ROUTES

● DRT FREQUENT STOPS

— GO TRANSIT ROUTE
Oshawa-Scarborough Town
Centre/Yorkdale Via Hwy 2

● GO TRANSIT
UNTIMED STOPS



SIGNED DRT STOPS
NO LONGER IN USE
TO BE REMOVED

— STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
(EXPANDED TO INCLUDE
ENTIRE STREETScape)

Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study

Figure 30
EXISTING TRANSIT



In general, these stops are poorly marked and are not pedestrian supportive, with no shelters, sidewalks, lighting or other pedestrian comfort features (**Figure 31**). In addition, service at some stops is out-of-date. For example, at the south west corner of Mills Road and Station Street and at the north-west corner of Mills Road and Hunt Street, combined GO / DRT stops (“co-stops”) are marked, but are no longer used by DRT (see **Figure 30** for location of inactive DRT stops). The DRT signage should be removed, with coordination between GO Transit and DRT.

Improving transit amenities could be incentives for employees to use transit from the GO Station to their place of work and as a quick convenient link to the Ajax Plaza. Already, some improvements are underway:

- DRT is in the process of updating and digitizing their routes and stops. Some routes will change in January 2008 (information not yet available) and in the future, stop information may become accessible on-line for the general public (timing to be determined); and,
- GO Transit is in the process of creating a Pedestrian Master Plan, which may address some of the bus-related, pedestrian-oriented issues noted in this report.

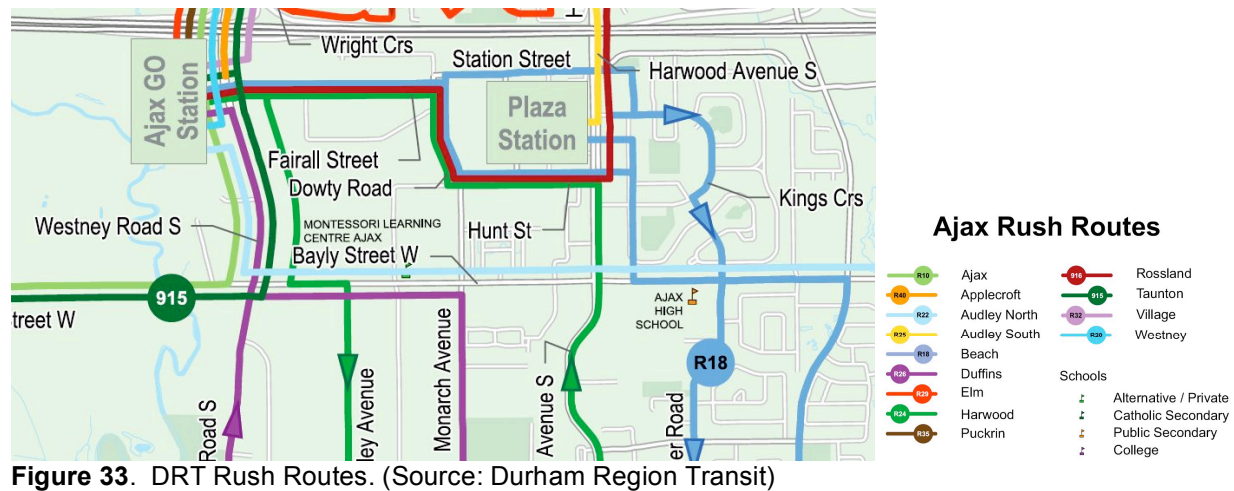
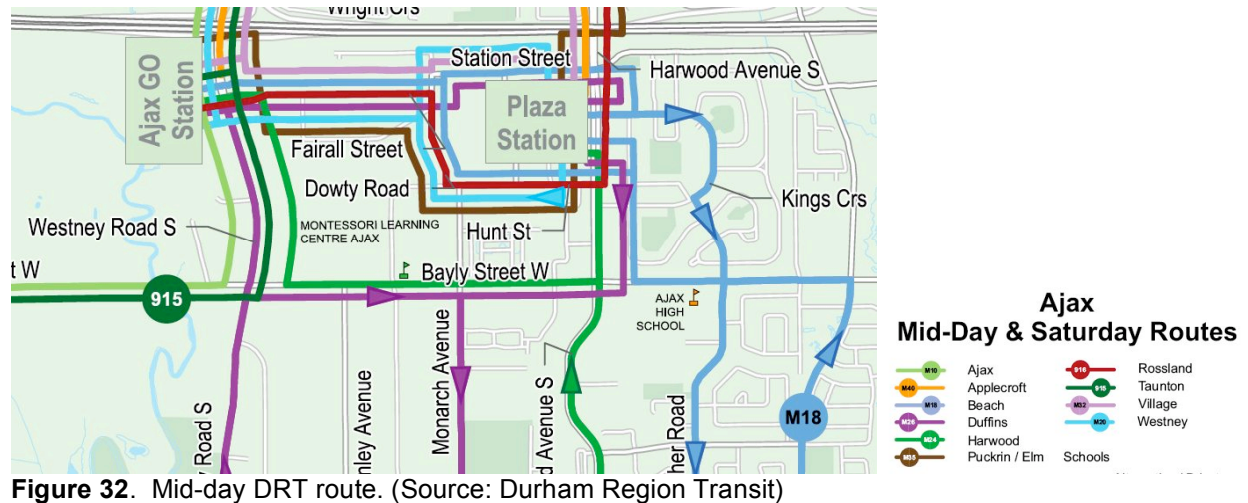
The bus routes that pass through and/or serve the Study Area with stops are:

a) GO Transit:

- Route: Oshawa-Scarborough Town Centre / Yorkdale Via Hwy 2
- Stops: at Hunt St./Mills Rd
At Station St. / Mills Rd
At Dowty Rd. / Fairall St.
At Dowty Rd. / Hunt St.

b) Durham Region Transit:

- The following routes provide direct travel between the major stops of the Ajax GO Station and Ajax Plaza, with an overall travel time of only 6 minutes between those two stops. The routes are along Dowty St. and across Hunt St., and/or across Fairall St. and up Station St. (**Figures 32 & 33**). As mentioned earlier, some DRT routes are subject to change in 2008, but DRT is not able to confirm whether changes will affect the Study Area routes.
 - M18 & R18 – Beach
 - M26 – Duffins – between Ajax GO Station and Ajax Plaza
 - Regional Route 916 - Rossland
 - R24 & M24 – Harwood
 - M35 – Puckrin/Elm
 - M32 – Village
 - M20 Westney(R = Rush Route)
- From the Ajax GO Train Station, these routes travel east along Fairall Street to Dowty Road, and then either north on Dowty Road and east along Station Street to the Ajax Plaza, or, south on Dowty Road and east along Hunt Street to the Ajax Plaza. The other major DRT route close to the Study Area is along Bayly St. W. with a stop at Monarch Ave.



ROADS

The roads within the Study Area are either collector or local roads, with the exception of Bayly St., which is a Type A arterial road, and Station St., which is a Type C arterial road. Some narrow local roads result in periodic congestion. Furthermore, the local roads act as short cuts to the highway interchange for vehicles avoiding traffic congestion on Bayly St.



Figure 34. Heavy volume and relatively fast traffic during peak hours (Dowty Rd)

NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

Northbound Monarch Ave. and Southbound Dowty Rd. are controlled by a stop sign at Hunt St. Short queues (of less than 10 vehicles) form at both of these stop signs during peak periods, but usually dissipate within a few minutes during both morning and afternoon peak periods (**Figure 35** and **36**). Opportunity may exist to realign the roads and intersection for improved connectivity. Although the southwest corner is an Emergency Medical Services station, Road realignment of Hunt St. and Monarch Ave. could be considered if an opportunity for re-development arises on the northeast corner of Hunt St. and Dowty Rd.

At the intersection of Dowty Rd. and Fairall St., Eastbound Fairall St. is controlled by a stop sign and northbound (Dowty) left-turn traffic is preceded in priority by southbound through and right-turn traffic coming off Station St. Minor congestion occurs during the morning peak period, when northbound left-turn and eastbound queues were observed to reach up to 10 vehicles (**Figure 35** and **36**). However, the queues usually dissipated within a few minutes. Eastbound queues on Fairall St. in the afternoon began promptly at 5:00pm and spanned up to McMaster Ave. (500 meters) for about 15 minutes during the height of the peak period. Queues remained at about 250 meters until 5:40pm, followed by sporadic short queues (<30 vehicles) until 6:45pm. These queues correlated with the arrival times of the six GO Trains scheduled at the Ajax Station between 4:44pm and 6:23pm.

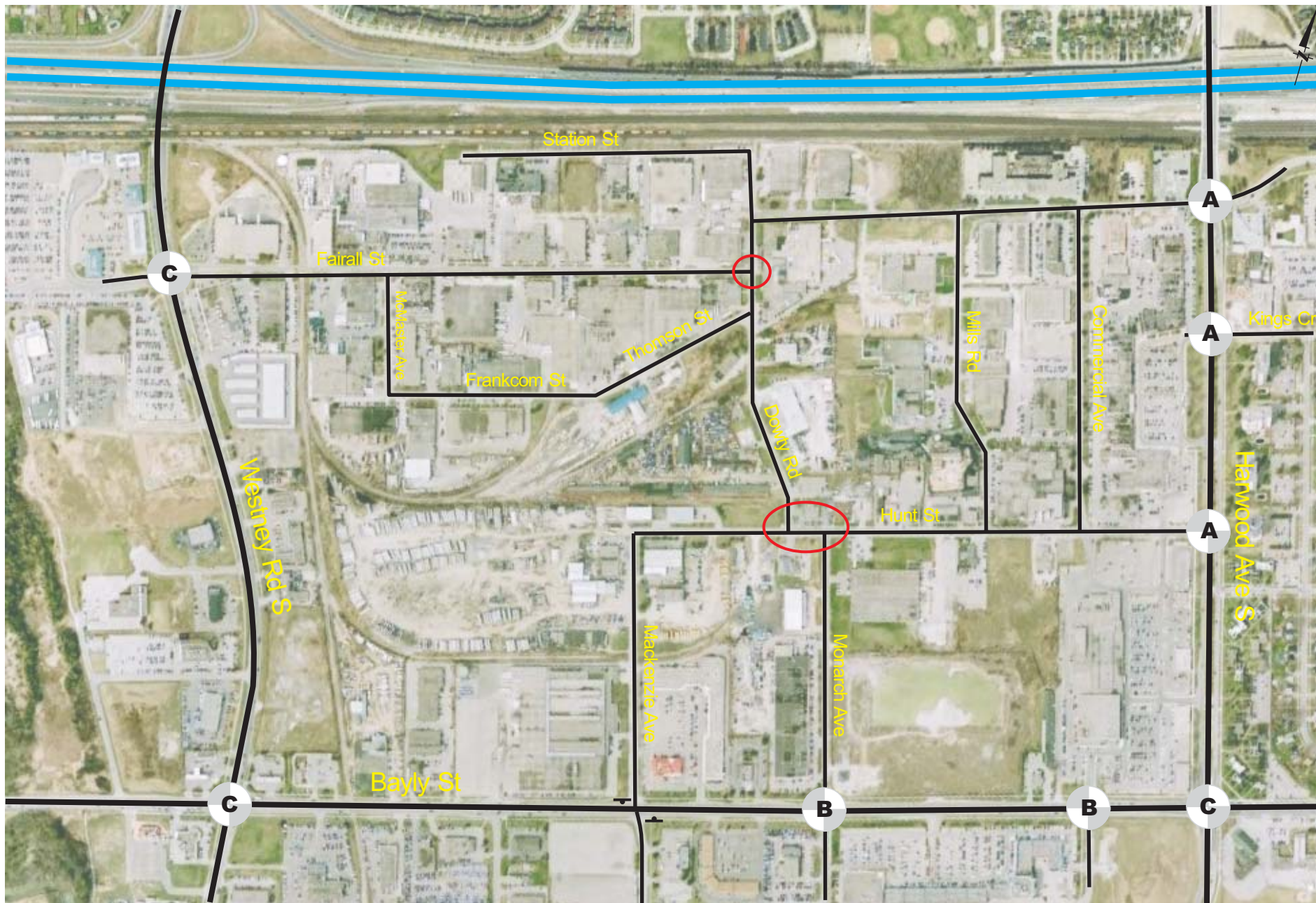
The vacant Avery Dennison-Fasson site is currently for sale, which if the Town desires, provides an opportunity, to realign Station Street with Fairall Street. This would provide improved east-west connectivity and a balanced approach to access to and from Dowty Road.

INTERSECTION OPERATIONS

An analysis of turning movement counts and signal timing was used to assess the operations of intersections within and adjacent to the Study Area. Traffic volumes at various screen lines are documented in **Appendix B**.

All intersections along major arterial roads function well during the AM peak hour (**Figure 35**) and most movements function well (A to C level of service) during the PM peak hour (**Figure 36**). The exceptions are a handful of movements with a poor level of service (F) including the eastbound through and northbound/southbound left-turns at Westney/Bayly and northbound through and southbound left-turns at Westney/Fairall. Level A represents very low delay, where most vehicles do not need to stop; Level B is similar to Level A with a short delay where more vehicles need to stop; Level C represents fair progression, with a significant number of vehicles stopping; and Level F represents delays more than 80 seconds, and is considered unacceptable by most drivers.

Although there are a number of operational delays at intersections along major arterial roads during the existing PM peak, it is not anticipated to be a hindrance to traffic accessing the Central Ajax Employment Area. As well, the 2021 planned improvement networks assumes both Westney Road and Bayly Street will be widened to three lanes which should improve arterial road operations.



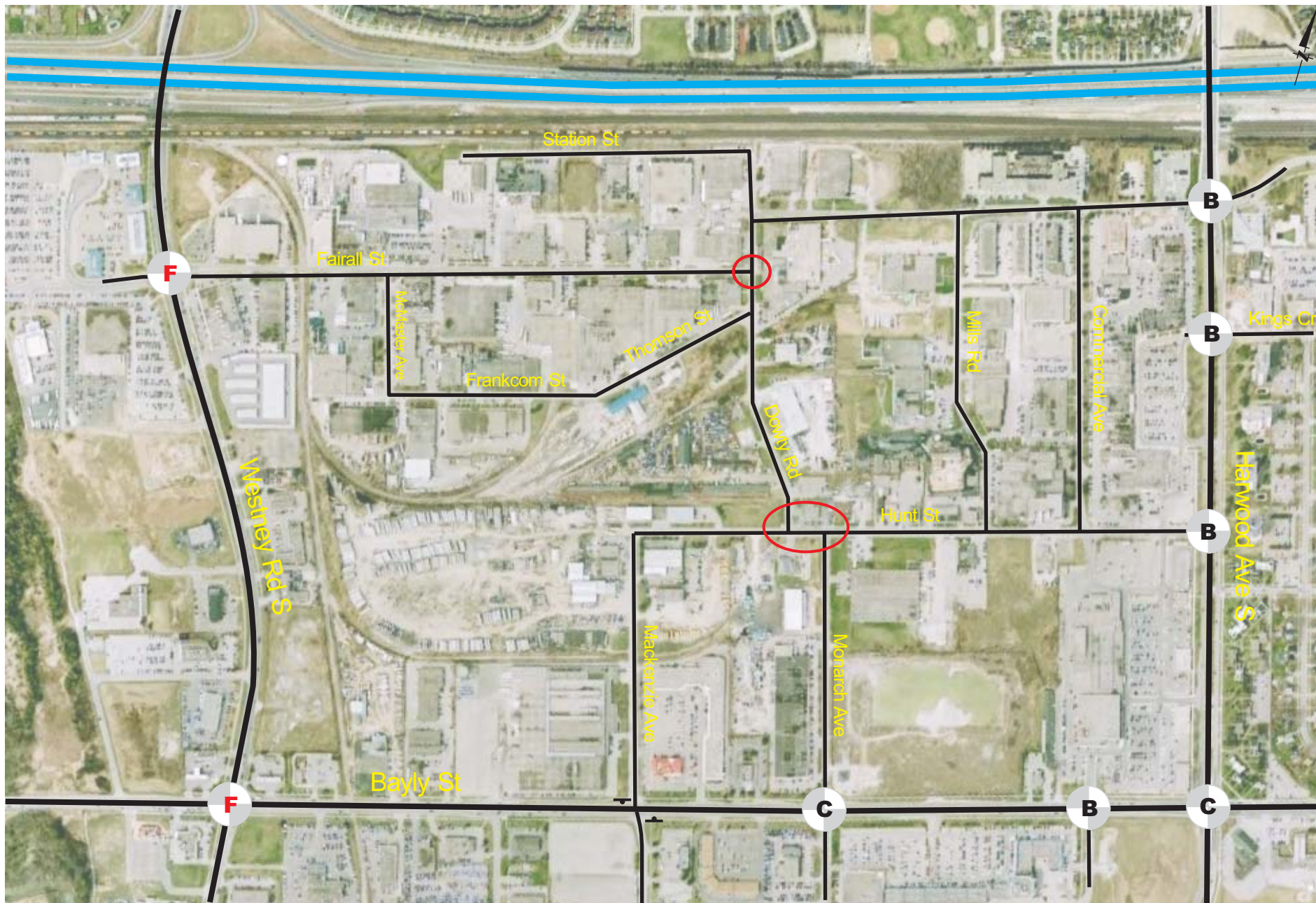
Central Ajax Employment Area Level of Service - 2006 AM Peak Hour

Figure 35



Problematic
Intersection

NOT TO SCALE F:\traffic\8416\Clerical\Figures\Closer Zoomed\Figure - LOS.cdr
Nov. 2007



Central Ajax Employment Area Level of Service - 2006 PM Peak Hour

Figure 36



Problematic
Intersection

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4.1.5 WATER, SANITARY, AND STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

There are no known capacity constraints for sanitary and water flows. However, business owners have expressed concerns regarding insufficient water pressure that occasionally sets off fire alarms. The Town is also not aware of any current flooding problems or frequent storm sewer failures. The Regional Municipality of Durham Works Department has retained a consultant to undertake the Water and Wastewater Master Plan (WWMP) study. The objective of the WWMP study is to develop a long-term servicing strategy for the design and operation of all municipal water and wastewater systems in Durham Region. The study will follow the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Municipal Class Environmental (Class EA) process, and will fulfill as a minimum Phases 1 and 2 of the Class EA process. The WWMP study will also include the development of hydraulic models for all municipal water and wastewater systems within the Region which will also address the issue of water pressure. Until then, information on the water and sanitary systems is limited.

The majority of the Study Area is in the Town's Western Drainage Area, serviced by the Monarch Avenue trunk sewer system which drains to the Bayly Street Pumping Station. All blocks in the Study Area are serviceable with sanitary sewers. Block IV currently has an easement and if redeveloped, will require a sanitary sewer extension on MacKenzie Avenue from the south. All sewers have capacity limitations, so each application for development will have to be individually reviewed to determine servicing capability and/or works required prior to approval. The Region has experienced some deficiencies in their system in this area due to the age (over 50 years) and condition of the existing infrastructure, making it susceptible to requiring repair. The hydraulic study initiated by the Region should better confirm the capacity and longevity of the infrastructure.

Storm sewer capacities are sufficient for the current uses in the Study Area. Any increases in impervious surfaces or the removal of roadside swales as a result of redevelopment within the Study Area will require stormwater management on-site quality and quantity controls.

Historically, industrial buildings vary greatly when it comes to water consumption and sanitary production. According to the Region of Durham, the Steam Plant is a large consumer of water, and its consumption represents an equivalent population of approximately 1,000 to 2,000 people. Redevelopment of the Steam Plant to more modern and efficient equipment would help alleviate water constraints. Underground steam lines are also quite old (over 50 years) and may require repair or upgrades.

4.2 SWOT ANALYSIS CONCLUSION AND KEY ISSUES

The SWOT analysis has identified a number of strengths and opportunities. The Study Area is a viable employment area that continues to be well suited for employment use. There are however a number of weaknesses and threats. The area does not exhibit the characteristics of a modern business park. Improvements are needed to both the public streetscape as well as to the character of private lands in terms of landscaping, pedestrian safety and comfort, orientation of parking and screening of loading and storage. However, strong incentives for upgrade, or enhancement of private property will be needed to initiate change within the Study Area.

The introduction of residential development in the adjacent Downtown could be interpreted as a threat by some industries who may avoid locating in the area as a result. On the flip side, the current image of the Central Ajax Employment Area could be a threat to the ability of the

Downtown to accommodate a broader range of residential and mixed uses. The investment efforts and benefits for these two areas need not be mutually exclusive. The reinvigoration of one can act as catalyst for the reinvigoration of the other. A revived employment area can act as a vehicle for improvement of the Downtown Central Area through an improved image, mitigation of incompatibilities and an increased employment population, while a reinvigorated Downtown could attract a broader range of employment uses wanting a location with the amenities that an adjacent Downtown location offers. The key is identifying an appropriate transition area of compatible industries and establishing a planning framework by which the transformation of the area can be realized.

The key issues that need to be considered are:

- Appropriate Official Plan designations and policies to create a compatible transition between the Downtown and the balance of the employment area;
- Appropriate Zoning provisions to create an employment area which is compatible with the adjacent Downtown;
- Official Plan and Zoning provisions to take advantage of new municipal authority allowed by the recent revisions to the *Planning Act* regarding building design and character;
- The type and location of streetscape improvement to the boulevards and right-of-ways including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, lighting, landscaping, transit stops, gateway features and other streetscape improvements to establish a coordinated image for the area;
- Necessary intersection and network improvements;
- The type and location of private realm improvements such as landscaping, and built form improvements; and
- The means to promote and achieve private realm improvements including municipal initiatives and incentives.

These issues are considered in Sections 6 through 9.

5.0 PUBLIC INPUT

5.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Town hosted a set of public consultation meetings on November 28, 2007. Two consultation meetings were held at the Town Hall: one in the afternoon which was a workshop with business owners and landowners; the second was held in the evening in an open house format, where residents were invited to view posters, and speak individually to Town staff and consultants. For both occasions, a presentation was made reviewing the study purpose and objectives, study process, and highlights from the draft SWOT analysis.

An overview of the Study was posted on the Town's website. Also posted on the webpage were the open house/stakeholder workshop presentation, and an on-line feedback form. The presentation and comment form that were available for attendees to take away with them on November 28th are in **Appendix C**.

For the stakeholders' workshop, an invitation was mailed to all landowners within and adjacent to the Study Area, and a second invitation was hand delivered to business owners. The workshop had an attendance of eight people, and the evening open house had an attendance of nine people.

5.2 STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP RESULTS

After an overview presentation, the stakeholders were provided a workbook containing three discussion questions. Facilitated by the consultants, stakeholders were asked to answer each question individually, and then discussed their thoughts collectively. The group discussions are summarized below.

1) POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CENTRAL AJAX EMPLOYMENT AREA

- Good access to highways 401 and 407
- High traffic area: Bayly St., and Hunt St. are shortcuts to the 401
- Mid-point in the GTA
- Availability of labour and easy access for employees
- Area code (best in Durham Region – the local calling area is quite large)
- Accessible by public transportation
- Available parking
- Lower property taxes than in other places
- Rents and property value are cheaper here because of the older buildings, and the lower ceiling height
- Close to Downtown, it is a walkable area being close to retail
- Mature landscaping

2) IMPEDIMENTS TO RENEWAL AND INVESTMENT WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

- Zoning is erratic and lacks cohesiveness
 - It is restrictive and should allow more multi-users
- Location: this end of Town is not growing

- Not much investment for retail because of the dominant industrial character
 - People aren't moving into this part of Town
- The removal of the Harwood/401 interchange reduces access
- Lack of street lights and street signs (people and trucks get lost)
- Criminal activity in the evening, especially in the north part of the Study Area because of the lack of people and lights was noted
- Poor public utilities
 - Some parts of the Study Area lack the infrastructure for high speed internet
 - Poor water pressure (inefficient for sprinkler systems)
 - Power surges are common
- Small lots and spaces
- Buildings attract short term leases, because it is not uncommon for a business to outgrow the building
- Age of buildings
- Low ceiling heights of buildings create the need for outdoor storage for manufacturing businesses, because buildings are too low to keep storage indoors
- Lack of rentable offices and lack of opportunity to build offices
- The cost of redeveloping versus greenfield development
- Poor aesthetics to attract the office market
 - Some buildings are ugly and hinder the improvement efforts by others

3A) HOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS AREA EVOLVE IN 10 YEARS TIME?

- Elimination of outdoor storage views
- Living areas near employment areas
- Hotel and conference centre to bring people into the area
- Owner occupied businesses so there is not as much turnover
 - The area is very attractive for small owner-occupied businesses
 - Customers do not see the area, so there is no incentive for business owners/landowners to improve the aesthetics of their property
- Majority of the business owners do not want much change to the area

3B) WHAT COULD THE TOWN'S ROLE BE IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE STUDY AREA?

- Outdoor storage sometimes is a necessity. The Town should look at ways to improve aesthetics, but not eliminate outdoor storage, i.e. Town should suggest ways to screen or hide outdoor storage from the road.
- Would like to see the Town offer incentive for landscaping and other improvements.
- The Town needs to take the lead on streetscape improvements such as sidewalks and street signs to build civic pride, and then the businesses will follow. Ultimately, it is commerce that will make the greatest improvements and changes.
- Create opportunity and attraction for a new wave of uses that don't require outdoor storage.
- Would like to see the Town provide incentives to attract employee intensive businesses.
- Permit industrial lofts for residential/industrial/office uses, i.e. the Avery-Denison building may be an opportunity site.
- Allow retail at the front and manufacturing at the back, much like the Castlefield area in Toronto.
- Zoning needs to be simplified, and reduce restrictions to attract businesses.
- Relax zoning to allow retail, but need to apply aesthetic restrictions, like in a heritage district.
- Don't see much change in the most southern property of the Study Area.

After the facilitated group discussion some of the stakeholders had questions and comments regarding the Study Area in general. Details of the discussion are in **Appendix D**. In summary,

one of the landowners wanted to know what the Town's big picture was for the area; and another expressed interest in expanding the use of his large property to include more retail and commercial along Bayly St. and Mackenzie Ave., but still maintain the manufacturing use in the rest of the building. Staff indicated that By-law 95-2003 permits limited retail in conjunction with a manufacturing establishment.

5.3 PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED

At the evening open house, residents expressed the desire to see the Study Area better connected to the rest of the community, but also stressed that maintaining employment was important. They felt it was important to keep as much employment within Ajax as possible, and to maintain Ajax as an attractive location for new employers. There was also a desire to see Ajax evolve into a more sustainable community.

In terms of the character of the Study Area, they agreed that the streetscape could be better unified, and improved. They expressed a desire to see improved connection to public transit, the GO station, and to the Downtown; and to make the Study Area more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists, in an effort to reduce car dependency.

In addition to the comments received at the Open House, the Town received one submission from the on-line survey posted on the Town's website. In summary, the resident would like to see activity in the Study Area increased so that it is well used and safe for residents. Also, they would like to see greater public transit, and improved walkability / bikeability so that car dependence is reduced, and increased standard in building design.

The questions and answers of the post-presentation discussion at the Open House, and the submitted on-line comment form are contained in **Appendix D**.

6.0 BIOMASS DISTRICT ENERGY FACILITIES

6.1 OVERVIEW

Through the SWOT analysis, it was determined that one major element critical to the image enhancement of the Study Area is the improvement of the Steam Plant property and its associated operation. The Steam Plant supports a number of area industries and if appropriately redeveloped, would be a positive environmentally friendly, alternative for energy production. Currently, the Steam Plant serves the following area industries:

- Visa Dupont,
- Ajax Textile,
- Dominion Colour,
- Temuss Products, and
- Drew Canada.

This section explores the benefits of district energy facilities and provides examples of biomass facilities using wood and/or wood waste as their primary fuel, proving that it is possible to locate a wood and/or wood waste biomass district energy facility in proximity to residential, commercial and institutional uses, provided any potential compatibility issues are properly identified and mitigated. Through discussion on the proposed redevelopment of the Steam Plant into a cogeneration facility that will use renewable energy (wood waste biomass), this section highlights that there are clear benefits to redeveloping the existing Steam Plant into a modern facility. As this section also indicates, it is critical that the Steam Plant redevelopment address compatibility issues such as visible outdoor storage, odour, dust, noise and emissions, and incorporate the best available mitigation technologies.

6.2 BENEFITS AND POSITIVE ASPECTS OF DISTRICT ENERGY FACILITIES

District energy has seen increasing attention as a source of providing heating and cooling to employment and residential areas. It is a focus topic for the Ontario Provincial government as a means to promote clean and very efficient energy production and use. The Province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe directs municipalities to implement official plan policies and other strategies to support energy conservation, including identifying opportunities for alternative energy generation and distribution; and, air quality protection including the reduction of emissions from municipal and residential sources. As well, a number of research institutes such as the Canadian District Energy Association (CDEA), the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI), and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund (TAF) have undertaken several studies to promote district energy facilities to help address Canada's energy infrastructure challenges. In response, an increasing number of Ontario municipalities are searching for opportunities to incorporate district energy facilities into their communities.⁴

⁴ CDEA, CUI, and TAF launched Urban Energy Solutions, a program directed at assisting government departments, research institutes, energy practitioners, investors and industry associates to enhance knowledge about district energy applications.

District energy is the distribution of thermal energy (heating or cooling) using an underground pipeline distribution system from a central source (**Figure 37**). District energy systems transport steam, hot water and/or chilled water to buildings in a specific district for space heating, domestic hot water heating and air conditioning.⁵ Underground piping linking supplier to consumers enables energy consumption to be managed at a community level.

Adopting community-level energy sources means individual users save space and money because they don't need their own boilers or furnaces, chillers or air conditioners.⁶ As well, given the proximity of the energy generation, electricity transmission losses are reduced. A district energy facility with stringent controls can also reduce emissions created by boiler plants without emission controls in many individual buildings. District energy systems are an alternative form of energy from coal and nuclear plants, and can use a variety of conventional fuels such as oil and natural gas, or the burning of biomass (**Figure 38**). The energy efficiencies that result from economies of scale and use of efficient heat sources provide significant environmental benefits including reduction of greenhouse gases and improved air quality (**Figure 39**).⁷

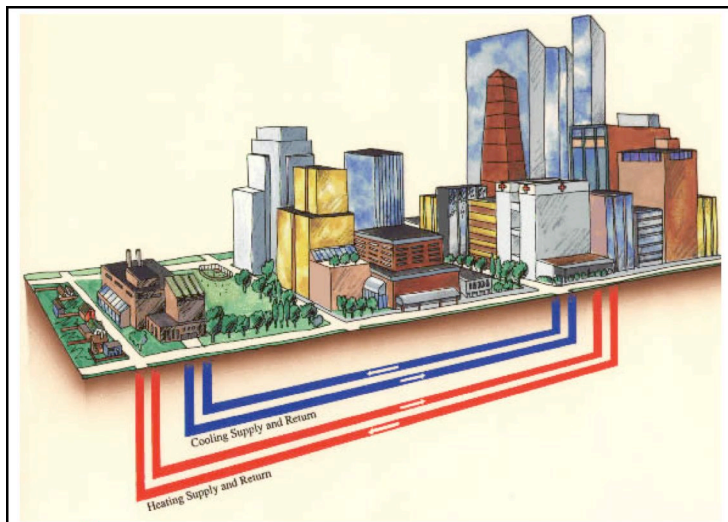


Figure 37. District Energy System schematic. (Source: International District Energy Association).

⁵ MacViro (2005). *Town of Oakville: District Energy Benefits Study*.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Canadian District Energy Association (CDEA).

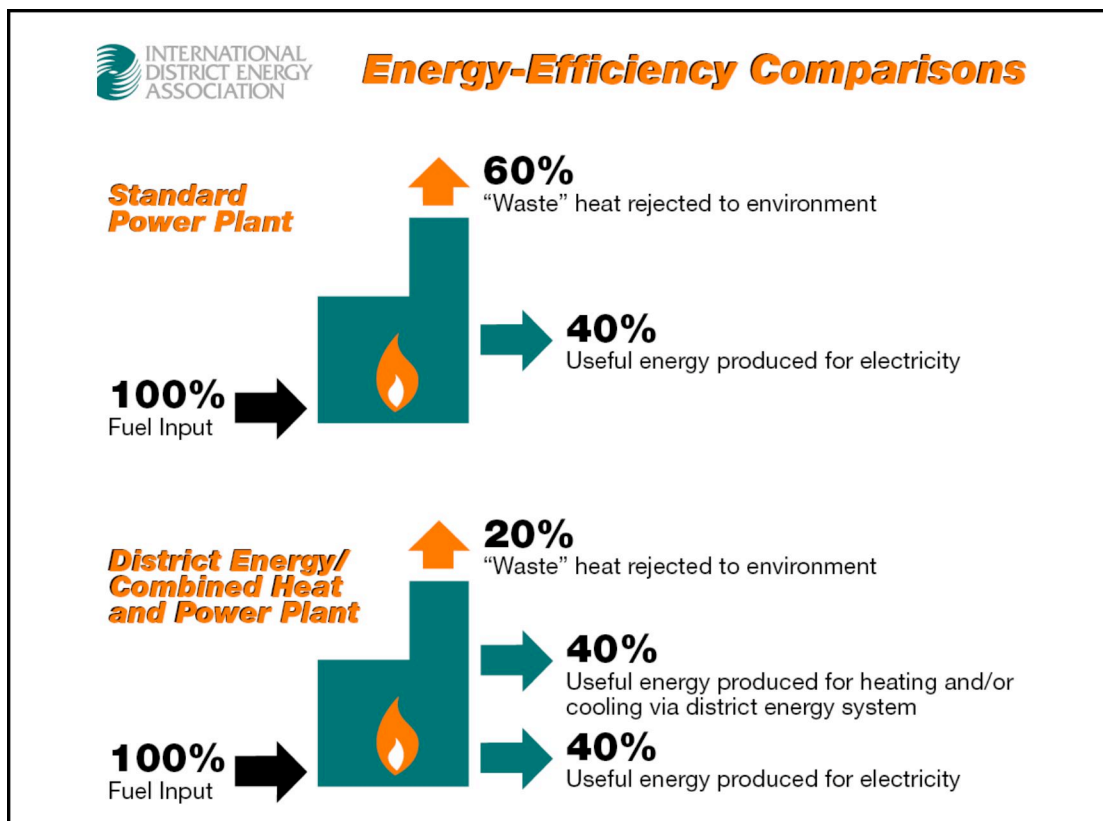
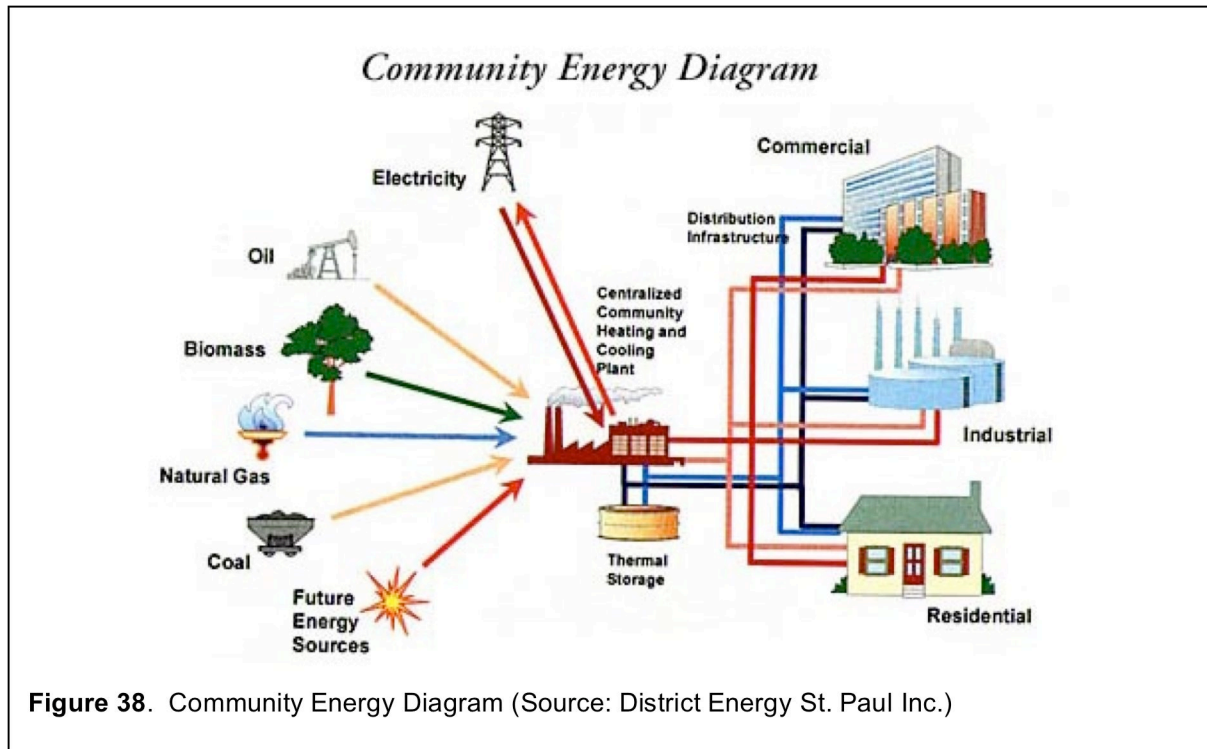


Figure 39. Energy efficiency comparisons. (Source: International District Energy Association)

Modern efficient district energy systems burn fuel to produce electricity, and use the heat from combustion as thermal energy (heating and cooling). This is called cogeneration (**Figure 40**). District energy systems using cogeneration have a high overall efficiency (70 to 85%).⁸ Thermal energy may be distributed using either steam or water. Older systems tend to be steam systems, while newer systems commonly use hot water, due to further efficiency increases and reduced maintenance costs.⁹

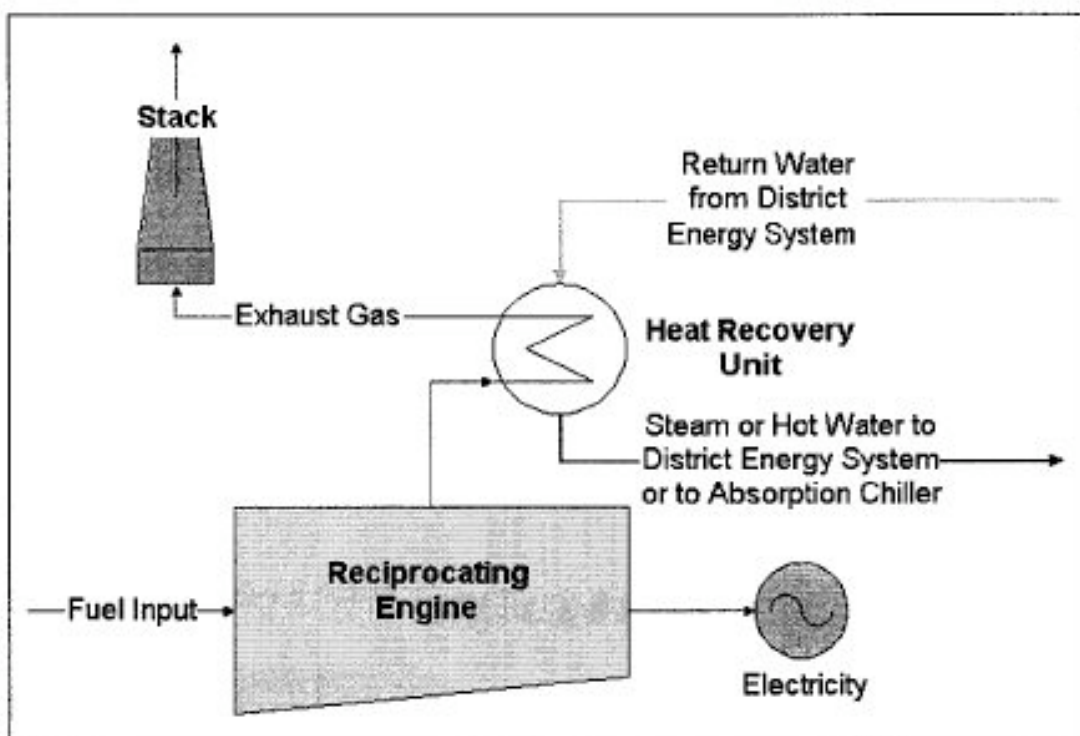


Figure 40. Typical cogeneration schematic. (Source: MacViro, 2005)

Many district energy facilities in North America use natural gas as a fuel type. While natural gas is considered a clean fossil fuel, there are environmental implications with the use of any fossil fuel. One concern is that natural gas is a non-renewable energy source. Another concern is that, as with other fossil fuels, burning natural gas produces carbon dioxide (CO₂), a greenhouse gas, which has a negative impact on the earth's atmosphere. Each year 5 to 5.5 billion tons of CO₂ is released into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels.¹⁰

The United States and Canada are two of the highest per-capita energy users among developed nations. There is a heavy reliance on fossil fuels and electricity to meet heating and cooling needs. The concern over the use of non-renewable fossil fuels has lead many North American municipalities to discover that "green" renewable energy technologies, such as biomass, can be well developed and reliable. Biomass fuels can be derived from wood, agricultural crops, some clean forms of municipal solid waste and organic residues.

⁸ MacViro (2005). Town of Oakville: District Energy Benefits Study.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Maker, Timothy and Penny, Janet (1999). "Heating Communities with Renewable Fuels: The Municipal Guide to Biomass District Energy." Natural Resources Canada and United States Department of Energy

Biomass is regarded as a "green" energy for several reasons, one being that it is considered to be CO₂ neutral. For instance, in the burning of wood biomass the CO₂ released from the combustion is reabsorbed by trees which, with appropriate forest management, are then reused as an energy supply (biomass fuel). This effectively makes wood biomass carbon neutral. In contrast, the combustion of fossil fuels adds new CO₂ to the atmosphere that has been stored underground for millions of years. In other words, the net greenhouse gas emissions of wood burning systems are much less than those generated by burning fossil fuels because the CO₂ produced by burning wood is roughly equal to the amount absorbed during the growth of the tree. When renewable biomass fuels displace non-renewable fossil fuels, they are considered to be "green energy" as they reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that contribute to climate change. Assuming that wood biomass resources, such as forests, are managed properly, wood biomass fuels can be infinitely renewable.¹¹ Biomass has already proven to be economically stable sources of energy over time (**Figure 41**).¹²

While some clean forms of municipal solid waste are considered a biomass fuel, there have been concerns over the types of contaminants that could be emitted from such facilities and the effects on human health. The use of this type of biomass fuel is highly controversial especially in situations where such a facility is proposed in proximity to residential.

For many municipalities, wood is a substantial local renewable biomass resource that can be used as a fuel to generate electricity and thermal energy. Wood for use as fuel comes from a wide variety of sources including, sawmills, woodworking shops, forest operations, and urban tree and landscape residues. Another major wood resource is wood waste, which includes manufacturing and wood processing wastes, as well as construction and demolition debris. The increased use of wood waste for energy does not require more forest harvesting, since they are by products of activities that are already going on.¹³ If these materials are not used in energy production, some of these materials would end up in landfills and potentially generate an even more potent greenhouse gas (methane).

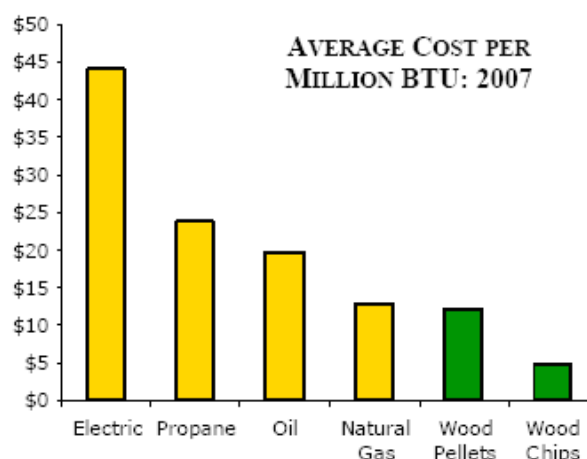


Figure 41. Reducing Fuel Costs with Wood Biomass.

(Source: Massachusetts Sustainable Forest Bioenergy Initiative, July 2008)

¹¹ Natural Resources Canada website, July 17, 2008

http://www.canren.gc.ca/renew_ene/index.asp?CaID=47&PgID=956

¹² Massachusetts Sustainable Forest Bioenergy Initiative (July 2008) Woody Biomass energy: Local Renewable Fuel for Commercial, Institutional and Industrial Facilities.

¹³ Maker, Timothy and Penny, Janet (1999). "Heating Communities with Renewable Fuels: The Municipal Guide to Biomass District Energy." Natural Resources Canada and United States Department of Energy

6.3 EXAMPLES OF BIOMASS DISTRICT ENERGY FACILITIES

The following are examples of district energy facilities in different-sized North American communities adjacent to residential, commercial and institutional uses that use wood and/or wood waste biomass as their major fuel source.

DISTRICT ENERGY ST. PAUL INC. (DESP)

Launched as a demonstration project in 1983, District Energy was Saint Paul's response to the energy crisis of the mid to late 1970s. The venture was a public/private partnership among the City of Saint Paul, the State of Minnesota, the U.S. Department of Energy and the local downtown business community, all of whom wanted to prove the viability of a hot water district heating system in a state with cold winters.¹⁴ In 2003, District Energy Saint Paul (DESP) expanded to become a co-generation facility, producing electricity and thermal energy. DESP has contributed to the downtown's economic development, re-urbanization and sustainable development.¹⁵



Figure 42. District Energy St. Paul
(Source: Canadian District Energy Association)

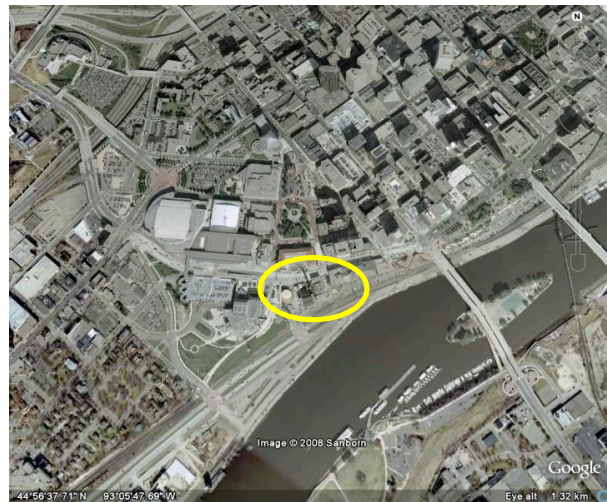


Figure 43. District Energy St. Paul
(Source: Google Earth)

St. Paul's population is approximately 287,000.¹⁶ DESP is located in the urban core and provides heating to 185 buildings and 300 single-family homes, and cools 95 buildings in the downtown and adjacent areas.¹⁷

District Energy St. Paul primarily uses wood waste biomass, with natural gas as the main back-up fuel. Oil or clean-burning coal can also be used as back-up fuels.¹⁸ The system includes a 65

¹⁴ District Energy St. Paul, August 1, 2008, <http://www.districtenergy.com/about/story.html>

¹⁵ Canadian District Energy Association. District Energy St. Paul Fact Sheet, <http://cdea.ca/resources/best-practices/compendium-of-case-studies/>

¹⁶ City of St. Paul, Minnesota, August 12, 2008 <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.asp?NID=2020>

¹⁷ Canadian District Energy Association. District Energy St. Paul Fact Sheet, <http://cdea.ca/resources/best-practices/compendium-of-case-studies/>

MWth (thermal mega watt) wood waste co-generation heat and power plant with an electrical capacity of 33 MW, four 25MW gas-fired boilers, two 44 MW low-sulphur coal-fired boilers, and four 106 MW gas and light oil fired boilers.¹⁹

DESP's wood-waste-fired co-generation plant was added in 2003. Since then, DESP has reduced its reliance on coal and oil by 70 percent and doubled the plant's efficiency. According to local documentation, the use of wood waste as a renewable fuel source produces significant environmental benefits and has helped the community solve a local wood waste disposal problem.²⁰ DESP uses up to 280,000 tons of wood waste annually, taking downed or diseased trees, tree trimmings and clean construction debris out of the waste stream and converting it to clean-burning energy. By reducing the reliance on coal and oil, DESP has reduced CO₂, sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and particulate emissions by more than 60 percent.²¹ Additionally, the plant's location demonstrates the viability of siting a renewable-energy wood waste co-generation facility in an urban environment.

MCNEIL GENERATING STATION, BURLINGTON, VERMONT

During the 1970s, the rising demand for electricity and the retirement of some local existing power sources prompted the Burlington Electric Department (BED) to look for ways to provide additional power to meet the city's growing need for electricity.²² BED conducted studies to find a fuel source that would be locally available, reliable, cost-effective, non-polluting and publicly acceptable. Wood became the preferred choice.

The station has operated since 1984 and was retrofitted in 1989 to also burn natural gas.²³ While wood remains the plant's primary fuel, the addition of gas allows McNeil to operate more frequently, making it more economical.²⁴

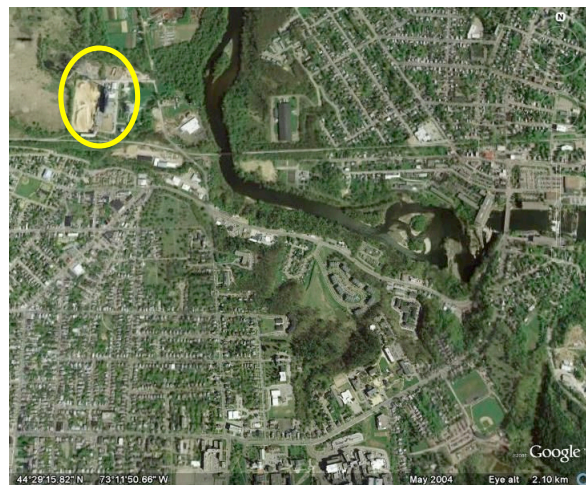


Figure 44. McNeil Generating Station
(Source: Google Earth)

The McNeil Station is jointly-owned by BED, Central Vermont Public Service, Vermont Public Power Supply Authority, and Green Mountain Power. The station's equipment includes a wood boiler, turbine generator, and cyclones and electrostatic precipitators for emission control. The

¹⁸ Maker, Timothy and Penny, Janet (1999). "Heating Communities with Renewable Fuels: The Municipal Guide to Biomass District Energy." Natural Resources Canada and United States Department of Energy

¹⁹ Canadian District Energy Association. District Energy St. Paul Fact Sheet, <http://cdea.ca/resources/best-practices/compendium-of-case-studies/>

²⁰ District Energy St. Paul, August 1, 2008, <http://www.districtenergy.com/services/districtenergy.html>

²¹ District Energy St. Paul Inc. Investing in the Community: 2005 Annual Report

²² Burlington Legacy Project, Case Study: Joseph C. McNeil Generating Station, <http://www.cedo.ci.burlington.vt.us/legacy/strategies/06-org-biomass-main.html>

²³ Wiltsee, G. (2000). "Lessons Learned from Existing Biomass Power Plants". National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

²⁴ Burlington Electric Department, Joseph C. McNeil Generating Station, August 12, 2008, <http://www.burlingtonelectric.com/SpecialTopics/Mcneil.htm>

station generates up to 50 MW of electricity, which is nearly enough for the entire City of Burlington's population of approximately 38,000, Vermont's largest city.²⁵ The use of wood and wood waste biomass replaced nuclear, fossil fuels, and hydro energy.

McNeil Station's emission control devices limit the particulate stack emissions to one-tenth the level allowed by Vermont State regulation. McNeil's emissions are one one-hundredth of the allowable Federal level. The only visible emission from the plant is water vapor during the cooler months of the year.²⁶

McNeil purchases 180,000 tons of wood annually. Seventy percent of the wood chips that fuel the McNeil station are wholotree chips and come from low quality trees and harvest residues.



Figure 45. McNeil Generating Station
(Source: Burlington Electric Department -
<http://www.burlingtonelectric.com/PhotoGallery/mcneil/mcneil1.html>)

The remaining portion of McNeil's wood requirements are met by purchasing residues such as sawdust, chips and bark from local sawmills and by using processed urban wood waste (free from contaminants). This significantly reduces the volume of wood waste going into the area's regional landfill.

BED's foresters monitor each harvest operation to see that wood is harvested properly. The Station's chip suppliers are required to conduct their harvesting activities in accordance with strict standards to protect the environment.²⁷

PEI ENERGY SYSTEMS, CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

In 1986, PEI constructed Canada's first hot water district heating system burning wood chips as an alternative energy source to imported oils and electricity. The district energy facility, located in Charlottetown, was built with public funds and operated by PEI Energy Corporation. In 1995, Trigen Energy Canada Inc. purchased the PEI Energy Plant and two other smaller district heating facilities, a second wood-fired plant and an energy from waste plant, and connected the three distribution networks. Trigen also installed new, high-efficiency wood boilers, co-generation equipment, and emission controls, including air scrubbers, multi-cyclones, and filters for removing particulates.²⁸ The redeveloped facility, with the latest pollution-control equipment in its two stacks, has improved air quality for Charlottetown's population of approximately 58,000.²⁹

The heat-generating capacity of the plant is 33 megawatts (MW) and a 1.2-MW backpressure turbine generates electricity.³⁰ This expanded co-generation district energy facility, which

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Burlington Electric Department, Joseph C. McNeil Generating Station, September 12, 2008, <http://www.burlingtonelectric.com/SpecialTopics/Mcneil.htm>

²⁷ Burlington Legacy Project, Case Study: Joseph C. McNeil Generating Station, <http://www.cedo.ci.burlington.vt.us/legacy/strategies/06-org-biomass-main.html>

²⁸ Maker, Timothy and Penny, Janet (1999). "Heating Communities with Renewable Fuels: The Municipal Guide to Biomass District Energy." Natural Resources Canada and United States Department of Energy

²⁹ Natural Resources Canada, Bioenergy Publications, http://www.canren.gc.ca/prod_serv/index.asp?Cald=184&PgId=1088

³⁰ Ibid

became fully operational in 1998, provides steam to the nearby hospital; hot water through a 15-kilometre distribution system to heat 84 buildings, including provincial buildings, the university, a college, two malls, and many commercial and residential buildings; and, electricity for operating the plant.³¹ Excess electricity generated beyond that required for the plant's operations is sold back to Maritime Electric Company Ltd.

The use of sawmill wood waste is saving 7.6 million litres of oil each year and significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions.³²



Figure 46. PEI Energy Systems
(Source: Canadian District Energy Association)

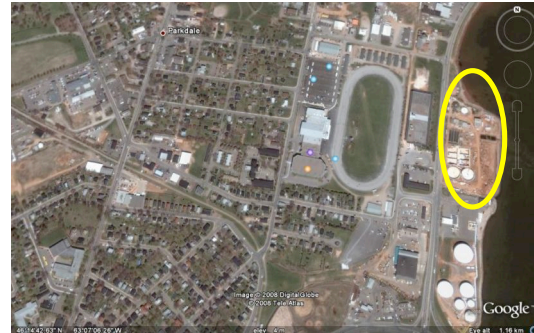


Figure 47. PEI Energy Systems
(Source: Google Earth)

REVELSTOKE COMMUNITY ENERGY CORPORATION, REVELSTOKE, B.C

In 1997, the federal government began a review of the potential for a district energy facility in Revelstoke. The study raised interest among community members and local business owners about the potential to reduce their reliance on conventional fuel sources.

As a result, the City established the Revelstoke Community Energy Corporation (RCEC) to build a wood residue-fired plant using biomass boilers. Locally produced wood residue, once destined for burning is now an integral part of the City's district heating system. The planning and community engagement for the development of a district energy facility in this City of approximately 8,000 took approximately eight years.³³

The plant, which is located in Revelstoke's downtown, was commissioned in 2005 and burns wood waste generated by Downey Street Sawmills Ltd. The plant produces steam for the operations of the sawmill and hot water for major municipal, institutional, and commercial buildings including a secondary school, community centre, aquatic centre, motels, stores, and a church.³⁴

The facility, which consists of a 1.5 MW wood-fired biomass boiler and a 1.75 MW back-up propane boiler, has reduced the Town's reliance on non-renewable fossil fuels and has reduced

³¹ Maker, Timothy and Penny, Janet (1999). "Heating Communities with Renewable Fuels: The Municipal Guide to Biomass District Energy." Natural Resources Canada and United States Department of Energy

³² Ibid

³³ Canadian District Energy Association. Revelstoke Community Energy Corporation Fact Sheet, <http://cdea.ca/resources/best-practices/compendium-of-case-studies/>

³⁴ Ibid

greenhouse gasses by 3,700 tonnes annually. The district energy facility has also reduced particulate emissions by 90 percent. The emissions meet or exceed provincial standards, resulting in air quality improvements. From an economic perspective, the facility has lowered energy costs for customers and increased the profitability of the sawmill because of the reduction in waste disposal and thermal operating costs.³⁵



Figure 48. Revelstoke Community Energy Corporation
(Source: Canadian District Energy Association)

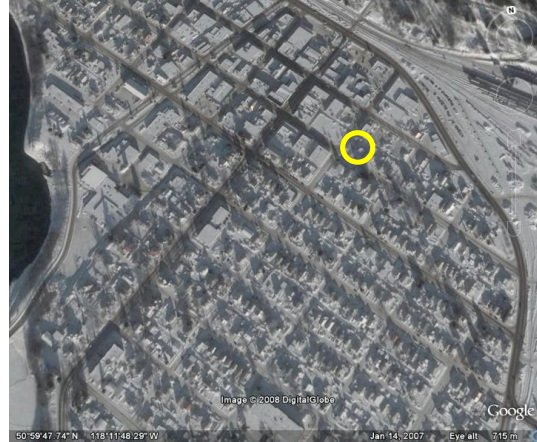


Figure 49. Revelstoke Community Energy Corporation
(Source: Google Earth)

6.4 AJAX STEAM PLANT PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT

Built in 1941, the existing Steam Plant currently burns wood biomass, and is supplemented by natural gas.

The Certificate of Approval for Air that was issued in 1984 indicates that the Steam Plant has six (6) wood biomass combustors each with natural gas-fired ignition burners and afterburners. This equipment provides heat for five steam boilers that exhaust into the atmosphere through a stack extending 45.6 metres above grade. The current air emissions of the existing Steam Plant include carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, sulphur dioxide, and various other trace compounds associated with wood combustion. The solid waste product is ash. The 1984 Certificate of Approval for Air indicates that the Steam Plant is to have an opacity meter in the stack. An opacity meter simply provides information on the smoke density which would give a measure of the efficiency of combustion. When combustion is poor (e.g.; low temperature, starved for oxygen) visible emissions can occur. The 1984 Certificate of Approval for Air did not require or approve pollution control equipment. The Steam Plant, in its current technology, has no emission controls.

As noted in the SWOT Analysis, the Steam Plant currently creates visible emissions, lacks aesthetic appeal, has outdoor industrial processes and has visible outdoor storage of wood waste and ash. All these factors contribute to the Study Area's significant compatibility issues with the adjacent Downtown. Redeveloping the Steam Plant into a modern district energy facility with stringent pollution controls could play a significant role in improving the compatibility of the Study Area with the Downtown.

³⁵ Canadian District Energy Association. Revelstoke Community Energy Corporation Fact Sheet, <http://cdea.ca/resources/best-practices/compendium-of-case-studies/>

Index Energy, a new North American based energy company, plans on redeveloping the existing Steam Plant into a cogeneration facility. Index Energy is part of the Index Estate Group of Companies, a Swedish based private equity firm.



Figure 50. Proposed Index Energy Cogeneration Facility.
(Source: Index Energy)

The proposed redevelopment of the Steam Plant will be constructed in two phases and includes five (5) wood-fired combustor/boilers (four new and one refurbished), five (5) multi-cyclones³⁶, four (4) baghouses³⁷, one (1) six-cell cooling tower, two (2) high-pressure turbines, and one (1) low-pressure turbine. Phase One of construction will include the installation of 2 new combustor/boilers, which will replace two existing units (currently without any pollution control), and the installation of two multi-cyclones. Phase Two, which is to be completed one full year after the completion of phase one, will include the installation of two more new combustor/boilers, two multi-cyclones, four baghouses, and three steam turbines for electricity generation. The facility will produce steam for nearby hosts as well as up to 25 MW of electricity for export to the central grid. The energy needed will be provided by the combustion of approximately 821 tonnes of wood residue per day. The facility also provides the possibility of hot and/or col water distribution sometime in the future. As construction of the facility is phased in, the existing stack would be replaced by a bundle of 4 separate stacks. The existing steam line distribution system would also need to be refurbished and/or replaced.

Most of the operations associated with the facility will be contained in a wholly enclosed building. Trucks delivering wood residue will unload within the building where the wood residue will be stored. Ash which is a by-product of wood combustion is proposed to be stored outside the building, but all ash will be containerized. These changes in the operation of the Steam Plant will reduce off-site nuisance impacts related to dust and tracking of mud and material from

³⁶ Exhaust gases from the combustor are directed through a multi-cyclone. A multi-cyclone is a bank of cyclones. Cyclones separate particulate and remove large particles. Rather than treating one very large flow in a single large cyclone, multi-cyclones split the air flow. This improves the overall system efficiency as particles have less distance to travel to the walls of the cyclone.

³⁷ A Baghouse is a high efficiency cloth filter that receives air from the multi-cyclone and further controls particulate emissions. Baghouses are considered to be state-of-the-art particulate control.

the site. The site will have an MOE approved Best Management Plan to ensure that no fugitive dust leaves the site and is well managed at the site. This includes routine inspections and regular reporting.

As noted earlier in this section, there are many possible fuels that a district energy facility could use. For instance, the existing Steam Plant could have been redeveloped into a natural gas-fired co-generation facility, which as noted earlier is considered a clean fossil fuel. Many municipalities, such as Toronto, Markham, Hamilton and Sudbury, have all developed natural gas-fired district energy facilities. A benefit to using wood biomass rather than fossil fuel is that it can reduce the net amount of CO₂ that is emitted. As noted in the examples of wood and wood waste biomass district energy facilities in this section, all the facilities have seen a significant reduction in the amount of greenhouse gasses they emit. Index Energy chose to maintain the Steam Plant as a wood residue fired co-generation facility. If the facility was redeveloped into a natural gas-fired facility, it would emit approximately 250,000 net tonnes of CO₂ per year into the atmosphere. Since the burning of wood biomass is considered to be CO₂ neutral, the savings of approximately 250,000 net tonnes of CO₂ is equivalent to what 62,500 mid-sized cars would emit on an annual basis.³⁸

While the proper burning of wood produces less of some greenhouse gasses, it produces more particulate emissions in relation to a natural gas fired facility. However, the quality of the emission control system in place will have a bearing on the level of emissions for any type of system. As noted in **Table 2**, Index Energy's proposed in-stack particulate emissions are well within, and in many cases well below, local and international standards for wood combustion. **Table 2** compares the in-stack standards and guidelines for particulate emissions in various jurisdictions. The Ministry of the Environment's (MOE) standard is lower than many other jurisdictions and the proposed in-stack particulate emissions projected by Index Energy are even lower than what is required by MOE.

Table 2. Standards and Guidelines for Particulate Emissions from Wood Fired Units

Jurisdiction	In-stack Emission Limit (mg/SDm3)* ³⁹	Comment/Reference
Ontario (MOE)	46	MOE 1990 Guidelines.
British Columbia	53	
Quebec	70	
USA	96	New Source Performance Standard.
USA (once proposed)	28	Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) standard. Was proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency, but has since been withdrawn (2007) over a legal challenge based on the definition of "waste" with regard to wood waste.
European Union (EU)	8.6 to 26	Based on Integrated Pollution Prevention Control – Best Available Technology Assessment. These

³⁸ Calculated with Carbon Footprint Calculator, <http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>. (Calculation of 62,500 mid-sized cars is an approximations based on a 4-cylinder mid-sized car travelling an average of 20,000 km per year)

³⁹ For comparative purposes all in-stack concentrations need to be reported with the same conditions (temperature, moisture and oxygen levels). All values for this table were corrected to 25°C and 7% O₂.

Jurisdiction	In-stack Emission Limit (mg/SDm3)* ³⁹	Comment/Reference
		are guidelines and cannot be used in emission permits (EU statement). These are seen as “achievable” levels for electrostatic precipitators (ESPs) ⁴⁰ and baghouses.
Sweden	70 -291	Based on a monthly average.
World Bank	50.9	World Bank Thermal Power Guidelines.
Finland	No specific limit	
Proposed by Index	20	Guaranteed level with baghouse.

*Note: mg/SDm3 = milligrams (one thousandth of a gram) per Standard Dry metres cubed. These emissions are assessed as the concentration in the exhaust gases of the stack, before they are dispersed into the air.

No data related to the Steam Plant’s current emissions is available, but older facilities with only combustion control and no emission control, would typically have an in-stack particulate emission of 250 mg/SDm3. Even in Phase One of the project, where two combustors are operating with multi-cyclones, emissions will be lower than current levels. With Index Energy’s proposed equipment and pollution controls in Phase Two (i.e.; installation of baghouses), in-stack emission levels below 20 mg/SDm3 should be achievable. It is common for baghouses to actually operate at lower levels of emissions. An in-stack particulate emission level of 20 mg/SDm3 would be well over a 10 fold reduction from the plant’s current operations.

The MOE only sets in-stack standards for particulate. In addition to this in-stack standard for particulate that must be met by Index Energy, the MOE will also require the facility to meet ambient air quality standards. Ambient air quality levels are the concentrations that the public could be exposed to from the emissions of the plant. The ambient levels are the concentrations in the air, after the emissions from the stack have dispersed into the environment. The ambient concentrations are the levels that people would be exposed to. MOE specifically regulates facilities to ensure that the ambient concentrations associated with any emissions are below standards and guidelines. **Table 3** compares the modeled off-site air concentrations associated with the Index Energy Cogeneration Facility with the MOE requirements. The modeling exercise states that particulate will be 1.5% of the MOE standard; nitrogen oxides (NO_x) will be 19% of the MOE standard; and, carbon monoxide will be less than 1% of the MOE standard. Additionally, dioxins and furans will be less than 1% of the MOE standard.

⁴⁰ An electrostatic precipitator (ESP) is an air pollution control device. Like baghouses, ESPs are used to separate particulate matter from an air stream.

Table 3. Predicted Air Quality from the Index Energy Facility⁴¹

Contaminants	Predicted Off-site Air concentrations (ug/m3)*	MOE Standard or Guideline (ug/m3)*	Percentage of MOE Limit ⁴²
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	31	6000	<1%
Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	38.6	200	19%
Particulate Matter (PM)	1.8	120	1.5%
	Predicted Off-site Air concentrations (pg/m3)*	MOE Standard or Guideline (pg/m3)*	Percentage of MOE Limit ⁴³
Dioxins and Furans	0.000019	5	<1%

Note:

ug/m3 = micrograms (one millionth of a gram) per metre cubed.

pg/m3 = picograms (one trillionth of a gram) per metre cubed.

As noted, there is no data available for the Steam Plant's current emissions. Given the lack of emission controls and the age of the combustors at the current Steam Plant, emissions would be significantly greater than what is indicated in **Table 3**. For example, particulate matter for the Steam Plant as it operates today is expected to be at least 10 times higher than the proposed emissions from the Index Energy Cogeneration Facility. Similarly, other combustion emissions from the Steam Plant as it operates today would be significantly higher, though it is not possible to estimate how much greater.

Index Energy's redevelopment of the Steam Plant into a cogeneration facility will have addressed many of the land use compatibility issues raised in this report. Specifically, the redevelopment should eliminate visible emissions through proper wood combustion and particulate emission control. Industrial processes, wood waste, and ash will no longer be visible, addressing some outdoor storage issues. While the ash will be containerized, to completely eliminate outdoor storage the containers should be located within the building. The unloading of trucks inside the building will address noise issues. Additionally, the new building design will reflect a prestige employment type use thereby improving the aesthetic appeal.

Once completed, the proposed steam and electricity provided by the Index Energy Cogeneration Facility would have the ability to help attract industrial, residential and commercial uses to Downtown Ajax. Before that is realized, issues with regard to the redevelopment's compatibility with sensitive uses in the Downtown need to be identified and managed.

This includes addressing height limitations for buildings in the Downtown due to the facility's proposed stack emissions. Based on the modeling of off-site air concentrations (ambient air quality) for the Steam Plant redevelopment, Index Energy also outlined the maximum allowable building heights for future development surrounding the new facility. For example, a 40 metre building (approximately 13 storeys) must be a minimum of 300 metres away from the facility; a

⁴¹ These emissions are assessed as concentrations in the air.

⁴² Compared against criteria listed in the Ministry of the Environment publication "Summary of O. Reg. 419/05 Standards and Point of Impingement Guidelines & Ambient Air Quality Criteria (AAQCs)"

⁴³ Compared against criteria listed in the Ministry of the Environment publication "Summary of O. Reg. 419/05 Standards and Point of Impingement Guidelines & Ambient Air Quality Criteria (AAQCs)"

50 metre building (approximately 16 storeys) must be a minimum of 400 metres away from the facility; and, a 70 metre building (approximately 23 storeys) must be a minimum of 500 metres away from the facility. A building that exceeds the maximum allowable building height has the potential to create an elevated location where projected emissions standards could be exceeded. If the facility's actual emissions are higher than projected, the maximum building heights noted above would have to be reduced. It should be noted that similar restrictions would need to be assessed for natural gas fired facilities as well.

Since the cogeneration facility will be constructed in two phases over the course of approximately two years, the issue of the facility operating without baghouses during the first phase needs to be addressed, as the facility will not be operating to the projected standards for particulates. As part of the projected emission modeling, Index Energy did not project emissions for Phase One of the redevelopment. As mentioned previously, the emissions coming from the two new combustor/boilers with multi-cyclones will be lower than current levels. The cyclones that will be installed during Phase One will remove large particles, while the baghouses, that will not be installed until Phase Two, are essentially cloth filters that will further control particulate emissions. It should be noted that only two combustors will be operating during Phase One and these are a direct replacement for the existing units that have no current emission controls.

6.5 POSITIVE ASPECTS OF BIOMASS DISTRICT ENERGY FACILITIES

As illustrated by the examples in section 6.3, it is clear that, when compatibility issues, such as odour, noise and emissions are properly identified and mitigated, combining modern district energy and clean-burning technologies can in fact allow compatible integration of a wood or wood waste biomass district energy facility into a community containing residential, commercial and institutional uses.

Combining the technologies of clean-burning wood biomass combustion and modern district energy provides a community with added benefits beyond what a district energy facility can supply alone.⁴⁴ For example, a redeveloped wood waste biomass district energy facility in Ajax could:

- provide positive action on climate change since burning wood waste biomass adds no net CO₂ to the atmosphere;
- provide improved emissions and therefore better local air quality over the existing facility;
- reduce waste and help solve a waste disposal problem by diverting wood waste from landfill;
- reduce fossil fuel consumption and the need for numerous, less efficient heating and cooling systems in individual building systems;
- reduce operating costs for local industries by using steam generated at the plant; and,
- make Ajax a leader in sustainable development through the use of district energy in accordance with modern standards; especially biomass fuelled district energy.

⁴⁴ Maker, Timothy and Penny, Janet (1999). "Heating Communities with Renewable Fuels: The Municipal Guide to Biomass District Energy." Natural Resources Canada and United States Department of Energy

7.0 EVALUATION OF LAND USE STRATEGIES

Section 7 explores land use and municipal policy strategies to maintain and enhance the viability of the Central Ajax Employment Area while improving land use compatibility issues with the adjacent Downtown.

Land use incompatibility issues arise from nuisance factors such as traffic, noise, dust, litter and odour as well as from visual amenity factors. There are a number of mitigating factors that can improve land use compatibility. These include the separation of land uses, land use restrictions or prohibitions, operational limitations, site and building design and landscaping. This section explores the various land use, and design aspects that can enhance the viability of this employment area and reduce existing incompatibilities with the adjacent Downtown.

7.1 VISION

It is envisioned that the Central Ajax Employment Area will evolve into a more prestige employment area that is compatible with the Downtown, is walkable for employees, encourages transit use, and upholds high standards of building and streetscape design. Businesses in the Central Ajax Employment Area will complement and harmoniously exist with the commercial and residential uses of the Downtown. The Employment Area will connect with the mixed-use Downtown both physically through pedestrian and bicycle linkages, and visually through improved built-form and streetscape character. The Central Ajax Employment Area will offer opportunities that encourage employees of the area to walk, cycle, or use public transit through improved lighting and landscaping, direct pedestrian and bike lane connections to the Downtown, and improved street furniture and bus shelters.

7.2 LAND USES

The type of land use within an area has a large bearing on the degree of compatibility between two adjacent areas. The types of land uses within the Study Area and the constraints and opportunities associated with these are summarized in the SWOT analysis. Strategies to address compatibility between Study Area land uses and the Downtown are discussed below.

As well, the Town is currently completing a Commercial Land Needs Analysis and an Employment Needs Study. These studies are assessing the market potential for various land uses, which could be accommodated within the Town.

7.2.1 EXISTING LAND USE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

As discussed in the SWOT analysis, there are a variety of land uses within the Study area including office space and prestige style employment operations. There are also a number of general industrial operations, which although do not occupy prestige style buildings, do operate in fully enclosed buildings and raise no significant compatibility issues due to their operations.

There is, however, a minority of businesses both within and adjacent to the Study Area which do raise compatibility concerns and affect the perception of the employment area.

This includes the Steam Plant due to visible stack emissions, visible outdoor storage of scrap lumber and ash, and the general appearance of the building and property. In addition, the bus storage depot within the study area, and the auto wrecking yard and truck terminals adjacent to the study area, are all extensive outdoor type operations with similar characteristics to outdoor storage. Such uses are usually prohibited in prestige employment areas. Within the General Employment Zone, which applies to the Study Area, Truck Terminals are not permitted. However, as noted, there is a bus storage depot (Laidlaw) on Mackenzie Avenue within the Study Area. Additionally, the truck terminal (on the west side of MacKenzie Avenue) and auto wrecking yard (on the west side of Dowty Road) located outside the Study Area, impact the overall image of the Central Ajax Employment Area and its compatibility with the Downtown.



Figure 51. Industrial character of the area from Westney Road to the Downtown. (Source: Google Maps, 2007)

7.2.2 COMMERCIAL LAND NEEDS ANALYSIS AND EMPLOYMENT LAND NEEDS STUDY

The Town is currently undertaking a Commercial Land Needs Analysis and an Employment Land Needs Study. In addition, the Region of Durham is undertaking their Growth Plan Conformity Exercise to implement the Growth Plan, which, among other matters, includes the allocation of population and employment forecasts to the area municipalities to a 2031 planning horizon. The Region's population and employment forecast allocations are only preliminary at this time and are critical inputs in order to finalize the Town's recommendations of the commercial analysis and employment study. It is anticipated that Regional Planning Committee

at their regular meeting on November 25, 2008 will receive the population and employment forecast allocations and direct Regional staff to prepare the implementing official plan amendment to the Regional Official Plan. At that time, Town staff will be in a position to release the commercial analysis and employment study for review with the caveat that the Regional forecasts have yet to be adopted by Regional Council and receive final approval from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

7.3 OTHER LAND USE COMPATIBILITY FACTORS

There are a number of other land use compatibility factors in addition to land uses that affect the real and perceived compatibility of the area with the adjacent Downtown. These include the types of operation, site and building design, and landscaping.

ENCLOSED OPERATIONS

Whether industrial processing and handling operations are conducted outdoors or within enclosed buildings has a bearing on compatibility. Within the Study Area, the majority of the operations conduct the processing and handling indoors. The one key exception to this is the Steam Plant. The outdoor material handling and lack of screening at the facility result in both visual and nuisance compatibility issues.

OUTDOOR STORAGE LIMITATIONS

In most cases, outdoor storage in the area is not visible from the street. However, there are two exceptions to this. The first is the Steam Plant's pile of scrap lumber and ash (**Figure 52**). These piles are clearly visible from the street above the fencing and likely from most multi-storey buildings constructed in the Downtown. The fencing itself is a haphazard mix of materials including an old building wall, scrap lumber and large concrete barrier blocks, which in itself detract from the visual appearance and image of the area (**Figure 53**).



Figure 52. Ash pile is visible from Mills Rd.



Figure 53. Haphazard mix of materials for fencing along Mills Rd.

The second site is at 215 Hunt Street where a CN Rail contractor yard has storage of equipment and supplies clearly visible from Hunt Street (**Figure 54**). The property does not have a building on site and appears to be a lot solely dedicated to a contractor's yard.



Figure 54. Visible storage of equipment and supplies from Hunt St.

Beyond the Study Area to the west, large areas of outdoor storage predominate, including an auto wrecking yard, which affects the overall character and image of the Study Area.

SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN

There are a number of aspects of building and site design that affect the appearance of an employment area and the corresponding compatibility with adjacent residential and mixed-use areas. These include the location of loading docks, parking and building character.

A number of properties within the Study Area have loading docks located in the front yard clearly visible from the street. Where the loading docks are in the front yard, there is little that can be done to ameliorate the situation. Unless the buildings are expanded or redeveloped, this condition will remain. For those with side yard loading docks, there may be opportunities to screen the loading areas. Yet, there is little incentive for these industries to screen loading docks unless they are undertaking expansions or building retrofits.

Despite these site area constraints, loading docks are not a major contributor to a negative image of an area. The greater concern for compatibility is where loading docks abut new residential areas, in which case noise impacts may be an issue. Another issue is trucks using the right-of-way to maneuver into loading docks, which poses safety and traffic flow problems.

There are a few properties with extensive front yard parking up to the street. In most of these situations, there are other locations on the property where parking can be accommodated. Section 8 discusses these situations in more depth. However, without an application for building expansion or redevelopment, the Town has little opportunity to influence a property owner to relocate parking, unless an incentive program is developed.

In the Study Area, few of the buildings exemplify modern building design but many do have a front building façade that is of higher standard than a simple metal clad building.

Architectural control of future industrial buildings or expansions to existing buildings would give the Town more control over the built form character of new buildings. Section 8 provides a more in depth discussion of those opportunities.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping provides a relatively simple method of ameliorating an incompatible view or appearance, particularly in the front yard.

Within the Study Area, there are some good examples of landscaping, but in most cases there is a dearth of street trees within the public right-of-way and landscaping on private properties. However, there are many opportunities to improve landscaping in both the public and private realms as many properties have sufficient sized front yards in which additional landscaping could be accommodated. Landscaping opportunities and strategies are discussed more fully in Section 8.

7.4 ALTERNATIVE LAND USE STRATEGIES

Three alternative land use strategies were developed for the Study Area. These strategies each attempt to improve compatibility with the adjacent Downtown while maintaining a viable employment area. Each alternative requires a differing level of policy intervention in the Study Area.

7.4.1 STRATEGY 1: MOVING TOWARDS A PRESTIGE EMPLOYMENT AREA

A typical means of ensuring compatibility between a residential and an employment area is to create a prestige employment area at the interface. The Study Area has many positive characteristics that contribute to a prestige employment area including access to major transportation corridors. However, as the SWOT analysis has illustrated, there are a number of site, building design, landscaping and operational characteristics in the study area that do not reflect a prestige employment area.

This strategy will require a policy and zoning shift to Prestige Employment for the entire area identified in **Figure 55** both in terms of the range of permitted uses as well as prohibitions on outdoor storage, restrictions on loading dock location, parking area locations, and minimum standards of building design and landscaping.

7.4.2 STRATEGY 2: TARGET ONLY KEY TRANSITION SITES FOR AMENDMENTS TO OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING

It was heard from stakeholders that the majority of the business owners do not want to see much change to the area. Other landowners identified the desire to be able to permit a broader range of uses including retail and commercial uses along Bayly Street, which could also act as a transition to the Downtown.

Key sites can be targeted to improve compatibility with the Downtown without instigating major change to the area, allowing for status quo on interior lots that cannot be seen from major streets that lead to the Downtown.

This strategy would see site-specific Official Plan and Zoning changes that are targeted to properties that border the Downtown or on streets that lead to the Downtown as shown on **Figure 56**. To expand the range of permitted uses, these changes would re-designate and rezone lands along the interface with the Downtown to Prestige Employment, with permissions for some limited outdoor storage. Limits on outdoor storage could include scenarios such as prohibiting outdoor storage at the interface with the Downtown, limiting it to a certain percentage of the property, or imposing strict screening requirements.

Legend



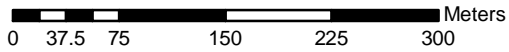
Study Area



Downtown Central Area



Proposed Prestige Employment Area



Central Ajax Employment Area

Land Use Compatibility Study



Figure 55 - Land Use Strategy 1:

Moving Towards a Large Prestige Employment Area



Sorensen Gravelly Lowes
Planning Associates Inc.

Modified
September 2008

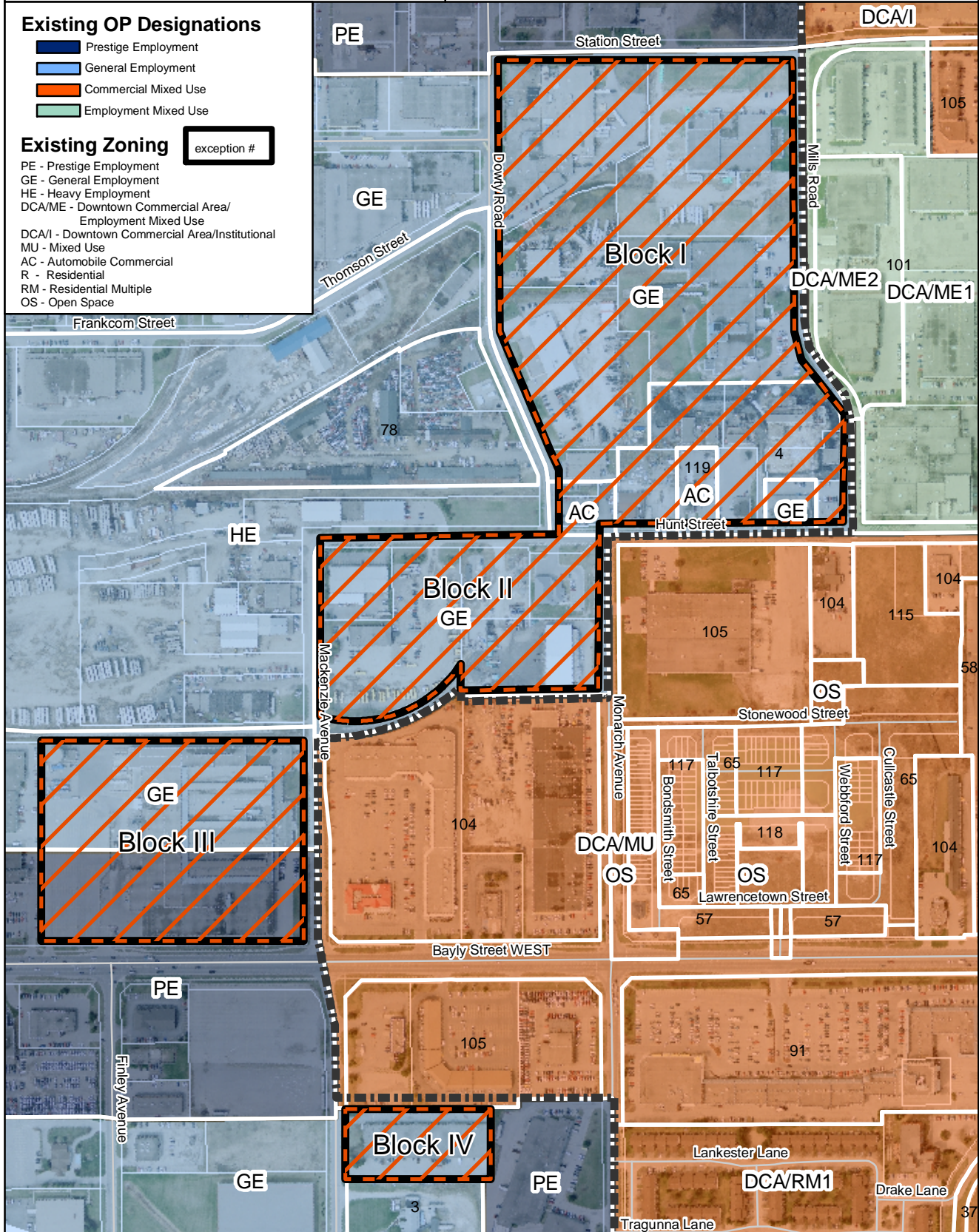
Existing OP Designations

- Prestige Employment
- General Employment
- Commercial Mixed Use
- Employment Mixed Use





Existing Zoning

exception #

- PE - Prestige Employment
- GE - General Employment
- HE - Heavy Employment
- DCA/ME - Downtown Commercial Area/
Employment Mixed Use
- DCA/I - Downtown Commercial Area/Institutional
- MU - Mixed Use
- AC - Automobile Commercial
- R - Residential
- RM - Residential Multiple
- OS - Open Space



Legend

-  Study Area
-  Downtown Central Area
-  Proposed Prestige Employment with limited outdoor storage on targeted properties
-  Also subject to OPA 20 Area Specific Policy 6.10

0 37.5 75 150 225 300 Meters



Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study



**Figure 56 - Land Use Strategy 2:
Target Key Transition Sites**

 **Sorensen Gravelly Lowes**
Planning Associates Inc.

**Modified
September 2008**

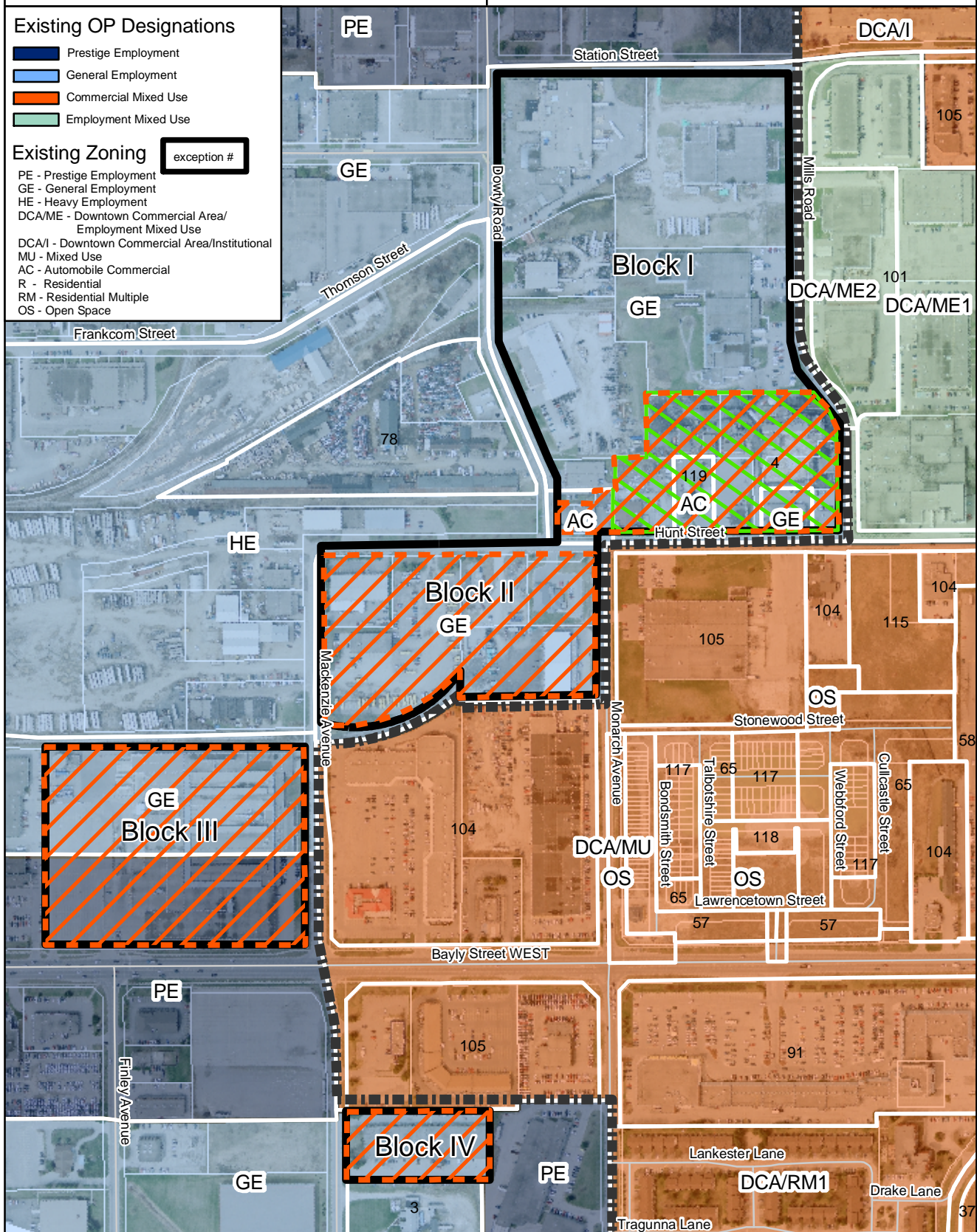
Existing OP Designations

-  Prestige Employment
-  General Employment
-  Commercial Mixed Use
-  Employment Mixed Use

Existing Zoning

exception #

- PE - Prestige Employment
- GE - General Employment
- HE - Heavy Employment
- DCA/ME - Downtown Commercial Area/
Employment Mixed Use
- DCA/I - Downtown Commercial Area/Institutional
- MU - Mixed Use
- AC - Automobile Commercial
- R - Residential
- RM - Residential Multiple
- OS - Open Space



7.4.3 STRATEGY 3: APPLY STRICT DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS ONLY

A third alternative Strategy is to allow the current land use designations to remain, but apply strict built-form and landscaping requirements through site plan approvals as well as a program to encourage and facilitate specific site design and landscape improvements on properties not undertaking building expansions subject to site plan approval. These efforts would be complemented by Town initiated streetscape improvements.

7.5 EVALUATION CRITERIA

To evaluate the three strategies, two criteria and a series of indicators and measures were developed as set below.

Criteria 1: Land Use Compatibility

Indicators and Measures:

- ⇒ Compatibility between the employment area and the Downtown
 - Ability to minimize nuisance impacts (noise, dust, odour, airborne chemicals)
 - Ability to limit or control outdoor storage, loading, and outdoor operations
 - Ability to improve the streetscape, landscape and built form character of the area

Criteria 2: Maintain Viability of the Employment Area

Indicators and Measures:

- ⇒ Create opportunity for re-investment
 - Ability to improve the image of the area
 - Ability to attract new compatible industries
 - Ability to maintain existing compatible industries

Table 4 summarizes the evaluation of the three strategies based on these criteria.

7.6 PREFERRED LAND USE STRATEGY

As indicated in **Table 4**, all three strategies have the potential to improve the compatibility of the Central Ajax Employment Area with the Downtown.

A full scale change in the Study Area from General Employment to Prestige Employment as addressed in Strategy 1, would ensure a broader area of compatibility with the adjacent Downtown, but would likely take a long time, and require a major catalyst to begin the transformation. Re-designating all lands in the Study Area would also be unnecessary as the Downtown lands to the east of Block I are designated Employment Mixed Use and already provide an appropriate interface between the Study Area and the Downtown. Additionally, the Prestige Employment designation does not permit outdoor storage, which based on the nature of businesses in the area, the existing built form and discussions with area businesses, is necessary.

Table 4. Alternative Strategy Evaluation

Criteria 1: Land use compatibility

Indicator	Measure	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Compatibility between employment area and the Downtown	Ability to minimize nuisance impacts (noise, dust, odour).	The uses permitted by the Prestige Employment designation would not impose nuisance impacts to residential or mixed uses. However, existing industries that may be incompatible with the Downtown in the Study Area could remain for some time. A large prestige area designation could raise land values, providing an incentive for such industries to leave or improve. However, a full-scale transformation of the entire Study Area into a prestige employment district could take a very long time.	Expanded permissions for less obtrusive uses applied to properties at the Downtown-Employment area interface would minimize the potential for nuisance impacts on Downtown residential and mixed-uses. However, existing industries that may be incompatible with the Downtown need to leave or improve their operations. Targeted municipal incentives may be required to encourage the transformation of such industries at the interface area.	Permitted uses would remain the same. Improving the streetscape and landscape character of the area may entice new non-polluting industries to locate in the study area when other industries leave. However, incompatible industrial uses would still be permitted to locate and expand within the study area resulting in a greater level of incompatibility with the Downtown, detracting from streetscape and site design improvements.
	Ability to limit or control outdoor storage, loading, and outdoor operations.	The Prestige Employment designation would restrict outdoor storage, and would not permit trucking operations, or contractor yard. Also, it would only permit manufacturing in wholly enclosed buildings.	Land use restrictions would apply to properties at the Downtown-Employment area interface where compatibility issues are most critical. These restrictions would include manufacturing in wholly enclosed buildings. However, the dominant industrial image of the area would remain and could continue to be a detractor for revitalization efforts of the Downtown.	Improved landscaping could be used to screen some outdoor storage, loading and outdoor operations, but many would remain visible.
	Ability to improve the streetscape, landscape and built form character of the area.	Prestige employment uses would more likely address corporate image through landscaping and building design. The larger the prestige employment area the greater the likelihood for change and reinvestment to occur. However, whole scale change to the built form character of the area would require significant private sector investment. A major catalyst will be needed to begin the transformation. Without such catalyst, it may never happen.	Prohibiting certain uses that are more industrial in nature at the interface with the Downtown may see some built form improvements in the interface area where the streetscape improvement is most critical for compatibility. However, improvements to the broader study area would not result from this strategy.	Design requirements may assist in reducing the visual impact of outdoor storage and operations. However, the design requirements would apply only at time of building expansion or redevelopment. The opportunity for improvement would, therefore, be dependant on business expansion or property redevelopment. Municipal initiated streetscape improvements to the public street right-of-way could dramatically improve the streetscape and landscape character of the area and compatibility with adjacent residential areas.

Criteria 2: Maintain Viability of the Employment Area

Indicator	Measure	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Create opportunity for re-investment	Ability to improve the image of the area.	As indicated in Criteria 1, the larger the prestige employment area the greater the likelihood for change to the built form and streetscape character of the area. However, there must be a catalyst to instigate change. Simply designating the area for prestige employment will not change the area, it will just limit the more noxious and general industrial uses. Change will only occur if prestige industries can be attracted to the area.	Change would only occur along the edge of the study area adjacent to the Downtown and on streets that lead to the Downtown, and would likely be limited to discouraging incompatible industrial uses rather than initiating a significant change to the character of the area.	Municipality initiated streetscape improvements along with Community Improvement incentives for landscaping and façade improvements could be the catalyst to improve the image and character of the employment area. However, significant built form improvements would only occur at time of building expansion or redevelopment.
	Ability to attract new compatible industries	New industrial developments are attracted to areas that are master planned and/or offer a sense of prestige. Wholesale change to the area would attract new prestige industries to the area. However, adjacent properties outside of the study area including the wrecking yard and the truck terminals detract from the image of the area and will likely dissuade significant reinvestment by prestige industries.	Improvement efforts along interface properties will help improve the appearance of the area and create a buffer between the employment area and the adjacent Downtown residential and commercial developments. Businesses looking for smaller properties and older industrial buildings will continue to be attracted to the area although they may not necessarily be of prestige nature. It is unlikely to lead to a significant attraction of prestige employment uses to the study area.	Improved landscaping and streetscape aesthetics will improve the attractiveness of the area for a range of industries. However, outdoor storage, trucking and heavier industries would not be completely eliminated from the broader area and may still detract from the area as a place for prestige industries to locate.
	Ability to maintain existing compatible industries	This strategy would make many existing uses legal non-conforming. This would restrict or hinder expansion of many existing uses and may result in relocation of those businesses.	This strategy would make some existing uses legal non-conforming at the interface with the Downtown, but the existing industries in the remainder of the study area would be unaffected. The interface area may also act as a buffer between the downtown and the remaining unchanged employment area, resulting in existing industries being less concerned about residential intensification in the Downtown.	This strategy would not affect the daily operations of existing businesses, and, therefore, would not restrict or hinder growth of existing compatible industries. Streetscape improvements and façade improvement incentives may also encourage existing industries to remain and invest in the area despite the presence of new and expanding residential uses in the downtown.

The approach in Strategy 2 to re-designate only lands along the interface with the Downtown from General Employment to Prestige Employment ensures an improved compatibility between the Study Area and the Downtown. It also maintains General Employment lands to help accommodate the Town's anticipated 42% growth in the industrial employment sector by 2021. A re-designation to Prestige Employment will still permit manufacturing uses, but will require that such uses be in a wholly enclosed building. This arrangement is more compatible at the interface with the Downtown than the General Employment designation, which does not restrict manufacturing to wholly enclosed buildings.

As mentioned, the Prestige Employment designation and zone does not permit outdoor storage. Therefore, Strategy 2 as detailed in Section 9 recommends applying Area Specific Policy 6.10 to lands in Blocks I and II of the Study Area abutting the Downtown to prohibit auto-oriented uses and permit limited outdoor storage for targeted properties (properties that already have outdoor storage). Outdoor storage would be phased out in time, in compliance with the Prestige Employment Designation. Retail sale of products for all blocks would be restricted to 20% of the total gross floor area of the building, as currently provided in the Prestige Employment designation.

As discussed in the SWOT Analysis, the Steam Plant, with its current operations, raises significant compatibility concerns. One of the most critical efforts to improving the Study Area's compatibility with the Downtown is the redevelopment of the Steam Plant. As discussed in Section 6.0, the redevelopment of the Steam Plant into a modern co-generation district energy facility with stringent pollution control measures could greatly improve the Study Area's compatibility with the Downtown. It could also help attract prestige employment uses to the Study Area that wish to benefit from more affordable energy costs. As detailed in Section 9, some of the criteria a co-generation district energy facility should comply with to ensure compatibility with the Downtown include: ensuring fuel sources are environmentally responsible, such as the use of uncontaminated wood waste biomass; ensuring compliance with all regulations and Certificates of Approval for Air; restricting the amount of biomass that can be accommodated on the site at any one given time; and screening or enclosing both wood waste fuels and ash.

The Study Area appears to be well utilized, and is meeting a market demand for certain industries. At the stakeholder workshop, representatives from existing industries expressed their satisfaction with the Central Ajax Employment Area, as it serves their needs. It is clear that the visibility of daily operations and aesthetic character of certain industrial uses is a major barrier to improving the image of the Study Area, and its compatibility with the Downtown. Therefore, Strategy 2 in combination with Strategy 3, which applies landscaping and streetscape aesthetics to improve the attractiveness of the Study Area for a range of industries, could see more immediate changes that improve compatibility with the Downtown in the area that is most critical – the interface.

As such, the preferred strategy is a combination of streetscape, landscape and design improvements coupled with land use restrictions at the interface with the Downtown and on lands with frontage on roads that lead to the Downtown, as proposed in Strategies 2 and 3. This preferred strategy will improve compatibility with the Downtown while maintaining and improving the viability of the employment area over the short to mid term.

In most cases, improvements to building façade, parking and loading orientation and landscaping only occur when a property redevelops or building additions are contemplated. In

these cases, the Town can apply site plan control requirements to ensure the recommendations of this study are met. However, since significant land use changes are not contemplated in the Study Area, it is likely that few properties will redevelop. Therefore to achieve the vision and design objectives set out in this study, it would be imperative to also apply an incentive program, such as financial grants through a Community Improvement Plan, which is discussed in more detail in Section 9 of this report. Otherwise, little change may occur in the private realm. Streetscape and landscape improvements are essential to improving the aesthetics of the Study Area, both in the private and public realms. Stakeholders have pointed out that the Town needs to take leadership to instigate change in the area. Aesthetic improvements beginning within the public realm are anticipated to yield quick results.

As the preferred strategy would indicate, a combination of efforts is required to effectively achieve the goals of this study. Section 8 of this report provides detail on how the design aspects of the preferred strategy could be implemented by outlining block-by-block design recommendations. Section 9 discusses the suggested Official Plan and Zoning amendments required to implement the preferred land use strategy.

8.0 URBAN DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

To implement the preferred land use strategy and enhance the compatibility between the Study Area's employment uses and the adjacent Downtown, the Study explores how urban design improvements to the Study Area can be achieved through application of existing municipal guidelines. These include the Town's Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines (EAUDG) and Durham Region's Arterial Corridor Guidelines (DRACG) where roads are subject to Regional jurisdiction. This section undertakes a block-by-block assessment of the Study Area and addresses areas for improvement.

8.1 PUBLIC STREETSCAPE

8.1.1 SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Sidewalks are located on Hunt Street and the west side of Dowty Rd. (**Figure 57**). They were constructed as part of the municipality's Downtown Sidewalk Connectivity Initiative, completed in 2007 to provide improved sidewalk connections for pedestrians traveling from the GO Station, at Westney Rd. and Fairall St. to the Downtown Central Area.

Within the Study Area, these sidewalks provide an immediately noticeable improved pedestrian environment in terms of comfort, safety and streetscape appearance. However the sidewalk network is discontinuous. There is no sidewalk for pedestrians walking from Station St. or Mills Rd. to the Downtown or to other places of employment. To improve the comfort for pedestrians along these streets, and to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment that might encourage employees to walk for short amenity trips to and from the Downtown, additional improvements are necessary. The recommendations for Sidewalk Improvements are:

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK I - Station St. – Mills Rd. – Hunt St. - Dowty Rd. (see Figure 59)

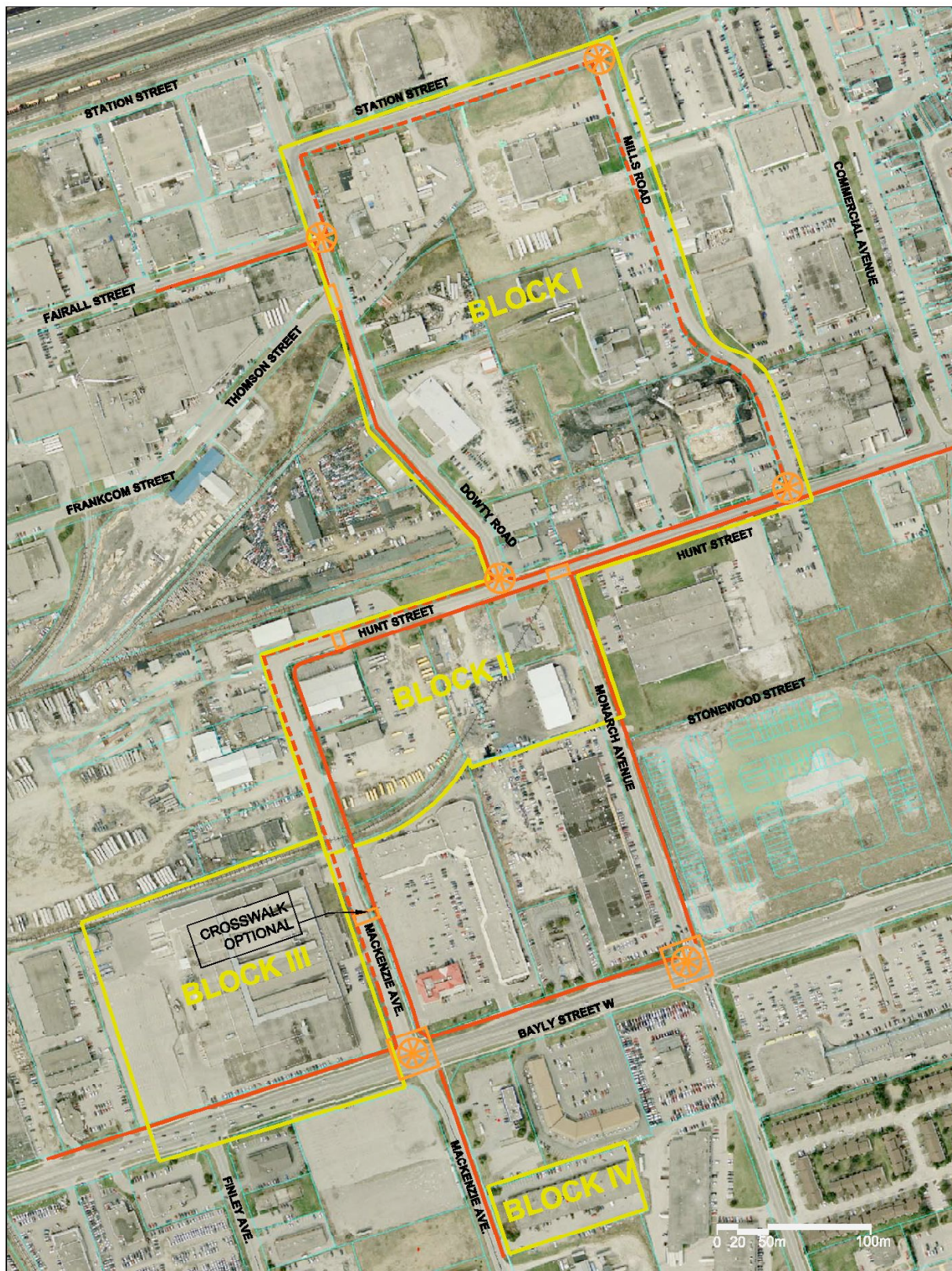
- a) Provide a sidewalk on the following streets:
- East side of Dowty Rd. from Fairall St. to Station St.;
 - South side of Station St.; and
 - East or west sides of Mills Rd.



Figure 57. New sidewalk, west side of Dowty Road



Figure 58. Portion of an existing sidewalk along north side of Station St. However a continuous sidewalk on the south side is preferable, to create a direct link to Ajax Plaza



LEGEND

- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- - - PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED CROSSWALK



PROPOSED AREA GATEWAY
(INCLUDES CROSSWALKS)



GATEWAY SITE PER OPA 20
(INCLUDES CROSSWALKS)



STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
(EXPANDED TO INCLUDE
ENTIRE STREETScape)

Figure 59

SIDEWALKS AND GATEWAYS

Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study



Both guideline documents note that sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street. However, Table 4, p. 12 of the DRACG (2007) notes that, for Type C Arterial Roads in industrial areas, a sidewalk on only one side of the street is required. Station St. is a Type C Arterial Road and therefore falls within this recommendation for one sidewalk only. There is a small segment of an existing sidewalk along the north side of Station Street, however the majority of commercial uses and plazas are located south of Station Street. Therefore, a sidewalk is proposed for the south side of Station Street. However, considering the importance of Station Street as an access to the Downtown and its role as a connector to the GO Transit station, a sidewalk is preferred on both sides of Station Street and should be considered by the Town with the south side being the priority. If a sidewalk is also constructed on the north side, a crosswalk at Station and Dowty would be required.

b) Mills Rd. connections

A sidewalk on the west side of Mills Rd., extending from the existing sidewalk is preferred. The existing sidewalk is located along the property at the northwest corner of Mills and Hunt. However, Sandra Tea & Coffee has parking to the curb. This preferred strategy would require Sandra Tea & Coffee to move their parking to the rear of the property. Requiring Sandra Tea & Coffee to move their parking would have financial implications.

c) If possible, construct (1.5m wide) 5'-0" wide sidewalks (Figure 59).

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK II - Monarch Ave. – Hunt St. – Mackenzie Ave. (see Figure 59)

Block II is served by at least one sidewalk along each street. However, some of the sidewalks are interrupted by very wide driveway cuts.

a) At driveway cuts, add differentiated pavement to create a visible, uninterrupted sidewalk route.

b) Extend the sidewalk on the north side of Hunt to meet Mackenzie Ave.

c) Complete sidewalks on Mackenzie Ave. south of Hunt St. and south of Bayly St.



Figure 60. New sidewalk on south side of Hunt St. is interrupted by a large driveway cut (at orange bollards). Continue the sidewalk across the driveway with a distinctive pavement.

Preferred Strategy BLOCK III - Mackenzie Ave – Bayly St. W. (north-west quadrant)

274 Mackenzie Ave. has a sidewalk on its Bayly St. W. frontage but no sidewalk along its main frontage on Mackenzie Ave. There is a sidewalk, however, on the east side of Mackenzie Ave., along the frontage of the commercial plaza. Although this Study has taken the position that, for an established employment area, a sidewalk on one side of the street is sufficient, this property has no pedestrian connection to the sidewalk across the street, or to the sidewalk along the north side of Bayly St. W. It is recommended that a sidewalk be introduced on the west side of Mackenzie Avenue from Hunt St. to Bayly St. (see Figure 59).

8.1.2 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Section 5.2 – Crosswalk and Intersection guidelines of the DRACG provide a comprehensive overview of the function, location and design of effective crosswalks and intersections. This Study recommends that the DRACG guidelines be applied to the greatest extent possible for

new crosswalks in the Study Area. The EAUDG discusses intersections in the context of Gateway sites, which are addressed in a later section of this report.

Some key factors described in the DRACG include:

- Provide visual and physical devices that allow vehicles and pedestrians to coordinate their movements safely;
- Give priority to pedestrian visibility, movement and comfort;
- Locate crosswalks as a natural extension of the pedestrian network;
- Integrate and clearly demarcate turning movements; and
- Use visual and audible signals and markings to warn vehicles and guide pedestrians.

In addition, intersections provide the opportunity to identify an important location or “gateway” within an area.

The characteristics of some of the intersections in the Study Area are:

- They are not signalized;
- They do not have pedestrian crosswalks;
- They primarily serve traffic flow through the Study Area; at peak times, there can be several vehicles in all directions moving quickly through these intersections;
- Turning radii are wide, to serve larger vehicles; and
- Traffic and street name signage is visible but uncoordinated.

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK I - Station St. – Mills Rd. – Hunt St. - Dowty Rd.

To create a more pedestrian oriented environment and to improve the Study Area’s image and identity, the following intersections could be defined with crosswalks, signage and/or a landscaped Gateway feature provided in the Right-of-Way (ROW) (**Figure 59**):

a) Fairall St. and Dowty Rd.

- Differentiate pavement colour and/or texture in the intersection “box” to slow traffic and create driver awareness of pedestrians;
- Accentuate the existing north and south sidewalk corners of Fairall St.;
- Provide markings and signals to allow for safe crossing of pedestrians across Dowty Rd., to connect with the proposed sidewalk on the east side of Dowty; and
- Demarcate turning lanes.

b) Station St. and Mills Rd.

- Differentiate pavement colour and/or texture in the intersection “box” to slow traffic and create driver awareness of pedestrians;
- Create crosswalk along south side, to connect the proposed sidewalks along the south side of Station St. and the east side of Mills Rd.;
- The sight-line triangle on the south east corner is a large radius, providing a possible site for a Gateway feature, provided that there are no grade issues (**Figure 61**); and
- Ensure that any Gateway feature does not obscure pedestrian movement.

- c) Hunt St. and Mills Rd.
- Differentiate pavement colour and/or texture in the intersection “box” to slow traffic and create driver awareness of pedestrians;
 - Create crosswalks to connect all sidewalks;
 - Utilize this location as a Gateway to the eastern edge of the Study Area as well as the entrance to the Downtown, and to frame the view into the Public Park, as planned in the block directly south, as per OPA 20 (**Figure 62**);
 - Employ traffic calming strategies without hindering the transportation needs of local industries; and



Figure 61. View of the generous ROW at the southeast corner of Mills Rd. and Station St.

- d) Hunt St. and Dowty Rd.
- Differentiate pavement colour and/or texture in the intersection “box” to slow traffic and create driver awareness of pedestrians; and
 - Create crosswalks to connect all sidewalks

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK II - Monarch Ave. – Hunt St. – Mackenzie Ave. (Figure 59)

- a) An improved intersection treatment / Gateway is recommended at Dowty Rd. and Hunt St., as described under Block I.
- b) A crosswalk is needed at the Hunt St. and Monarch Ave. intersection, to connect the sidewalk along the south side of Hunt St. to the Monarch block sidewalks.

Preferred Strategy BLOCK III - Mackenzie Ave. – Bayly St. W

The intersection of Mackenzie Ave. and Bayly St. W. is a Gateway Site under OPA 20. As part of the Gateway treatment, pedestrian crossings will most likely be developed. Bayly St. W. is also identified for expansion and enhancement, to include a centre median and improved pedestrian amenities.

- a) Create a pedestrian crosswalk with differentiated paving along the north side of Bayly St. W., to connect the Bayly St. W. sidewalks across Mackenzie Ave. (**Figure 59**).



Figure 62. View from Mills St. into residential block to the south and possible location for a Public Park.

8.1.3 GATEWAYS

Developing Gateways goes hand-in-hand with intersection improvements and crosswalks, as described earlier. Creating a new, enhanced intersection in an existing area is a good opportunity to convey an area theme, improve signage and orientation, and slow traffic.

Section 3.3.3 - Public Identity Elements of the EAUDG describes the range of elements that can be used to define important corridors or places. Section 5.1 – Gateways and Landmarks addresses the role of certain locations to create a “sense of arrival” and to “reinforce the image

of the employment lands.” Some recommendations for how the built form should contribute to the Gateway may not be possible, because of existing building and site configurations. However, a consistent treatment to reinforce the following intersections as “anchors” will help to establish a local image for the area.

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK I - Station St. – Mills Rd. – Hunt St. - Dowty Rd. (See Figure 59)

- a) The Fairall St. and Westney Rd. intersection
 - Although outside of the Study Area, it is the main entrance to the larger Central Ajax Employment Area. This intersection provides an excellent opportunity to provide clear and coordinated address signage, business identities and to introduce the Area’s name or “brand”.
- b) The southeast corner of Station St. and Mills Rd.
 - This intersection is the “north-eastern Gateway” from the Downtown. The sight-line triangle on the southeast corner is a large radius, providing a possible site for a Gateway feature, provided that the slight grade change can be incorporated into the Gateway design (**Figure 63**).
- c) The north corners of Mills Rd. and Hunt St.
 - This location is the entry into the Study Area, with the potential for more pedestrian-oriented businesses. The corners on the north side of Hunt St. could incorporate some planting, signage and heritage elements related to the Steam Plant’s cultural history;
 - Views into the properties along the south side of Hunt. St. should be framed; and
 - Require that new development along the north corners reinforce the corner through location of entrances and glazed areas.



Figure 63. Utilize the southeast corner (on left) of Mills Rd. and Station St. to create an Area Gateway; incorporate transit stop pedestrian area and signage.

Preferred Strategy BLOCK III - Mackenzie Ave – Bayly St. W.

A new Gateway Site at the eastern half of the intersection of Mackenzie Ave. and Bayly St. W. is identified in OPA 20:

“...These Gateway Sites shall include buildings and landscape elements that establish urban-image landmarks in the Downtown Central Area. Future buildings at these locations will be sited to frame the intersection and have sufficient height, massing and architectural detail to highlight their visual importance as urban anchors and focal points....”

- a) Establish a short and long term or phased plan for Gateway development. Construction of key signage, pedestrian amenities, lighting and landscaping could improve the image of the area in the short term, during the period that current development remains.

8.1.4 LANDSCAPING

Both guideline documents describe the importance of landscaping and landscaped buffers to define and connect the public and private realms. In new employment areas, landscaped buffers serve multiple purposes, such as:

- Providing an area sufficiently deep for turning radii for larger vehicles;
- Screening of parking, loading and storage areas through the use of densely planted conifers at the edges;
- Creating a transition from the street to the front entrance; and,
- Providing an opportunity for uninterrupted landscaping and tree planting, to create a unified streetscape image of the area.

As the Study Area is an existing employment area, with established property owners and users, patterns of use and site functionality, there is some potential for landscaping to occur in the ROW; however, it may be interrupted and occur at “pockets”, or single locations. For example, where some users have loading bays and parking at the street edge, landscaping is not possible. In other locations, there is already a generous green edge, which could be enhanced. In addition, there are some areas of mature trees and hedge vegetation. These trees and vegetation should be preserved and enhanced with compatible planting.

Both the EAUDG and the DRACG provide guidance on the type and design of hard and soft landscaping options for the public boulevard. Although written for the region-wide context, the recommendations under Section 5.3 – Landscaping of the DRACG are applicable to this area as well. Key recommendations of the DRACG include:

- *Develop a Landscape Plan for consistent treatment;*
- *Select species that are easy to transplant and maintain;*
- *Consider planting shrubs, grasses or flowers...if spatial or maintenance requirements conflict with tree growth;*
- *Avoid planters;*
- *Plan the location of sidewalks, driveways and utilities around existing healthy trees;*
- *Seek permission from adjacent landowners to plant on their properties, if the ROW is too narrow to support plantings;*
- *Plant trees 1.5 to 2.0m from curb except where limited space...dictates otherwise*
- *Plant deciduous trees 8 to 10 m apart;*
- *Ensure placement of trees do not obstruct drivers’ view at intersections and driveways; and,*
- *Provide landscaping and distinctive surfaces at pedestrian crossings.*

Section 3.3.2 – Landscape Buffers of the EAUDG discusses the function and types of buffers that can be located in the ROW. The key statements are:

“Where part of a site’s frontage contains parking, or allows views to service, storage, or loading areas, the landscape buffer shall be appropriately landscaped to define the street edge and adjacent building walls, as well as provide a screening or buffering role.

Materials within the landscaping buffer may include hard elements such as columns, low walls and decorative fencing, and soft elements such as trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcover and sod. The buffer may not be wholly sod.”

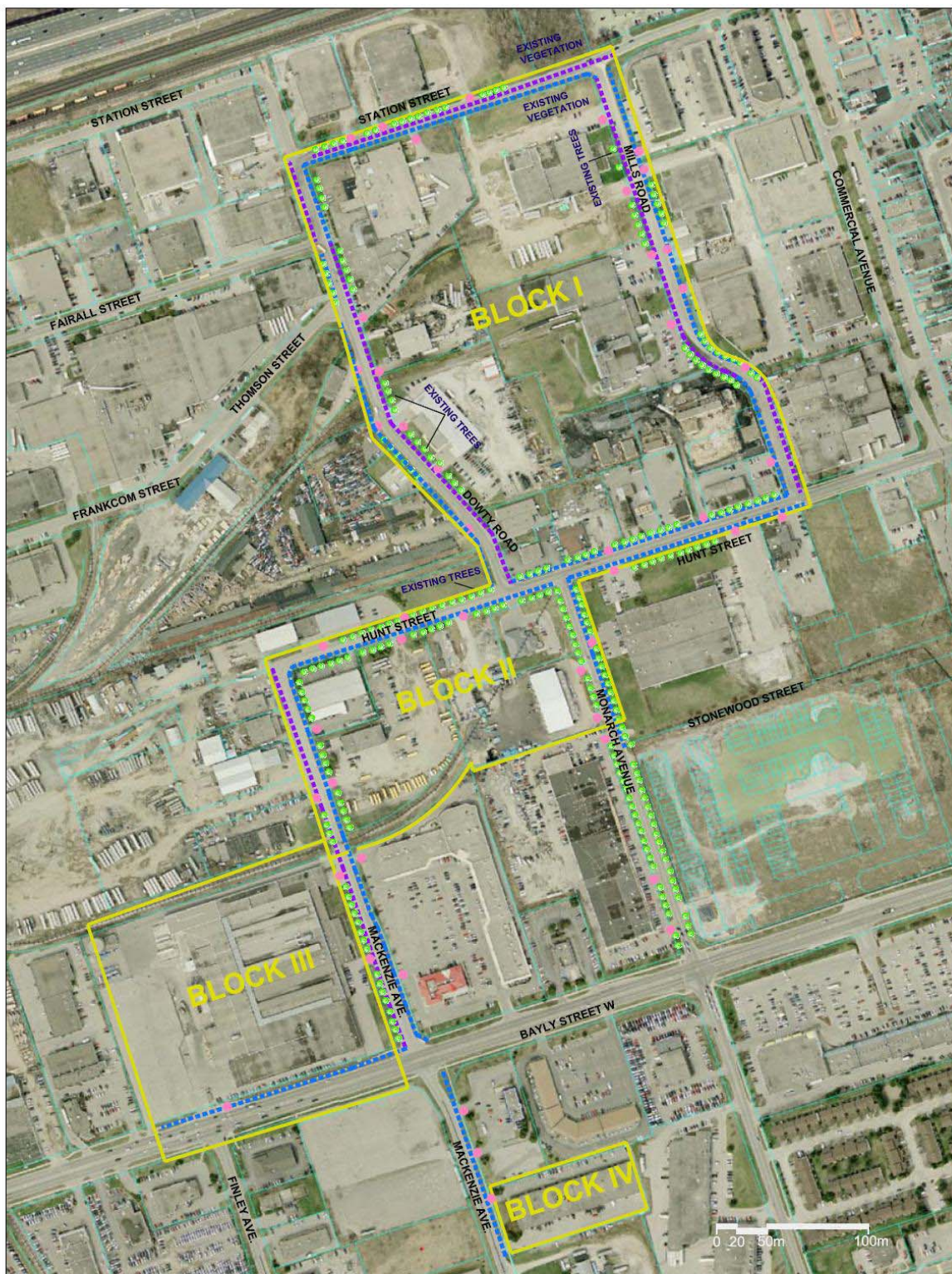
In light of the range of options given, and that in general, the EAUDG encourages alternative solutions for sites that fall outside the guidelines or categories, the preferred strategies by block are set out below.

However, to determine the overall feasibility and impact of additional landscaping in the Study Area, from infrastructure, community improvement and cost perspectives, a detailed Landscape and Streetscape Master Plan should be prepared by the Town, in coordination with Regional staff.

See **Figure 64** for the preferred landscape improvement strategies described below.

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK I - Station St. – Mills Rd. – Hunt St. - Dowty Rd.

- a) Where possible, eliminate off-street parked cars from the ROW.
 - Provide incentives for property owners that park up to the street edge to review their site usage and create other internal parking areas to replace the number of cars at the street edge and allow the possibility of a landscaped strip. Current properties that park to the curb, and potential solutions include:
 - 144 Mills Road, Sandra Tea & Coffee – could provide additional parking in the rear yard; and,
 - 81 Dowty Road, Avery/Denison property at Thomson Street – keep parking in the rear yard.
- b) Narrow wide driveway cuts with planting strips, and locations for signage and lighting.
 - Along boulevards with existing, proposed or new sidewalks, review the potential with property users to reduce oversized, wide driveway cuts to a minimum and “close the gap” with a buffer strip.
- c) Change pavement treatment at driveways
 - Create continuity in the streetscape by using a differentiated pavement at all driveway cuts. Even where sidewalks do not exist, a pavement colour that is repeated along the streetscape will contribute to a sense of streetscape unity.
- d) Establish a limited palette of public realm / ROW buffer materials and paving.
 - The variety of buildings, sites and frontages in the Study Area creates a disconnected appearance. Use of a select group of soft and hard landscaping within the ROW will contribute to building a unified streetscape.
- e) Establish a consistent landscaping approach on all ROWs in the Study Area that includes:
 - Planting tree rows at 10m spacing in existing, deeper grassed boulevards;
 - Incorporate shrubs at boulevards that cannot support tree planting;
 - Use landscape screening that does not create hiding places or “blind” corners;
 - Coordinate with the Region for landscaping in the public realm along Hunt St. and Station St. to ensure a consistent approach; and
 - Develop a detailed Landscape and Streetscape Master Plan to coordinate planting schemes, species and integration with pedestrian areas.



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■■■■■ PROPOSED LANDSCAPE BUFFER AT SIDEWALK | ●●● POTENTIAL TREE PLANTING OPPORTUNITIES |
| ■■■■■ PROPOSED LANDSCAPE BUFFER WITHOUT SIDEWALK | ■■■■■ STUDY AREA BOUNDARY (EXPANDED TO INCLUDE ENTIRE STREETScape) |
| ● DRIVEWAY CUT ALTERATIONS (REDUCED WIDTH WITH PLANTING STRIP OR DISTINCTIVE PAVEMENT) | |

Figure 64
Boulevard Improvements

Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study



Preferred Strategy: BLOCK II - Monarch Ave. – Hunt St. – Mackenzie Ave.

Along Monarch and Mackenzie Avenues, this block has consistent, grassed boulevards in the ROW which provide an excellent opportunity to create enhanced landscaped streetscape with tree planting on both sides of these streets. There are no properties where cars are parked to the curb face, as in Block 1, and the boulevards are long with minimal interruptions.

Along Monarch Ave, as one of the primary interfaces with the SunDial residential block, tree planting and reducing the view of parking and views of internal site areas is recommended. Along Mackenzie Ave., an enhanced boulevard can provide a transition from the Study Area to the commercial site to the south, at Mackenzie Ave. and Bayly St.

- a) Introduce a combination of tree rows along both sides of the streets and low planting along frontages, to partially screen parking areas at the street edge.



Figure 65. Along the east side of Dowty Rd., this tree row provides attractive, yet “semi-transparent” screening of the adjacent parking area. Similar tree planting should be considered.

Preferred Strategy BLOCK III - Mackenzie Ave – Bayly St. W. (north-west quadrant)

- a) 274 Mackenzie Ave.

This property has an attractive, well-maintained frontage along Mackenzie Ave., with a significant grassed public boulevard with interruptions at only the parking entrance and loading and internal site access. There is no sidewalk, as discussed above. As an extension of the site, this boulevard could be strongly enhanced with tree planting, lighting and signage.

Along Bayly St. W., the building comes very close to the street, with a single row of parking along most of its frontage. A large driveway cut leads into the site and parking areas, outside storage and loading are visible from Bayly St. W.

- (i) Along Mackenzie Ave., enhance the boulevard with a row of trees on both sides of the street, as an extension of the Gateway Site.
- (ii) Along Bayly St. W., introduce low shrub conifer planting to partially screen the parked cars and provide a “softer” and greener edge.
- (iii) Where planting is not feasible, replace the existing fencing with a semi-transparent fence (see image p. 47 EAUDG) to provide an attractive yet secure barrier.
- (iv) At the Bayly St. W. driveway entrance, create an attractive entrance with masonry pillar-like features that can also provide support for a semi-transparent fence, if implemented.

8.1.5 BUS SHELTER AREAS

Section 5.8 - Transit and Shelters of the DRACG provides a very good description of the range of functions, site planning and design for transit stops to create waiting areas that:

- Are integrated with the sidewalk,
- Provide good visibility and accessibility,

- Provide shelter, and
- Are attractive and complement adjacent areas.

For transit stop improvements, Section 5.8 of the DRACG provides implementation direction, although it may not be wholly applicable to the Study Area. Key guidelines include:

- Provide bus stops at the near side of an intersection, letting passengers disembark adjacent to the corner where crosswalk lines and signal heads are located.
- Position transit stops as close as possible to intersection and crosswalks.
- Provide concrete pads in the waiting and loading areas...to be long enough to serve all exit doors from the vehicle and accommodate wheelchairs and visually impaired persons.
- Regardless of the shelter location, visual connection to approaching vehicles and direct pedestrian access to vehicles must be provided.
- Use transit shelters that have transparent walls or an open, roofed shelter where enclosures cannot be provided.

Preferred Strategy: All Blocks

- Apply the DRACG recommendations for transit stops to create improved pedestrian waiting areas.
- Coordinate transit stop and waiting area design with GO Transit, which currently, is undertaking a Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Ensure that transit stops are fully connected to the pedestrian network system of sidewalks, crosswalks, intersections and private walkways, where appropriate.
- Remove unused transit stops.
- Coordinate GO Transit and DRT stop locations. Include both GO Transit and DRT staff in consultation and implementation of recommendations.
- Improve the public's access to the information on the location of the frequent, untimed stops.
- Ensure that signage for the routes and schedules served by the stops are clearly displayed at each location.
- Design transparent transit enclosures, to support visibility between driver and passenger and to avoid the inadvertent creation of a hiding place.



Figure 66. A transit stop on the south side of Hunt St., near Monarch Ave. Pedestrian comfort, visibility and accessibility can be improved with a transparent shelter, concrete pad and a waiting area that is connected to the proposed sidewalk.

8.1.6 LIGHTING

Public realm lighting provides the illumination required for the safety of pedestrians and vehicles. Employment areas are typically either poorly illuminated, as sites become vacant after hours, or are lit with glaring and inconsistent illumination. These problems are mostly associated with private parking and service areas. A consistent lighting pattern for the public realm could alleviate some of the inconsistencies of private property lighting and be used as a framework for signage and orientation. In addition, safety was a strong issue raised in the public consultation of this Study. Therefore, public realm lighting should improve conditions wherever possible.

Preferred Strategy: All Blocks

- a) Retrofit roadway light standards within a range of 9 – 15m in height.
- b) Ensure that light standards do not impede pedestrian movement, or pose obstacles to people with visual impairments.
- c) For visually impaired persons, light pools should intersect 2.1m above the ground.
- d) Luminaires should have sharp downlight cut-offs to prevent light spillage and projection into the night sky.
- e) Locate signage so that it is not affected by glare of adjacent street lighting.
- f) Utilize light poles to incorporate signage banner mounts or a distinctive / themed design.
- g) Provide pedestrian scaled light standards at crosswalks and transit stops.
- h) Where possible, use PV (photo-voltaic) powered light standards.

8.1.7 SIGNAGE

As mentioned previously under Gateways, the EAUDG provides guidance on creating public identity features to develop a distinctive image for the employment area. Section 4.5 – Signage provides guidance for both public and private realm signage. The recommendations that could be applied to Block I for public realm signage that may be part of a street name system and / or Gateway signage include:

- *Signage in high exposure areas such as gateways or intersections shall enhance the special identity and character of these areas, as well as the image of Ajax;*
- *Signage comprised of individual letters, front lit or back lit, or halo effect neon is preferred; and*
- *Provide large-scale street addressing easily visible to traffic.*

Preferred Strategy: All Blocks

- a) In general, develop an area-themed public signage and way finding system.
- b) Identify Heritage properties with descriptive plaques or signage to “tell the story” of the Study Area as an important link to Ajax’s economic past and prosperity.

8.1.8 CYCLING OPPORTUNITIES

The Town’s Quick Wins Cycling Study undertaken by iTRANS for the Town of Ajax has identified opportunities to include dedicated bicycle lanes. Opportunities exist along Fairall Street, Station Street, Hunt Street linking the Downtown to the Ajax GO Station.

8.2 PRIVATE REALM

The Study Area benefits from some properties with large, open areas that convey a relatively green setting, but also, suffers from some uses that have service, storage and parking adjacent to and visible from the street. The following recommendations outline general ways in which strategies from the EAUDG could be applied within the private realm, to improve the overall image of the area. These recommendations, read in concert with the EAUDG could be applicable to most sites in the Study Area, but the opportunities for individual properties must be explored on a site-by-site basis to respond to each property's site conditions, orientation and functionality. To this end, a detailed block-by-block analysis is not presented; however, these recommendations can be interpreted as preferred strategies for all blocks.

8.2.1 LANDSCAPING

As stated in the SWOT analysis, some properties present site planning and landscape features and configurations that are identified in the EAUDG including:

- Buildings and entrance areas are located parallel to the street edge;
- Entrances of office areas are designed with clear entrance doors, glazed areas that face the street and parking, and pedestrian connections to the street;
- Limited visitor parking areas separated by a landscaped strip at the street edge;
- Building mass is set back from the property line, providing opportunities for enhanced landscaping; and
- Building forms are regular, simple, and some, constructed of durable, yet not unattractive brick and concrete.

The EAUDG stresses that each site has the opportunity to fulfill the objectives of the guidelines – namely to create high quality streetscapes through alternative soft and hard landscaping. These measures are listed in Section 5.7 of the EAUDG – Alternative Approaches to Site Planning.

The following recommendations are examples of how the guidelines in Section 5.7 could be applied specifically to enhance some of the properties:

- a) Where buildings are set in the middle of a site and surrounded by spacious, yet largely un-landscaped areas:
 - Introduce an enhanced landscape design to incorporate grass areas, landforms, trees, shrub beds and decorative materials. Enhanced landscaping could be applied to focal areas of the site, such as at corners, entrances and driveways (EAUDG).
 - In lieu of the main built form, provide elements at the street edge that define the street, such as low walls, a strong landscaped edge or public identity elements (EAUDG).
- b) Where existing pedestrian walkways meet perpendicular to the street edge, or connect to parking:
 - Enhance these walkways with low landscaping and/or walls and pedestrian scaled lighting or in-ground illumination; and
 - Incorporate corporate identity and way finding signage (to main entrance / to shipping etc.) to assist pedestrians.

- c) If parking is located in front of buildings, mitigate the impact of vehicles by introducing landscape elements such as:
- Subdivided larger parking areas into smaller areas through the use of landscaped islands;
 - Use hard and/or soft landscape elements to act as a screen;
 - Where landscaping is not feasible, use semi-transparent fencing to provide security, screening and an improved appearance to chain link fencing.
 - Ensure that screening elements do not create unintended hiding places; and
- Consider alternative paving to promote groundwater infiltration and to reduce the amount of paved area; materials such as turf stone, or other decorative, alternate paving materials with groundwater porosity.
- d) At larger parking areas, provide pedestrian supportive amenities such as:
- Pathway demarcations with differentiated pavement or painting;
 - Pedestrian scaled lighting at key entrance locations;
 - Sidewalks / walkways along building faces, where possible; and
 - Way finding signage.
- e) Where driveway cuts are oversized, consider reducing the opening and creating a landscaped strip or low wall with signage.



Figure 67. The Ajax / Pickering / Whitby Assoc. for Community Living centre has a visible entrance, office area and signage. Reducing the driveway width and adding some screening to the parking area with a low wall or hedges and lighting would improve this property.

The Town of Ajax is undertaking a town wide study of the local urban forest. The study, which is currently in the data collection stage, will establish an inventory and percentage of existing forest cover including park and street trees. The strategy resulting from the analysis of this data will provide recommendations for specific forest coverage targets and future planting locations. Implementation will begin in 2010, with a goal of reaching a 40 percent tree canopy target by 2040. The preferred strategies discussed above could also be implemented through the urban forestry strategy.

8.2.2 SCREENING

One of the fundamental methods to improve the quality of the streetscape is to reduce views of outdoor storage, loading and service areas. Some properties utilize front yards, for such purposes, right up to the street edge, thereby precluding the possibility for landscape buffers to provide a natural screen. The EAUDG recommends a range of screening materials:



Figure 68. An employee parking lot at the south side of Hunt St. east of Monarch could be improved with more landscaping, screening, signage and differentiated paved areas.

- a) Views of outdoor storage that are not screened by buildings shall be screened with a barrier, which may be some combination of a berm, wall and/or a solid decorative fence, or other appropriate landscaping. (p.34 of the EAUDG)
- b) Ensure that parking visible from streets is screened with semi-transparent techniques (hard and/or soft landscape elements) to allow casual observation for safety (p.47 EAUDG).
- c) Where there is limited width, consider vegetated screens, such as wire fencing or cables with climbing greenery and accent lighting. These fences will be fully transparent in the short term, but will grow in over time. Ensure that such fences remain well maintained and function as an attractive streetscape feature as opposed to an “overgrown wall.”
- d) Outdoor storage that is unsightly should be screened with solid materials or dense, coniferous planting.
- e) Where physically possible, semi-transparent screening could be considered to screen loading docks, preferably in combination with some landscaping at the base of the fencing.

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK I - Station St. – Mills Rd. – Hunt St. - Dowty Rd.

Most properties in Block I have deep enough building setbacks and/or side and front yards to allow for combinations of deciduous and coniferous tree planting and bushes either as enhancement to existing vegetation, or as new landscaping along frontage that has no landscape treatment. For example, Plasti-Fab has some mature trees along the south side of Station St. These could be enhanced with infill planting and/or lower bushes, to provide a variety of scale and interest as well as screening views into the property. Semi-transparent fencing could also be employed behind the existing trees, if full infill landscaping is not possible.

Semi-transparent fencing, or vegetated walls or screens can be implemented at frontages with parking or loading adjacent to the pavement, where there is no depth for planting (referred to previously). However, in many of these cases, cars and trucks use the entire width of the parking or loading zone as direct driveway access from the street; the entire frontage is a curb cut. Screening would only be possible where there is enough depth between the pavement and building to permit turning, backing in / out.

a) One possible location for semi-transparent fencing would be the north-east property of Hunt and Mills, 177 Mills Rd., where loading and parking occur along the entire frontage of Mills Rd. To the north of the property, the loading area may have enough depth to permit turning and therefore, a fence at the property line. Semi-transparent fencing would be a good solution to provide screening of the loading bays. Screening may not be possible at the parking area closer to Hunt St.; a specific site study would be needed to determine if the required access would be impeded by property line fencing. Although this property lies technically outside the Study Area, again, its frontage contributes to the Mills Rd. streetscapes

b) The existing fencing along the Steam Plant's Mills Rd. frontage consists of a variety of materials and heights and presents an uncoordinated and an unattractive edge. There is also very limited space between the property line and pavement. A vegetated screen could be an option in this location, to provide a consistent and green edge at the pedestrian level.

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK II - Monarch Ave. – Hunt St. – Mackenzie Ave.

- a) Introduce semi-transparent fencing, as illustrated on p. 47 of the EAUDG at properties with visible parking and loading areas, specifically, at 215 Hunt St (1268449 Ontario Inc.) and 225 Mackenzie Ave. (Laidlaw Transit).



Semi-transparent screening of parking area (p.47 of the EAUDG).

- b) 232 and 234 Mackenzie Ave. should have screening along the street edge. Again, although technically just outside the Study Area, these properties occupy roughly half of the Mackenzie Ave. streetscape and are directly across from Otto Martinek Holdings and Laidlaw Transit, two active businesses within the Study Area and therefore, have a strong impact on the street's appearance. From 234 Mackenzie Ave., there are long range views into a general area for loading, parking and storage. Semi-transparent screening would be a moderate way to reduce the effect of these open views on the street, should full landscaping of this edge not be feasible. Where possible, low planting at the base of the fence should be implemented.

Preferred Strategy: BLOCK III - Mackenzie Ave. – Bayly St. W

The potential for landscaped edges and semi-transparent fencing for 274 Mackenzie Ave. in Block III is addressed under Section 8.1.4, Landscaping Public Realm.

8.2.3 FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Section 4.2 – Built Form of the EAUDG describes how the location, orientation and massing of buildings on the site create the “best” form of buildings. These buildings are:

- Visible from the most important street;
- Oriented to the most important street;
- Designed with simple built form shapes that are easily recognized by vehicles; and
- Oriented to present the most attractive and articulated part of the building, such as an



Figure 69. Outdoor storage should be screened with semi-transparent fencing of a consistent design and the boulevard could contain low planting to distract the viewer from the yard.

office component or façade without loading bays, to the street.

The SWOT analysis identified that several of the buildings in the Study Area have these basic site planning and built form characteristics. Other buildings do not, but could be altered and improved, using the EAUDG's fundamental principles for creating strong streetscape presence and simple, architectural articulation. For example,

- a) Where buildings already have well defined entrances or office components that face the street, consider improvements to further emphasize these elements, through landscaping, lighting or new architectural features, such as a cornice or roof overhang.
- b) Where buildings and properties are of lower quality materials and present an uncoordinated or unattractive image to the street, consider the use of new, semi-transparent fencing in combination with planting at the fencing base to define the private and public realms.
- c) Where large warehousing is highly visible from the street, consider treating a portion of the elevation with new cladding or glazing to provide articulation to the façade and distract the view from the larger, unarticulated or unattractive façade



Figure 70. The property at the northwest corner of Dowty Rd. and Fairall St. has implemented simple but effective landscaping that accents the pedestrian walkway from employee parking to the building entrance.



Figure 71 The Plasti-Fab property, at 40 Mills Rd. boasts impressive trees at its front entrance. However, the tree canopy hides the main entrance. Accent landscaping around the trees could include low planting, pedestrian scaled lighting, and a monument sign. The entrance itself could be emphasized with a higher parapet, possibly with corporate signage and wall-mounted lighting. Walkways from the parking area should be accented with planting and lighting. The new landscaped strip between the employee parking and delivery will be more effective as the landscaping matures.

8.3 TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

Depending upon the Town's willingness and desire to undertake property purchases, there are a number of possible network improvements that could be undertaken in and adjacent to the Study Area.

As indicated in Chapter 4, congestion and queuing occurs at the Fairall St. – Station St. offset at Dowty Rd. The queuing at this point is minor but could increase over time as background traffic from surrounding areas increases. The former Avery Dennison Plant at the southeast corner of this intersection is currently vacant and for sale. Purchase of that property and realignment of the intersection could improve east-west connectivity as well as creating two to three new development parcels.

Short queues of less than 10 vehicles occur at the Monarch Ave. - Dowty Rd. offset at Hunt St. but may increase with redevelopment of the area. The queuing appears to be less than at the Fairall St. - Station St. offset. If the property at the northeast corner of the intersection became available there may be an opportunity to realign the intersection but would likely require some lands from the east side of the Regional EMS Station located at the southwest corner. If there is no opportunity to realign the roads to a conventional 4-leg intersection, then other possibilities to improve traffic operations may include:

- A traffic signal at one location, such as Monarch at Hunt; or
- All-way stops at both of the existing intersections (Monarch at Hunt, and Dowty at Hunt).

Both of the above solutions would depend on the actual traffic volumes that arise out of the redevelopment. If traffic volumes along Hunt Street remain relatively high, as they are today, then all-way stops would not be very practical as the Hunt Street traffic flow would have to come to a stop. Further, a traffic signal at Monarch/Hunt would only be feasible if, the Monarch volumes were very high and vehicles queued back to an undesirable level under the existing stop-sign scenario. Another alternative is widening of roads to accommodate right-turn lanes at Monarch Avenue and Hunt Street, and Dowty Road and Fairall Street.

As discussed in Section 7.1.1, truck terminals on the west side of Mackenzie Ave. take-up lands between the two former east-west rail spurs between Frankcom St. and Bayly St. If these lands were to be redeveloped, there would be an opportunity of extending Hunt St. west to Westney Rd. This connection could improve the east-west network connectivity through the Study Area.

8.4 WATER, SANITARY, AND STORMWATER

Limited information is available regarding the current condition of the sanitary and watermain systems. However, the Region is currently completing a hydraulic model of the Region's sanitary and watermain infrastructure, which will determine the capacity of the existing infrastructure for any new development applications. The expected completion date of the model is late 2008. Until this information is available, little recommendation can be made for improvements to the water and sanitary system. However, it is known that the downstream infrastructure is over 50 years old, making it susceptible for repair.

Landowners within the Study Area have expressed concerns regarding low water pressure levels. If these concerns are deemed legitimate by modeling currently being undertaken

through the Region's Master Plan, the Region should investigate a comprehensive solution to this problem. However if the Region's hydraulic modeling finds that the water pressure within the watermain system is adequate, then the concern raised by landowners should be mitigated on a site-by-site basis through the upgrading of water pipes within private property.

Most of the storm sewers in the Study Area were designed based on a two-year storm event capacity. It is recommended that on-site stormwater management controls or cash-in-lieu policy be considered to attain quality and quantity control.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

9.1 OFFICIAL PLAN

The majority of the Study Area properties are designated General Employment, with the exception of 274 Mackenzie Ave., where the southern half of the property, fronting Bayly St. is designated Prestige Employment. **Table 5** summarizes the differences in permitted uses between the two land use designations.

Table 5. Comparison of Prestige Employment and General Employment Permitted Uses in the Town of Ajax Official Plan.

Permitted Uses	Prestige Employment	General Employment
Offices	√	√
Research and development facilities	√	√
Manufacturing	√ In wholly enclosed buildings	√
Warehousing	√	√
Distribution centres	√	√
Retail sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises	√ Max. 20% building GFA	√ Max. 20% building GFA
Automobile dealerships	√	
Financial institutions	√	
Restaurants	√	
Personal service establishments	√	
Athletic clubs	√	
Private recreational facilities	√	
Banquet facilities	√	
Convention centres	√	
Hotels and motels and ancillary uses	√	
Outdoor storage		√ Not to exceed 50% of site area, and to be screened from public view

With the exception of the additional service-oriented uses permitted by the Prestige Employment designation, the fundamental differences between the two designations are:

- Manufacturing is permitted only in wholly enclosed buildings on lands designated Prestige Employment, whereas there is no such restriction for General Employment lands; and,
- Outdoor storage is not permitted on Prestige Employment lands, but is permitted on General Employment lands.

Additionally, as mentioned in Section 2.0 of this report, properties 110 through 172 Hunt St. inclusive, and 170 Mills Rd. (the Steam Plant) are subject to Area Specific Policy 6.10. Within this Special Policy Area, “development is planned to be a mix of prestige employment type uses (but with provisions for outdoor storage), including office uses.”⁴⁵ Section 6.10.b) and 6.10.c)(v) allow the following uses:

- Offices;
- Public and institutional uses, public health facilities, and places of worship;
- Cultural, entertainment and social facilities;
- Non-profit clubs and organizations;
- Community facilities such as day care facilities and urban squares;
- Public and private utilities; and,
- General Employment uses where they do not conflict with the area specific policies.

Outdoor storage is permitted, provided it is located in a rear yard and screened from view from any street. Also, auto-oriented uses, and uses that involve transportation depot type uses are not listed as permitted uses. Specifically, excluded uses are, “*drive-through facilities including drive-thru restaurants; motor vehicle rental establishments; taxi depots; motor vehicle repair facilities (but excluding a motor vehicle service centre); and, motor vehicle sales establishments.*”⁴⁶

9.1.1 OFFICIAL PLAN MODIFICATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PREFERRED STRATEGY

The land use inventory of Section 2.0 found that the majority of occupants in the Study Area are of a manufacturing nature. At the stakeholders’ workshop, the Town learned that the landowners find the Study Area to be a prime location, and have long-term interests of keeping their businesses there. Further, some amount of outdoor storage is essential for their business operations, in part because of the low ceiling heights of the buildings.

In order to improve compatibility along the interface with the Downtown as set out in the preferred land use strategy in Section 7 and illustrated in **Figure 72**, the Official Plan needs to be amended to re-designate lands abutting the Downtown from General Employment to Prestige Employment. It is recommended that Area Specific Policy 6.10 be amended to include lands in the Study Area at the interface with the Downtown. The potential permitted uses for the Study Area is a combination of the uses permitted by the Prestige Employment designation and Special Area Policy 6.10 with some adjustments as listed in **Table 6** below.

⁴⁵ Town of Ajax (2005). Official Plan Amendment 20. Section (4), p.59.

⁴⁶ Ibid. Section (4), p.59.

Legend



Study Area



Downtown Central Area



Proposed Prestige Employment with limited outdoor storage on targeted properties



Amended OPA 20 Area Specific Policy 6.10 Area

0 37.5 75 150 225 300 Meters



Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study



Figure 72 - Preferred Strategy

Sorensen Gravely Lowes
Planning Associates Inc.

**Modified
September 2008**

Existing OP Designations

- Prestige Employment
- General Employment
- Commercial Mixed Use
- Employment Mixed Use

Existing Zoning

exception #

- PE - Prestige Employment
- GE - General Employment
- HE - Heavy Employment
- DCA/ME - Downtown Commercial Area/
Employment Mixed Use
- DCA/I - Downtown Commercial Area/Institutional
- MU - Mixed Use
- AC - Automobile Commercial
- R - Residential
- RM - Residential Multiple
- OS - Open Space

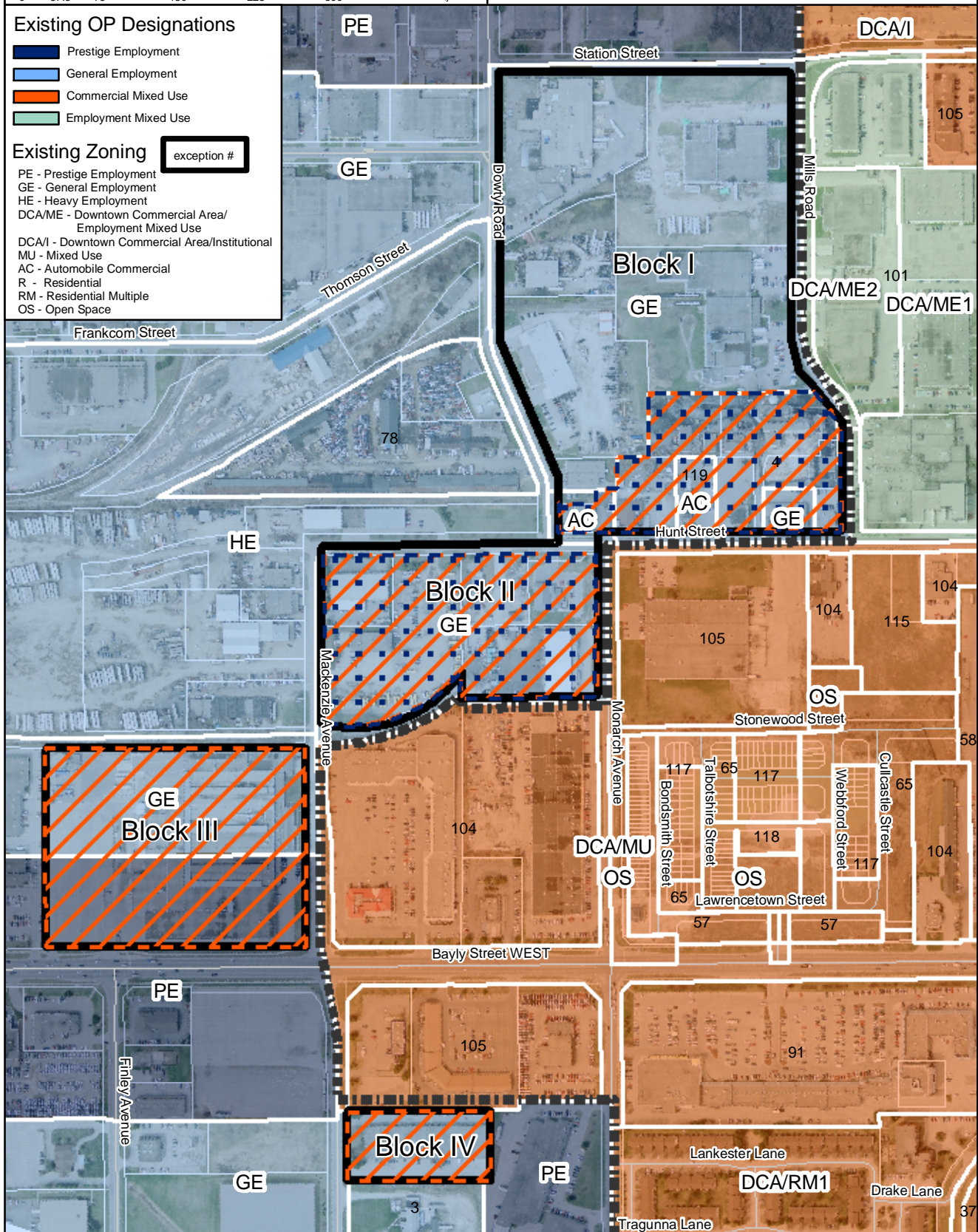


Table 6. Proposed Area Specific Policy for Study Area.

Permitted Uses	Current Prestige Employment Designation	Current Area Specific Policy 6.10	Proposed Area Specific Policy (PE designation with amended Area Specific Policy 6.10)
Offices	√	√	√
Research and development facilities	√		√
Manufacturing	√ In wholly enclosed buildings		√ In wholly enclosed buildings
Warehousing	√		√
Distribution centres	√		√
Retail and Showroom	√ sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises. Maximum 20% of the total GFA of the building.	√ sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises. Maximum 50% of the total GFA of the building.	√ sale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on premises. Maximum 20% of the total GFA of the building.
Automobile dealerships	√		√
Financial institutions	√		√
Public and institutional, public health facilities, and places of worship		√	√
Community facilities i.e. day care facilities and urban squares		√	√
Restaurants	√		√
Personal service establishments	√		√
Athletic clubs	√		√
Private recreational facilities	√		√
Non-profit clubs and organizations		√	√
Banquet facilities	√		√
Convention centres	√		√
Cultural, entertainment and social facilities		√	√

Table 6 continued...

Permitted Uses	Current Prestige Employment Designation	Current Area Specific Policy 6.10	Proposed Area Specific Policy (PE designation with amended Area Specific Policy 6.10)
Hotels and motels and ancillary uses	√		√
Public and private utilities		√	√
Outdoor storage		√ located in a rear yard and screened from view from any street. Also, parent General Employment designation permits a maximum of 50% of the site area provided it is screened from public view.	√ located in a rear yard and screened from view from any street.

Further Official Plan Amendments would be as follows:

Proposed amendments to the Town of Ajax Official Plan Land Use Schedule A:

- Re-designate targeted properties shown on Figure 72 from General Employment to Prestige Employment. Specifically:
 - Block I - All properties on the north side of Hunt Street (110 – 182 Hunt Street), 170 Mills Road and the Town owned lands;
 - Block II - All properties;
 - Block III – 274 MacKenzie Avenue; and,
 - Block IV – 377 MacKenzie Avenue.

Proposed amendments to Area Specific Policy 6.10:

- Expand the number of properties subject to this policy to include:
 - Block I - 182 Hunt Street; and
 - Block II - All properties.
- Remove the permission for 50% retail and wholesale of products manufactured, processed or assembled on the premises.
- Apply limited outdoor storage for targeted properties. Specifically:
 - Block I – permit outdoor storage for 172 Hunt Street and limit it to the rear yard and screened from view from any street; and,
 - Block II - permit outdoor storage for 215 Hunt Street and 225 MacKenzie Avenue and limit it to the rear yard and screened from view from any street and/or abutting a property in the Downtown.
- Maintain the prohibition of auto-oriented uses in 6.10 b).
- Maintain the pedestrian-oriented urban design and urban form policies in 6.10 c)
- Outline permissions for a co-generation district facility as follows:
 - Limit fuel sources for the production of electricity and thermal energy (steam and/or hot and cold water) uncontaminated wood waste biomass, as defined in Ontario

Regulation 347 under the Environmental Protection Act, and natural gas as a back-up fuel source;

- Limit the electricity generating capacity to a maximum of 25MW and require compliance with applicable legislation and regulations for any increases in electricity generation;
- Require compliance with all matters identified in the Certificate of Approval (Air) which will deal with noise and air emissions, including dust, under Ontario's Environmental Protection Act on record at any given time; and,
- Require compliance with all applicable legislation and regulations, including the Environmental Protection Act and Environmental Assessment Act.

Proposed amendments to other sections of the Official Plan:

- Amend policy section 4.2.5 Utilities, to include steam and hot/cold water infrastructure.
- Amend policy 2.4.2 Downtown Central Area, to include that new development within certain distances from the Steam Plant must conduct an Air Quality Study to demonstrate that the new development is not negatively impacted by the Steam Plant's emissions. The amendment would also provide an outline of the range of heights and range of distances from the steam plant that would be subject to the policy.
- Delete policy section 2.8.6 which permits an energy from waste facility in the vicinity of the Ajax Steam Plant.

Amendments to the Town of Ajax Official Plan Attachment 1 – lands Subject to Area Specific Policies/Official Plan Amendments:

- Revise this attachment to add properties to Area Specific Policy 6.10. Specifically:
 - Block I - 182 Hunt Street; and
 - Block II - All properties.

9.2 ZONING

The majority of the Study Area is zoned General Employment, with the exception of 274 Mackenzie Ave. which is zoned Prestige Employment, and 182 and 158 Hunt St. which are zoned Automobile Commercial.

9.2.1 SUGGESTED ZONING MODIFICATIONS

In order to implement the preferred land use strategy, the lands along the interface with the Downtown as shown on **Figure 72** should be re-zoned to Prestige Employment, with the addition of some existing uses, which are currently permitted by the General Employment zone. Specifically:

Proposed amendments to Zoning By-law 95-2003:

- Re-zone lands identified in Figure 72 from GE-General Employment to Prestige Employment. The existing AC-Automobile Commercial zone will be maintained as it is permitted adjacent to residential uses;
- Amend the outdoor storage provisions for employment areas (section 6.4.3.1(II)(c)) to add that no outdoor storage shall be located closer than 15 m to any residential and mixed-use zone in the Downtown, is located in the rear yard, and is not visible from the street;
- Amend provisions for employment area landscape buffers (section 4.12.1 as amended by by-law 86-2005) to require a minimum 6 metre landscape buffer between outdoor storage in any rear or interior side yard that abuts any residential and mixed-use zone in the Downtown.

- Amend section 4.1.3 to include steam and hot/cold water infrastructure; and
- Permit outdoor storage for lands designated Prestige Employment in the Study Area, in addition to the properties identified in Exception 4 below:
 - Block II – 215 Hunt Street and 225 MacKenzie Avenue.

Proposed amendments to Exception 4 of the Zoning By-law, as amended by By-law 86-2005:

- Add 182 Hunt Street to the boundary of this exception;
- Permit outdoor storage for 172 Hunt Street but provide that storage shall be located in the rear yard and is not visible from the street;
- Add that no materials may be stored outside to a height greater than 1.8 metres and is to be enclosed by a fence at least 1.8 metres high and which must be constructed of permanent masonry, wood and/or plastic with a ratio of voids to solids not greater than 50%;
- Remove the zoning permissions for the Steam Plant as it operates currently; and,
- Add permissions for a district energy facility and outline the criteria a district energy facility would have to satisfy in order to meet the zoning. Criteria could include:
 - limiting fuel sources for the production of electricity and thermal energy (steam and/or hot and cold water) to uncontaminated wood waste biomass, and natural gas as a back-up fuel source;
 - limiting the electricity generating capacity to a maximum of 25MW;
 - requiring all wood waste fuel to be stored within a wholly enclosed building and all ash to be containerized;
 - requiring compliance with all matters identified in the Certificate of Approval (Air), which will deal with noise and air emissions, including dust, under Ontario's Environmental Protection Act on record at any given time; and,
 - requiring compliance with all applicable legislation and regulations, including the Environmental Protection Act and Environmental Assessment Act.

Those uses that do not meet the provisions of the amended zoning by-law should be treated as legal non-conforming uses and phased out as the properties redevelop.

9.3 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

9.3.1 THE LEGISLATION

The *Municipal Act* (subsection 111(1)) prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses. Prohibited actions include giving or lending money or municipal property, or giving a total or partial exception from any levy, charge or fee. However, certain financial assistance for the purpose of implementing a community improvement plan may be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.⁴⁷ The *Planning Act* allows municipalities to offer a number of monetary and non-monetary incentives, to improve the existing physical character of their community through the adoption of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP), under section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Town Council may wish to implement a CIP to assist in "...design or redesign, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation of a community improvement project area...".⁴⁸ A community improvement project area may be created should it be in the

⁴⁷ Government of Ontario (2000). *Municipal Financial Tools for Planning and Development*. Queen's Printer for Ontario.

⁴⁸ Government of Ontario (2007). *Planning Act*. Queen's Printer for Ontario. Section 28(1).

opinion of Council that is desirable because of, "...age, dilapidation, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason"⁴⁹

A CIP can be used to initiate public sector improvements such as infrastructure works, streetscape improvements, and landscaping improvements, as well as a vehicle to provide incentive-based programs to the private sector. The *CIP Handbook* (MMAH, 2006) lists some possible objectives for private sector, incentive-based programs including:

- Commercial building façade improvements;
- Structural improvements to buildings; and
- Preservation and adaptive reuse of heritage and industrial buildings.⁵⁰

A CIP can be applied to specific properties, streets, neighbourhoods, or entire communities.⁵¹

Required in a CIP is a clear outline of the municipal goals and objectives, eligibility criteria, and eligible rehabilitation costs. It also involves listing of criteria to measure and monitor the effectiveness of the financial assistance programs. Proper monitoring of the program should ensure complete follow-through and appropriate implementation.

The creation of a CIP involves public input, and proper marketing to promote the uptake of the program. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) encourages municipal and private sector leadership to ensure success of the CIP – through dedication of municipal “ambassadors” and “community champions”. The appointment of such positions can also help foster community pride.

9.3.2 PROCESS FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ALREADY ADOPTED CIP

The process required to amend a CIP is first to pre-consult with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. However, Council is the approval authority for amendments to the CIP through the adoption of an amending by-law. The amendment process is subject to the same public processes as that for an Official Plan amendment, as required in subsection 28(5) of the *Planning Act*.

9.3.3 CURRENT CIP PROGRAM IN DOWNTOWN AJAX

The Downtown CIP was briefly reviewed in Section 2.0 of this report. The intent of the Downtown CIP was to allow the Town to be an active player in the revitalization of the Downtown. It allows the Town to offer financial assistance to encourage and facilitate redevelopment. Some of the objectives are, but not limited to:

- To strengthen the Downtown in terms of vibrancy, diversity and economic viability by stimulating investment interest in the redevelopment potential of the Downtown;
- To improve the image and appearance of the area;
- To promote redevelopment/rehabilitation that supports the Downtown “vision”;
- To improve the pedestrian amenity and safety of the area;
- To enhance private sector investment opportunities and property maintenance; and,
- To increase tax assessment and revenues for the Town⁵².

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (2006). *Community Improvement Planning Handbook*. Queen’s Printer for Ontario.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Town of Ajax (2005). *Town of Ajax Downtown Community Improvement Plan*.

The Downtown CIP financial incentive strategy established the following programs:

- Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program;
- Providing financial assistance where property taxes increase as a direct result of improving a property in accordance to the goals and objectives of the CIP;
- Providing a grant to reimburse Planning and Development Fees for Official Plan Amendments, rezonings, minor variances, consents, site plans, plans of subdivision/condominium, sign permits, and demolition permits; and providing a grant to partially offset Building Permit Fees; and,
- Exempting/reducing the Town's portion of development charges for eligible developments.⁵³

Exemptions or reduction in the number of parking spaces required to property owners who undertake improvement projects, and reduction in parkland dedication requirements for improvement projects that involve high and medium density residential projects are the non-monetary incentives of the Downtown CIP strategy.

Grants and/or financial incentives are issued on a first come, first served basis. However, priority sites within the CIP area have been identified, in the event that there are multiple competing applications. Its important to note that the Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program is different from the other monetary incentive programs of the CIP, in that landowners/developers are not able to make an application to participate in this program. Rather, it is up to the Town to offer an invitation, or enter into an agreement with the landowner/developer, which is arranged by the Town.⁵⁴

CIP policy 1.2.4 allows the Town flexibility to make minor changes to any of the parameters, terms and conditions of any CIP program without amendment to the CIP. Changes considered minor include, but are not limited to:

- Changes to parameters identifying who is eligible to receive grants or loans, subject to the provisions of Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*;
- Changes to the type of works considered as elements contributing to the cost of rehabilitating lands and buildings; and,
- The addition or removal of "priority sites" within the Downtown CIP area.⁵⁵

9.3.4 SUGGESTED CIP STRATEGY

As the Study Area is to remain an employment area, it is unlikely to experience any significant amount of redevelopment. As such, without some incentives, it is unlikely that many of the private realm improvements suggested in this report will be initiated. A CIP program could provide the necessary incentives for:

- Façade improvements;
- Landscaping improvements;
- Parking lot retrofits and rearrangements;
- Screening and fencing; and
- Incentives are also applicable to small-scale redevelopments such as additions to existing buildings.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

As mentioned in Section 2.0, the Study Area properties located in the north-west corner of Mills Rd. and Hunt St. fall within the Downtown CIP area. A number of the Downtown CIP objectives are similar to those of this Study (see Section 1.2). To this end, the incentive programs of the Downtown CIP are well applicable to the improvement of the Study Area.

As such, one strategy could be to expand the Downtown CIP boundary to include the Study Area. Alternative strategies would be to create a separate CIP area and plan for the Central Ajax Employment Study Area.

9.4 SITE PLAN PROCESS

The site plan review process is an opportune time for staff to ensure any future development or redevelopment proposed within the Study Area enhances the prestige image of the area and ensures compatibility. Some items to be considered by the Site Plan Review Committee are:

- Compatibility with the existing area;
- Design elements such as building materials, location of doors and windows;
- Location and configuration of loading and servicing areas;
- Location and siting of parking and storage areas;
- Fascia signage and lighting; and,
- Architectural detailing of primary pedestrian points of entry.

In particular, section 3.6.2 of the Town's *Site Plan Review Manual* provides items that are encouraged to be included in site plans for employment lands. For example, some elements that are encouraged are:

- Well defined, visually appealing streetscapes;
- Buildings and landscaping should contribute to the larger streetscape;
- Buildings shall be sited, designed and organized in such a way that all new development appears and functions as an integrated extension of each other. Examples of areas for integration are:
 - Street corridors;
 - A cluster of buildings at the end of a cul-de-sac;
 - Sites relating to natural features;
 - Areas defined by clear edges;
 - Avoid homogeneity of building design;
- Concentrate amenities and activities at prominent locations, i.e. locating the main entrance at a corner, close to the sidewalk, adjacent to an employee amenity space to allow for casual encounters and interaction, and to enrich the streetscape;
- Outdoor storage shall be screened with a barrier such as a berm, fence, or landscaping;
- Site buildings generally parallel to adjacent roads, and aligned with neighbouring buildings to create a consistent street edge; and,
- Follow minimum built frontages as suggested in the *Site Plan Review Manual*.⁵⁶

Since the publication of the *Site Plan Review Manual* in 2006, amendments to the *Planning Act* which came into effect on January 1, 2007 allow for greater municipal input on matters of exterior design including the character scale and appearance of buildings, according to subsection 41(4)2. However, as discussed in the policy discussion of Section 2.0 of this report, the Official Plan must contain provisions relating to these matters, and the Town must pass a by-law in order for the Town to apply the expanded authority.

⁵⁶ Town of Ajax (2006). *Site Plan Review Manual*.

9.4.1 SUGGESTION TO THE SITE PLAN PROCESS

The *Site Plan Review Manual* already provides a good basis for encouraging the private sector to improve the private realm, and supporting actions that will help better integrate individual properties to one another. However, to better ensure such efforts by the private sector, the Town can now require items regarding exterior design, provided that Official Plan provisions are in place.

Since the Town is currently undertaking an Official Plan Review exercise, it would be an opportune time to add Official Plan policy outlining site plan drawing requirements, under subsection 41(2)(d) of the *Planning Act*.

9.5 URBAN FOREST STRATEGY

As discussed in Chapter 8.2.1 of this report, upon completion of this study, there may be an opportunity for the preferred strategy's private and public realm landscaping recommendations to be implemented through the Urban Forest Strategy.

10.0 SUMMARY

The findings of the SWOT analysis were presented at a stakeholder's workshop and public open house on November 28, 2007. The public consultation exercise helped refine the SWOT analysis. Based on the findings of the SWOT, and public input, a planning and urban design analysis was conducted to consider a range of suitable strategies for improving the character of the Central Ajax Employment Area and its compatibility with the adjacent Downtown.

Five central issues were addressed in this report: streetscape improvements; private realm improvements; transportation connectivity; Official Plan and zoning changes; and, municipal tools to implement the strategies. The preferred streetscape and private realm strategies applied the Town's existing Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines and Durham Region's Arterial Corridor Guidelines. From the planning policy side, suggested amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law were proposed to improve compatibility with the adjacent Downtown. Possible improvements to address transportation network issues were suggested. As well, a number of municipal tools available by the *Planning Act*, including a Community Improvement Plan, were considered as potential vehicles to improve the image and compatibility of the Central Ajax Employment Area, with the adjacent Downtown.

The next step is to present the preferred strategies in this report to Council, followed with a second public open house. In light of Council, agency, and public comments received on this report, final recommendations will be made and detailed implementing recommendations prepared.

APPENDIX A SWOT ANALYSIS

A. LAND USE

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Land Use Character & Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area contains some prestige employment type uses, office, and professional services particularly along Hunt Street. The location is a vibrant and well-occupied employment area – there is only one vacant property. Many existing uses at the immediate interface with the Downtown don't raise significant compatibility concerns with the Downtown. Many existing uses do not have outdoor storage. Available parking. Rents and property value are cheaper than elsewhere in the GTA. <p>Zoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Lands surrounding the Study Area are zoned Prestige Employment and Downtown Mixed Use. Lands on the east side of Mills Road is zoned Prestige Employment, with specific exception to prohibiting drive-through uses. Lands at the south-east corner of Hunt Street and Monarch is designated Downtown Mixed Use also with site-specific exception of prohibiting drive-throughs, and specifics on building setback and landscaped buffers on Monarch Avenue. Study Area lands located at the northwest corner of Hunt Street and Mills Road have site-specific exceptions that expand permitted uses to include more service and community oriented uses such as community facilities, and professional services. The gas station property on Hunt Street is subject to site-specific exception zoning requiring certain development standards such as minimum front yard, maximum side yards, and landscaped buffers along the street edge. <i>(continued next page)</i> 	<p>LAND USE CHARACTER AND COMPATIBILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Steam Plant creates visible emissions, lacks aesthetic appeal, and has visible outdoor storage of ash. The certificate of approval for the Steam Plant permits burning of wood biomass and air emissions. Certificates of approval for 40 Mills Rd. and 377 Mackenzie Ave. permitting air emissions. Area developed prior to modern business park characteristics such as landscaping, screening of outdoor storage, loading dock screening, parking area setbacks etc. Large areas of outdoor storage predominant particularly along the western side of the Study Area, but effects image of the overall area. Parking and loading areas adjacent to the street detract from image. Lots are small. Lack of rentable offices and lack of opportunity to build offices. <p>Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Window and doorsills of the Steam Plant are designated heritage, which can be perceived as an obstacle to redevelopment. <p>Zoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of the lands are zoned General Employment. This zone permits accessory retail outlets, dry cleaning establishments, emergency service facilities, light manufacturing, machinery and equipment sales and rental, manufacturing, motor vehicle service establishments, offices, outdoor storage, public storage facility, service or repair shops, veterinary clinics, and warehouse/distribution centres. Zoning is restrictive, and should allow for greater mix of uses. <p><i>(continued next page)</i></p>

Land Use SWOT cont'd

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths (continued)</p> <p>Adjacent Land Use Character and Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Downtown is buffered from Study Area by large retail plazas, or the mixed employment area on the east side of Mill Rd. • Some of the existing eastern half uses are compatible with the existing uses on the eastern side of Mills Road. • Within walking distance to the Downtown. <p>Air, Noise, and Soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil sampling for 270 Monarch Ave. found the site is probably free of contamination. • 160 Dowty Rd. (Ajax Auto Wreckers) was found to not have soil or groundwater contamination issues. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses (continued)</p> <p>Adjacent Land Use Character and Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some lands to the west including the wrecking yard will impact on the image of the area. <p>Air, Noise, and Soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The soil at the ash pile of the Steam Plant contains some chemicals that exceed acceptable environmental regulation levels. The land may not be suitable for industrial/commercial uses, and should be taken to a special licensed landfill. • Former rail lines may pose some environmental concern. • The study will need to determine if soil contamination can affect the ability to convert lands to more prestige employment use.
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <p>Land Use Character & Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fasson Canada site (1.77 ha) is currently vacant. • The Mackenzie Nominee site at 274 Mackenzie Ave has partial vacancy (for lease). • Many of the properties are developed with low coverage, which allows for lower cost redevelopment while others have opportunities for expansion. <p>Adjacent Land Use Character and Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion of the older arterial commercial and employment uses in the Downtown could improve the overall image of the area. <p>Air, Noise, and Soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the properties were vacant during the former munitions manufacturing years, so the soil may not be contaminated from that original use. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <p>Land Use Character & Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term operation of the Steam Plant, which is not compatible with residential uses in the Downtown or with a more prestige employment area image. • Some sites have soil contamination. <p>Adjacent Land Use Character and Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses to the west may affect the ability to transition the Study Area to a prestige employment area. • Many of the existing commercial along Bayly and Hunt Streets could be redeveloped for residential use, which may threaten the attraction of the area for employment uses. <p>Air, Noise, and Soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of the Study Area with former munitions manufacturing facility could represent an issue of potential environmental concern. • Soil condition of surrounding lands is unknown, and may pose potential soil leaching contamination threats. • Several surrounding properties have been issued Certificates of Approvals for air emissions, which may affect the Study Area.

B. EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town is expected to experience significant employment growth over next 20 years. • Employment in Ajax is forecast to grow by 60% by 2021 and 87% by 2031. • Ajax will run out of greenfield employment lands before 2031. • Industrial employment is also anticipated to be strong and will increase to 42% of total employment by 2021. • The Central Ajax Employment Area is part of a vibrant well-established employment area. • The Central Ajax Employment Area is well situated near a 400 series highway with good accessibility to Westney Road interchange and GO Station. • Availability of labour, and easy access for employees. • Access to supportive retail and commercial facilities also a positive aspect for employment areas. • A reliable central energy plant can be an attractor for many industries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing of Harwood Interchange reduced the accessibility of the area. • The Central Ajax Employment Area is an older industrial area and does not currently exhibit the characteristics that may be attractive to prestige industrial users. • The market for office uses, which could help invigorate the area, is limited.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensification and revitalization of existing employment areas will become increasingly important as Ajax reaches build out of its greenfield employment lands. • The widening of Highway 401 to ten lanes through to Salem Road should help to further reduce congestion through Ajax. • Extension of Highway 407 and construction of the 401-407 Link should improve accessibility for all employment areas in Ajax. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high Canadian \$ will have impacts on the industrial sector but the extent and duration of these impacts is not known. • Incorporating residential uses into adjacent areas can be a detractor for some industries. • The current central energy / Steam Plant as it exists is a detractor to encouraging prestige industries due to its outside storage of lumber and ash and its general site appearance.

C. URBAN DESIGN

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>GENERAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant flexibility in Urban Design Guidelines to use landscaping to improve properties and streetscape. <p>SITE PLANNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most buildings are sited parallel to the street. Most entrances and office components are located at the street frontage address. <p>PEDESTRIAN AMENITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most entrances face the street. <p>BUILT FORM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most entrances face the street. Architecture is generally simple forms with durable materials. Prominent view into new residential area at south end of Mills Street provides potential for landscape/built form feature. Some sites in transition provide redevelopment potential to initiate enhancement of area. North side of Hunt Street is part of the CIP area. <p>LANDSCAPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some existing landscaping is well established and mature. Large open lawn areas on some properties set tone for green area. <p>LIGHTING, FURNISHINGS AND SIGNAGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for City-initiated public realm improvements could make immediate positive impact. 	<p>GENERAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines primarily address new development; more guidance needed for sites in transition or upgrade/improvement to existing development. <p>SITE PLANNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some uses have loading docks and access along street frontage; therefore, screening may not be possible. Permitted minimum and maximum building setback can only be implemented on redevelopment sites. Parking and driveways are fixed due to service / access needs. <p>PEDESTRIAN AMENITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is not a complete sidewalk network in Study Area – some streets are pedestrian unfriendly and unsafe. Transit routes not well identified. Transit stops are unsafe waiting areas, and do not provide shelter. There are few connections to sidewalk (except Hunt St.) or adjacent properties / walkways. Retrofits to add sidewalks in some areas may be difficult. Some buildings and parking lots are located close to the street, which may interrupt a sidewalk connection and force pedestrians onto the pavement. Downtown Sidewalk Connectivity Project indicates sidewalks on one side of street – per guidelines, but both sides are required to improve safety and accessibility. Screening of outdoor storage / waste areas with solid masonry enclosures may not be possible due to functionality and access. Extent of Steam Plant heritage designation requirements may limit redevelopment of site. <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>

Urban Design SWOT cont'd

	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses (continued)</p> <p>BUILT FORM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some “industrial/manufacturing” building components with unarticulated building facades and unattractive materials. • Potential for significant built form retrofits probably limited as building configurations result from functional process requirements. <p>LANDSCAPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side yards are not well defined. • Service yards occupy most of property site area, so introducing landscaped side yards to define properties may be difficult. • Large amount of fencing in poor condition and/ or unattractive. <p>LIGHTING, FURNISHINGS AND SIGNAGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of uncoordinated lighting. • Pedestrian lighting is weak.
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <p>GENERAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to meet intent of existing urban design guidelines with landscaping. <p>SITE PLANNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to enhance frontages with landscaping. • Potential to subdivide larger parking areas at the street edge with landscaped islands, pedestrian walkways. <p>PEDESTRIAN AMENITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to demarcate pedestrian routes within parking areas. • Traffic calming features could be introduced. • Large properties provide potential for outdoor amenity areas to be added near buildings and screened with landscaping. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <p>GENERAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility of industrial processes / open storage / street loading may limit overall impact on improvement efforts of other properties. <p>SITE PLANNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term ownership and uses will result in some sites remaining in current configuration without strong incentives for upgrade / enhancement of private property. <p>PEDESTRIAN AMENITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Sidewalk Connectivity Project addresses the western edge of the Study Area (Hunt Street, Dowty Road); but the Study Area is not included in Project plans.

D. CONNECTIVITY / TRANSPORTATION

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>TRANSIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close vicinity to Ajax GO station; high use (1841 parking spaces, observed to be full). 6 bus routes serve the area b/w GO station (Westney) and Plaza Station (Harwood) - they continue north and southwards, serving the rest of Ajax. Close proximity to Highway 401 interchange offers excellent accessibility. <p>PEDESTRIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area has potential for mixed uses and pedestrian movement. <p>ROAD CONNECTION AND ACCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full movement 401 interchange at Westney good for truck and employee vehicle access. <p>CYCLISTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vicinity to GO station, Plaza station and nearby neighbourhoods provides cycling opportunities to and from this area. <p>SAFETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian crossings at sidewalks have 'call' buttons installed. <p>TRANSPORTATION CAPACITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All intersections along major arterials function well during the AM peak hour and most movements function well during the PM peak hour. 	<p>TRANSIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local transit probably has a low modal split. <p>PEDESTRIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of pedestrian-friendly land uses. Lack of sidewalks on some streets <p>ROAD CONNECTION AND ACCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent closure of Highway 401 / Harwood interchange; Salem is a bit farther east. Disconnect between existing roads: Fairall Street and Station Street; and Dowty Road and Monarch Avenue lead to some congestion and queuing at peak periods. There are no north-south or east-west roads in the area bound by Westney Road, Francom Street, Mackenzie Ave, and Bayly St. Station Street dead-ends at Dowty Road corner. <p>CYCLISTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home locations of present employment workforce may limit cycling use in the area. <p>SAFETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of streetlights and sidewalks in some areas. <p>TRANSPORTATION CAPACITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-lane roads within Study Area results in periodic congestion during peak periods.

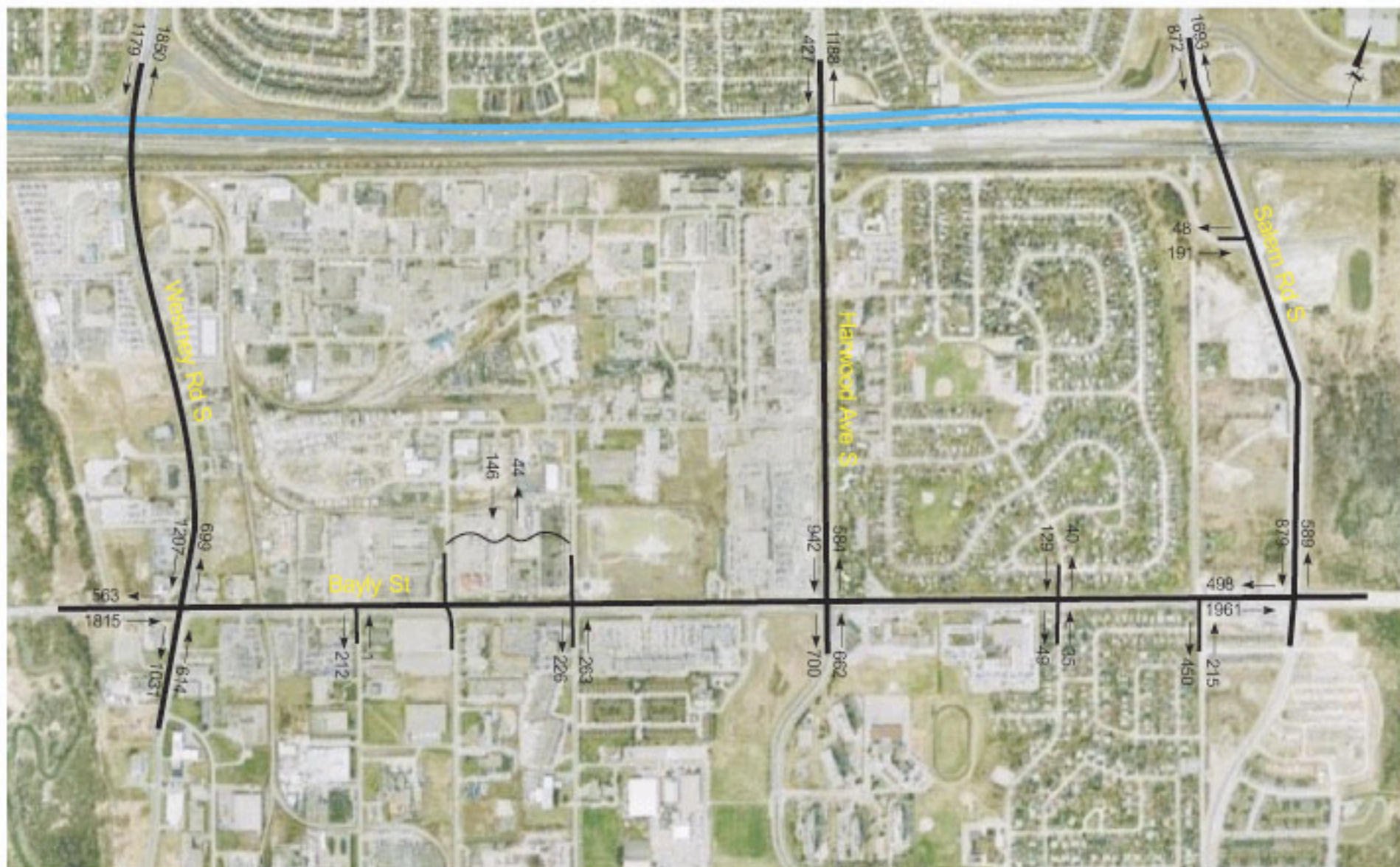
Connectivity / Transportation SWOT cont'd

Opportunities	Threats
<p>TRANSIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve walking access/paths to GO Station and Plaza station (i.e.: through to Commercial Avenue). • Employment intensification in area would increase local transit ridership. <p>PEDESTRIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve walking access/paths to GO Station and Plaza station (i.e., through to Commercial Avenue). <p>ROAD CONNECTION AND ACCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve general connectivity of roads throughout area with redevelopment. • Improve connections to arterial roads and Highway 401 interchange. • If an opportunity for re-development arises on the northeast corner of Dowty Road and Hunt Street, the intersection could be realigned with Monarch. • Lands at the southeast corner of the Dowty Road/Fairall Street/Station Street intersection are currently for sale, which provides an opportunity to realign Station Street with Fairall Street. <p>CYCLISTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve cycling connections to nearby residential neighbourhoods. <p>SAFETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build sidewalks at various locations, and on both sides of the street. 	<p>PEDESTRIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of employment force may not be within walking distance. <p>ROAD CONNECTION AND ACCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving vehicle access and road connectivity may reduce or discourage other non-auto modes of travel. • Increased Traffic from beyond the Study Area could increase queuing at the Fairall Street and Station Street; and Dowty Road and Monarch Avenue offsets <p>CYCLISTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to highway and arterial roads makes the area attractive for vehicle use. • Potential bicycle/auto/truck conflict. <p>SAFETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto/truck/bicycle/pedestrian conflict, especially at access points.

E. WATER, SANITARY, AND STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

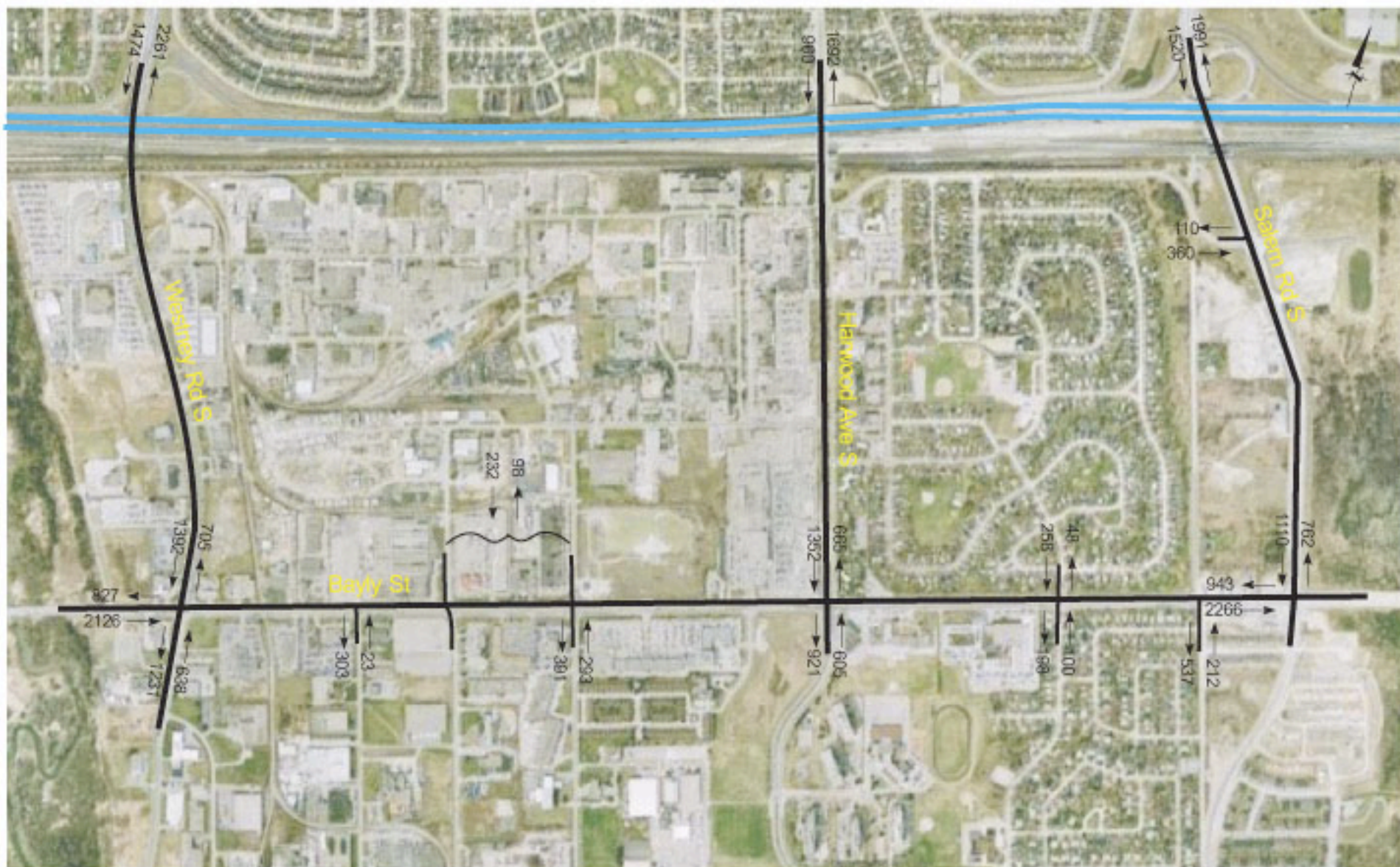
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>SANITARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No downstream capacity constraints have been identified. <p>WATERMAIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No capacity constraints have been identified. <p>STORM/STORMWATER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any redevelopment would not be subject to review/approval by Toronto Region Conservation Authority. The Town is not aware of any current flooding problems or frequent storm sewer failures. 	<p>SANITARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drainage area plans are not available for this area. Plan and profile information is limited in this Study Area. <p>WATERMAIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and Profile information is limited in this Study Area. Landowners have identified poor water pressure, which affects industrial sprinkler systems. <p>STORM/STORMWATER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drainage area plans are not available. Plan and profile information is limited. Design capacities of the storm sewers in this area are unknown. Quantity and quality control would be a requirement for any redevelopment. The quality control target will be 80% total suspended solids removal. Any cash-in-lieu agreement will result in downstream works in another part of Town, outside of the Study Area and would likely fall within the area that is subject to Conservation Authority approval.
Opportunities	Threats
<p>SANITARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KMK Consulting retained by Region to complete a hydraulic model of the sanitary infrastructure. This model will include a complete inventory of the sanitary sewer data (sizes, slopes, etc.) and will be used to assess capacity of existing infrastructure for any new development applications (expected completion early 2008). <p>WATERMAIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KMK is also doing a hydraulic model of the watermain infrastructure. <p>STORM/STORMWATER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-site stormwater management controls or cash-in-lieu policy may be used to attain quality and quantity control. 	<p>SANITARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The downstream infrastructure is quite old (>50 years), and is susceptible to requiring repair. <p>WATERMAIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The downstream infrastructure is quite old (>50 years), and is susceptible to requiring repair. <p>STORM/STORMWATER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The downstream infrastructure is quite old (>50 years) and is susceptible to requiring repair.

APPENDIX B TRAFFIC VOLUMES



Central Ajax Employment Area **2006 Adjusted Network Volumes - PM Peak** Source: Town of Ajax, Screenline Analysis

Appendix B-1

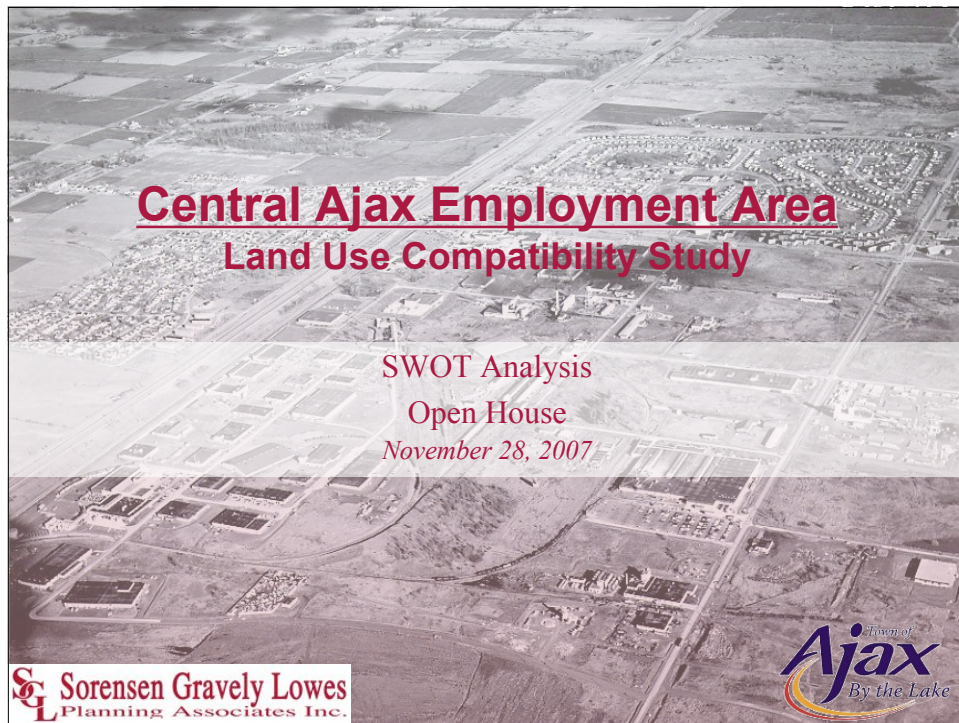


Central Ajax Employment Area
2021 [Do Nothing] Volumes - PM Peak
No Road Improvements
 Source: Town of Ajax, Screenline Analysis

Appendix B-2

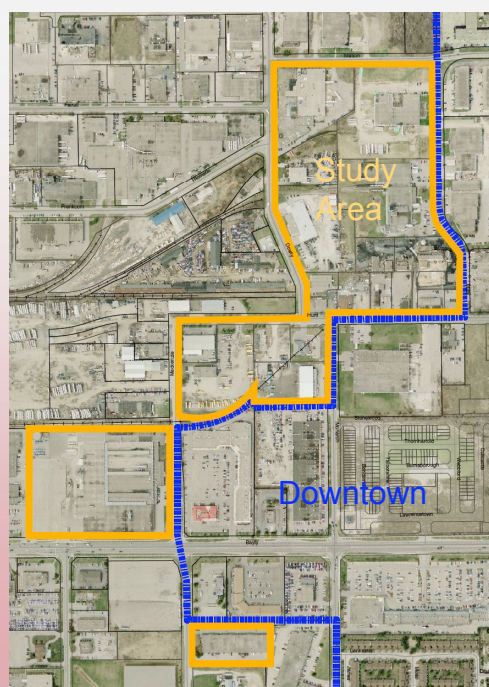


APPENDIX C PUBLIC CONSULTATION MATERIAL

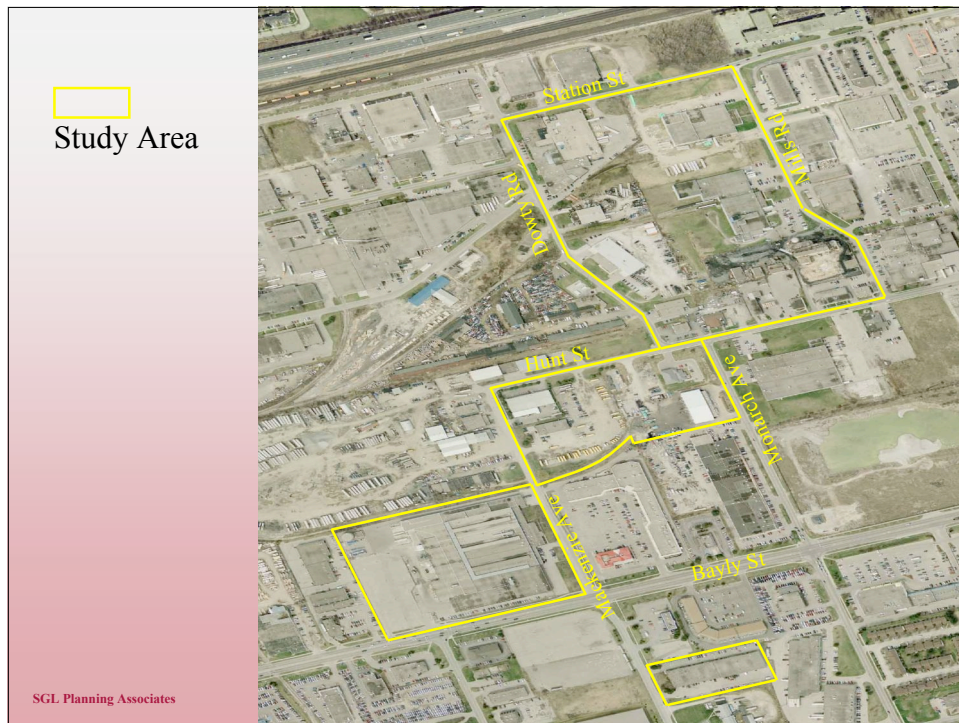


Study Purpose

- Find ways to improve land use compatibility at the interface with Downtown.
- Examine land uses, policies, infrastructure and site conditions.



SGL Planning Associates



Study Objectives

- Determine vision/direction for the Central Ajax Employment Area;
- Determine compatibility of existing uses with Downtown;
- Identify obstacles to investment and renewal;
- Examine policy regulations for appropriateness to achieve the vision;
- Identify streetscape and private realm improvements; and
- Recommend actions to stimulate investment to achieve the vision.

SGL Planning Associates

SWOT Analysis

- Organized into 5 themes:

1. Land Use
2. Employment and Economic Development
3. Urban Design
4. Connectivity/Transportation
5. Water and Sanitary Infrastructure

SGL Planning Associates



Land Use

Strengths

- Well occupied industrial area - only one vacant property.
- Many existing uses that border Downtown don't raise compatibility concerns.
- Some prestige type employment uses.

Weaknesses

- Older industrial area.
- Large areas of outdoor storage affects image.
- The steam plant's current technology creates visible emissions.

Opportunities

- Opportunities for new uses or redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites.

Threats

- New residential in Downtown may threaten the attraction of area for employment.
- Steam plant with its current technology is incompatible with residential development in Downtown, and with prestige employment.



Employment and Economic Development

Strengths

- Well situated near Highway 401, Westney Rd. interchange, and GO Station.

Weaknesses

- Area does not exhibit characteristics that may be attractive to prestige industrial users.

Opportunities

- Ajax is projected to have a full build-out of greenfield employment lands before 2031 - will increase demand for intensification and revitalization.

Threats

- The high Canadian \$ may have impacts on the industrial sector, specifically manufacturing.



Urban Design

Strengths

- Most entrances face the street.
- Some existing landscaping is well established and mature.

Weaknesses

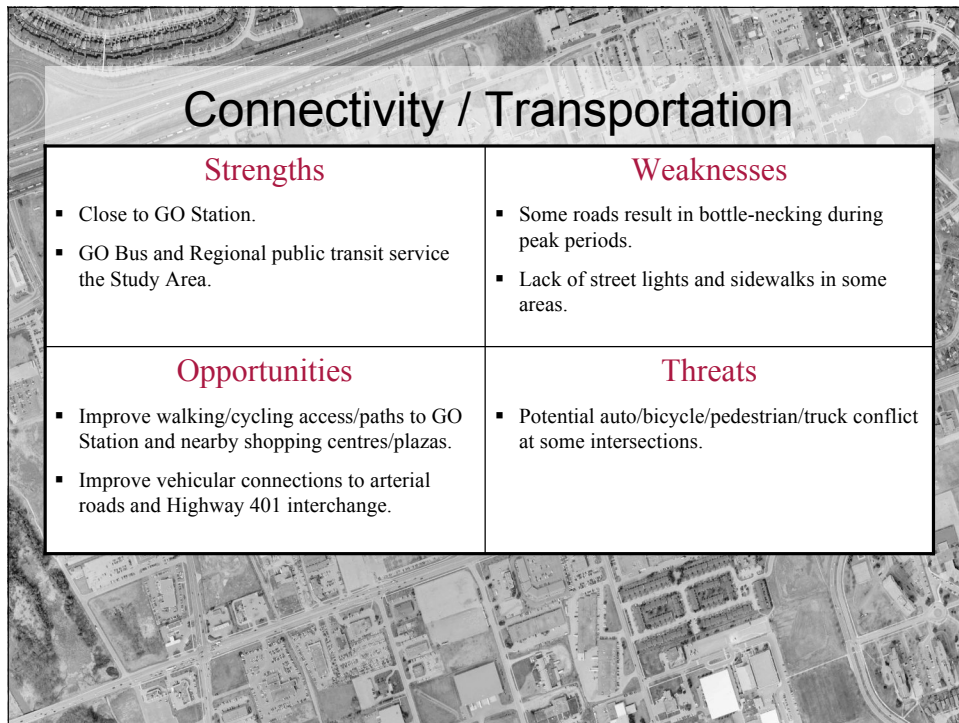
- Screening of loading docks and storage from street may not be possible on all properties.
- Some streets are not pedestrian friendly - lack of sidewalks.

Opportunities

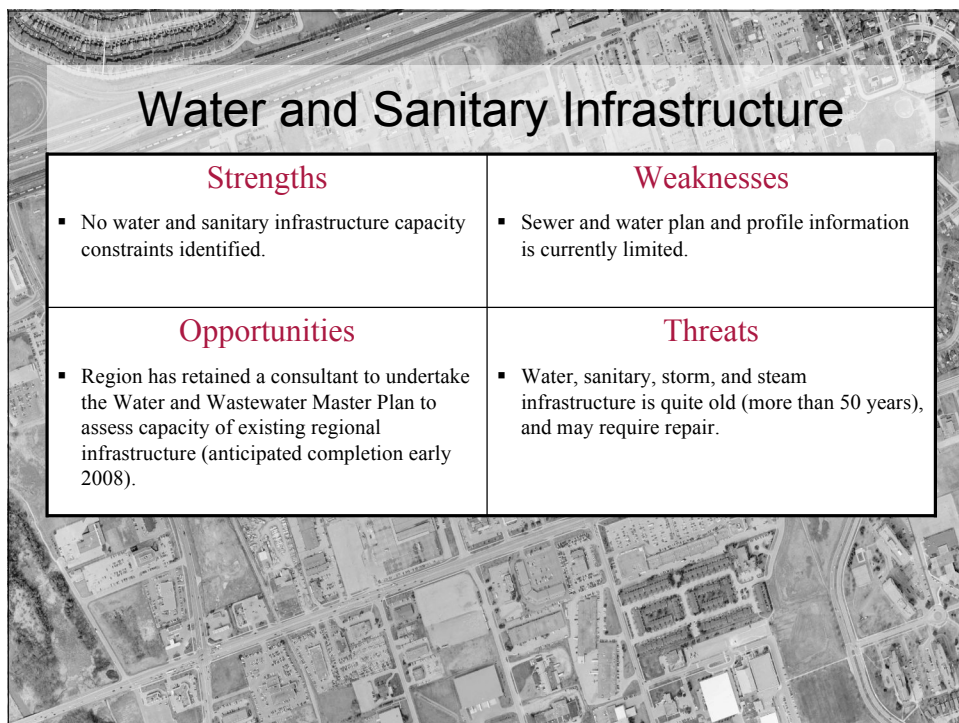
- Opportunity to use landscaping for improving properties and streetscape.
- Large properties provide potential for outdoor amenity areas and landscaping for screening.

Threats

- Visibility of industrial processes and open storage may limit improvement efforts of other properties.



Connectivity / Transportation	
Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Close to GO Station. ▪ GO Bus and Regional public transit service the Study Area. 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some roads result in bottle-necking during peak periods. ▪ Lack of street lights and sidewalks in some areas.
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve walking/cycling access/paths to GO Station and nearby shopping centres/plazas. ▪ Improve vehicular connections to arterial roads and Highway 401 interchange. 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential auto/bicycle/pedestrian/truck conflict at some intersections.



Water and Sanitary Infrastructure	
Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No water and sanitary infrastructure capacity constraints identified. 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sewer and water plan and profile information is currently limited.
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Region has retained a consultant to undertake the Water and Wastewater Master Plan to assess capacity of existing regional infrastructure (anticipated completion early 2008). 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water, sanitary, storm, and steam infrastructure is quite old (more than 50 years), and may require repair.



Study Process

- **Phase 1:**
 - ❖ *October - November*
 - ❖ Background research
 - ❖ Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)
 - ❖ Business inventory
- **Phase 2:**
 - ❖ *November 28th*
 - ❖ Public consultation
- **Phase 3:**
 - ❖ *November - January*
 - ❖ Refine SWOT with public comments
 - ❖ Planning analysis to consider options
 - ❖ Preferred Strategy Report
- **Phase 4**
 - ❖ *End of January*
 - ❖ Public consultation
- **Phase 5**
 - ❖ *January - February*
 - ❖ Recommendations
 - ❖ Present to Council early March



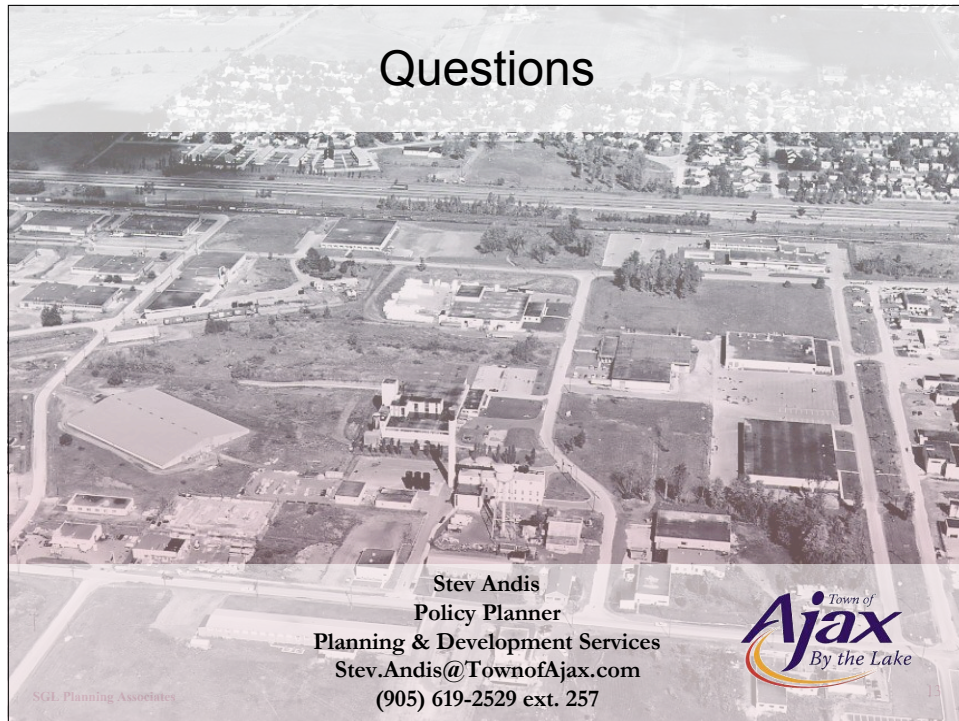
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Next Steps

- Add public comments into SWOT analysis.
- Planning Analysis to explore employment use options.
- Preferred Strategy Report to Council end January.
- Open House #2 end January to discuss Preferred Strategy Report.
- Presentation of Recommendations to Council early March.

Questions



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Policy Planner
Planning & Development Services
Stev.Andis@TownofAjax.com
(905) 619-2529 ext. 257



SGI Planning Associates

Central Ajax Employment Area

Land Use Compatibility Study



Please share with us your ideas and thoughts on the Central Ajax Employment Area. All comments are to be submitted by **Friday December 7, 2007**. Below are some questions and space for other comments you may have. Submission of comments may be dropped off in person at the Town Hall, e-mailed to Stev.Andis@townofajax.com, faxed to (905) 686-0360, or mailed to:

Stev Andis
Policy Planner
Planning & Development Services
Town of Ajax
65 Harwood Avenue South
Ajax, ON L1S 2H9

Thank you for participating in the Central Ajax Employment Area Land Use Compatibility Study.

What are the positive characteristics of the Central Ajax Employment Area?

What problems do you see in the area?

What are the obstacles to renewal and investment within the Central Ajax Employment Area?

More on the next page...



How can the area be improved, and what do you think the Town can do?

How would you like to see this area evolve in 10 years time?

More on the next page...



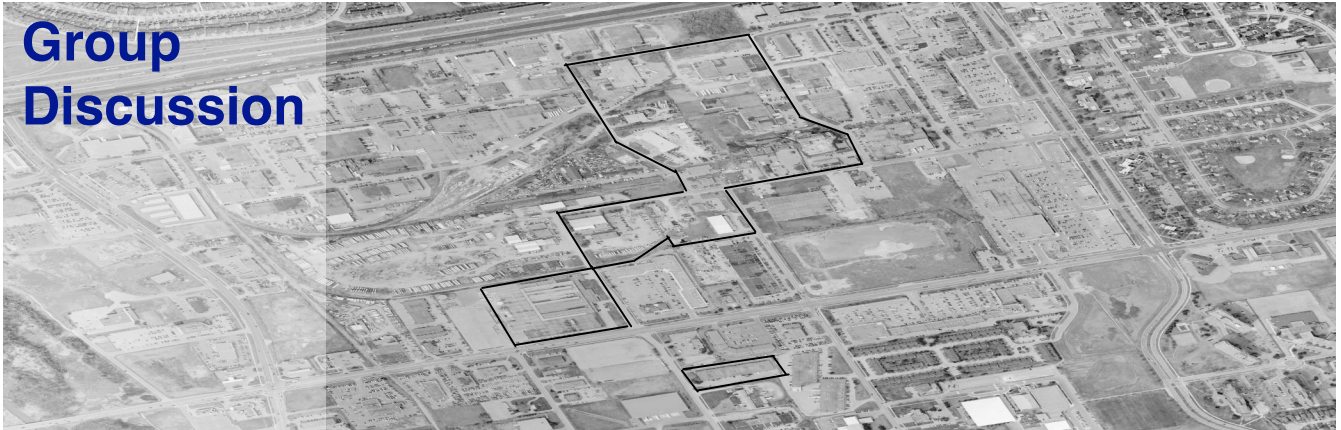
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Central Ajax Employment Area

Land Use Compatibility Study

**Group
Discussion**



Workbook

Discussion #1

Identify 5 positive characteristics of the Central Ajax Employment Area

Take 5 minutes to individually answer this question. Then discuss your answer with your group. Your group will be asked to present your collective thoughts.

Your thoughts:

Group thoughts:

Discussion #2

Identify 3 impediments to renewal and investment within the Study Area.

Take 5 minutes to individually answer this question. Then discuss your answer with your group. Your group will be asked to present your collective thoughts.

Your thoughts:

Group thoughts:

Discussion #3

Think of 3 key words or short statements that describe how you would like to see this area evolve in 10 years time. What could the Town's role be in the evolution of the Study Area?

Take 5 minutes to individually answer this question. Then discuss your answer with your group. Your group will be asked to present your collective thoughts.

Your thoughts:

Group thoughts:

APPENDIX D PUBLIC COMMENTS

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP DISCUSSION

Question: What is the big picture for this area?

Answer: The Town would like to keep it as employment, but also would like to hear from you what the big picture and future for this area should be.

Comment: It was not economical for Sklar Pepplar / Fixture This (274 Mackenzie Ave.) to rely on the Steam Plant, so we have switched energy sources. We wanted to put retail at the perimeter of the building along Bayly St. and Mackenzie Ave., and have spoken to Shoppers Drug Mart. We've also explored the potential for high density residential on the property. This is an ideal location because we are located at a lighted intersection, where traffic can be controlled. We also considered landscaping improvements on the property. However, there was too much red tape for us to deal with, even just to install new signage, so we have dropped the ideas, and have left the property status quo.

Question: Is the Steam Plant a stakeholder in this? Were they invited?

Answer: Yes, they were invited, but they did not come.

EVENING OPEN HOUSE DISCUSSION

Question: Was there any consensus from the stakeholders' workshop regarding needs and long-term interest?

Answer: Yes. One occupant is looking to expand now, and is looking for a third building. But there was concern by all the stakeholders about the older area. They agreed that the location is good. However, they admitted that the Study Area would likely continue to look the way it is now, although they did recognize the need for improvements.

Comment: If the streetscape was unified, that will be a benefit. There seems to be conflict regarding the image of the area compared to other municipalities. He hopes the objectives of this Study are followed through.

It would be good for employees to be able to walk to downtown. The lack of sidewalks is a major impediment. There should be connection from Salem/Westney to the GO Station.

Comment: He commends the Town for creating sidewalks to the GO Station. However, even greater connectivity is needed, and this should be given priority.

Question: Do the size of the lots inhibit new businesses from coming in? Are we losing business to the greenfields of North Ajax? Are businesses even considering Ajax?

Answer: Most of the businesses in the Study Area are owner-occupied, so there is not as high of a turnover as you'd see in other areas. Therefore, the Study Area is a bit more stable than anticipated in other employment areas. But yes, if an industry is looking to expand, they will likely go elsewhere because the lots are small.

Question: When will Ajax run out of employment lands?

Answer: There is opportunity for intensification, but there are very few in the Study Area. It is a vibrant area, so the key is to keep it that way.

Comment: It seems that the smaller lots are not necessarily bad – it can be a stepping-stone for smaller industries. Hopefully as they grow, they will stay in Ajax.

Question: Is there a need for additional capacity for infrastructure?

Answer: The capacity is ok for industrial use, but age is the question.

Question: What does General Employment mean?

Answer: It means that outdoor storage is permitted.

Question: I am a resident of the Sundial development – where exactly is the Downtown?

Answer: You are now living in the Downtown; the Town is currently in the beginning stages of redeveloping the Downtown.

Question: Are there other plans for more residential in the Downtown?

Answer: There is a mixed-use designation in the Downtown area, and Sundial is proposing a high density residential development.

ON-LINE SURVEY SUBMISSION

Survey Information

Site: Town of Ajax

Page Title: Central Ajax Employment Area Survey

URL: <http://www.townofajax.com/CM/WebUI/PageTypes/Survey/Survey.aspx?PageID=1940>

Submission Time/Date: 11/30/2007 5:18:57 PM

What are the positive characteristics of the Central Ajax Employment Area?

The increase in use of the site should ensure that it is well used and safe for residents. Also, it will permit greater transit use by drawing more transit to a central location. It will reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, as Ajax will decrease its need to be a bedroom community and employ more people locally.

What problems do you see in the area?

My dad lives across the street on a limited income. If the area becomes more popular, his rent may go up and his affordable housing could become unaffordable.

What are the obstacles to renewal and investment within the Central Ajax Employment Area?

The city is enormously car dependent. Overcoming resistance to reduced surface parking could be a big problem. It will take a big mental shift to see Ajax as a city and not as a bedroom community.

How can the area be improved, and what do you think the Town can do?

Reduce surface parking. Either put parking underground or in stacked parking, or better yet, improve transit use. Increase density of housing in the rest of Ajax so communities support transit so people leave their cars at home. Don't forget to draw cultural activities to the Town centre - i.e. museums, arenas, and cinemas. Make the town centre the destination people want to visit. Also, a key is to build bike lanes and paths. Tens of thousand of Ajax residents live an easy bike ride to the town centre. Become a demonstration project for walkable and bikeable

communities everywhere. Also, improve transit links between the Go Train and the city centre. Invest in parks and gardens in green space and turn Harwood Avenue into a grand boulevard with parks and benches and shops beside and between the roadway. Build an outdoor skating rink, and try to draw interesting independent shops and a department store that doesn't rely on a big box concept of acres of parking.

How would you like to see this area evolve in 10 years time?

I would like to see it become more European and walkable with interesting shops that people walk to or take the bus. I would like to find it easy to reach by bus or Go Train. I would like to see a good mix of races and people of different incomes living together. I would like to bike to and around town without fearing for my life. I would like to read about Ajax in magazines advertising vacation destinations - bragging about the resort by the lake and the excellent shopping in the town centre, all with easy connections to VIA rail and Toronto Airport via GO Transit.

Do you have any other thoughts or comments?

Yes, stop building ugly sprawl and big box stores. It is making a mess. Hire top-notch architects to build a safe, attractive and walkable, bikable and transit accessible community. You have such a beautiful city - why ploy it under for ugly look-alike houses and big box stores that look the same in Ajax as Calgary or Brampton. Brand yourself as a different kind of community and plan your city accordingly.