

The Corporation of the Town of Ajax  
**SPECIAL COUNCIL**



Thursday, December 4, 2014

**9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

Friday, December 5, 2014

**8:30 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.**

Town Hall, River Plate Room

65 Harwood Avenue South, Ajax

## **AGENDA**

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- 1. Call To Order**
- 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**
- 3. Council / Management Community Action Plan - Planning Workshop**

DATE	AGENDA ITEM	LEAD
<b>Thursday December 4, 2014</b>	<b>DAY ONE</b>	
9:30 - 9:45 am	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Opening Remarks</b>	Mayor Parish & Brian Skinner
9:45 - 10:15 am	<b>Workshop Introductions/Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agenda Review</li></ul>	Susan Wright
10:15 - 10:45 am	<b>Constituent Feedback Overview/ Discussion</b> Customer Polling; Virtual Town Hall; Customer Feedback; Election Canvassing & Perspectives from Constituents	Susan Wright Council
10:45 - 11:00 am	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:45 am - 12:15 pm	<b>Financial Overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities &amp; Challenges Moving Forward</li></ul> <b>Planning and Development Overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>~ Growth, Demographics and Diversity</li><li>~ Planning &amp; Economic Development</li><li>~ Traffic, Transportation and Related Infrastructure</li></ul>	Rob Ford Paul Allore
12:15 - 1:00 pm	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1:00 - 1:30 pm	<b>~ 2015-2018 Staffing Forecast</b>	Sharon Dunn
1:30 - 4:30 pm	<b>In-Camera Human Resource Matters</b>	Brian Skinner
4:30 pm	<b>ADJOURN</b>	

DATE	AGENDA ITEM	LEAD
<b>Friday, December 5, 2014</b>	<b>DAY TWO</b>	
8:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>Staff Presentations/Council Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stormwater User Rate</li> <li>• Other Important Topics               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Veridian</li> <li>-Fair Representation</li> <li>-Duffins Creek Water Control Pollution Plant</li> <li>-Waterfront</li> <li>-Whistle Blower Policy</li> <li>-Health of our BIA's</li> <li>-Clements Rd Landfill Site - Post Closure Monitoring</li> <li>-Garbage Campaign</li> <li>-Accessible Green Spaces in Downtown (and use of cash-in-lieu of Parkland)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Staff/Council
12:00 -12:45 pm	<b>LUNCH</b>	
12:45 - 3:15 pm	<b>Setting Our Strategic Direction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarizing Key Strategic Challenges</li> <li>• Defining Strategic Objectives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-New or Existing Objectives-are there any areas that require more support</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Defining Strategic Outcomes (2015-2018)</li> </ul>	Susan Wright
3:15 - 3:45 pm	<b>Moving Forward/Next Steps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process: Actions and Time Lines</li> <li>• Defining priorities for Year 1 &amp; 2 (2015-2016)</li> </ul> ~ <a href="#">Communications &amp; Consultation Plan</a>	Susan Wright
3:45 - 4:00 pm	<b>BREAK</b>	
4:00 - 5:00 pm	~ <a href="#">Budget Builder Survey Results</a> ~ <a href="#">General Levy Forecast</a>	Rob Ford
5:00 - 5:15 pm	<b>Closing Remarks</b>	Mayor Parish & Brian Skinner
5:15 pm	<b>Adjourn</b>	

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# Growth, Demographics and Diversity

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Community Action Plan  
Strategy Session  
December, 2014

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Town of Ajax  
Planning and Development Services

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## **Introduction**

This report presents demographic data about the residents of Ajax and offers comparison data on the Region of Durham residents. Population data is derived from Manifold's proprietary data product "SuperDemographics." Manifold is an Authorized User of selected Statistics Canada Computer File(s) and Distributor of Derived Information Product(s) under Licensing Agreement 6630. Manifold's statistics may vary from publications of the Durham Region Planning Department which may use different methodologies to estimate and/or forecast population growth. Using this data, this report provides current year estimates of population statistics and social and economic information on the following demographic indicators:

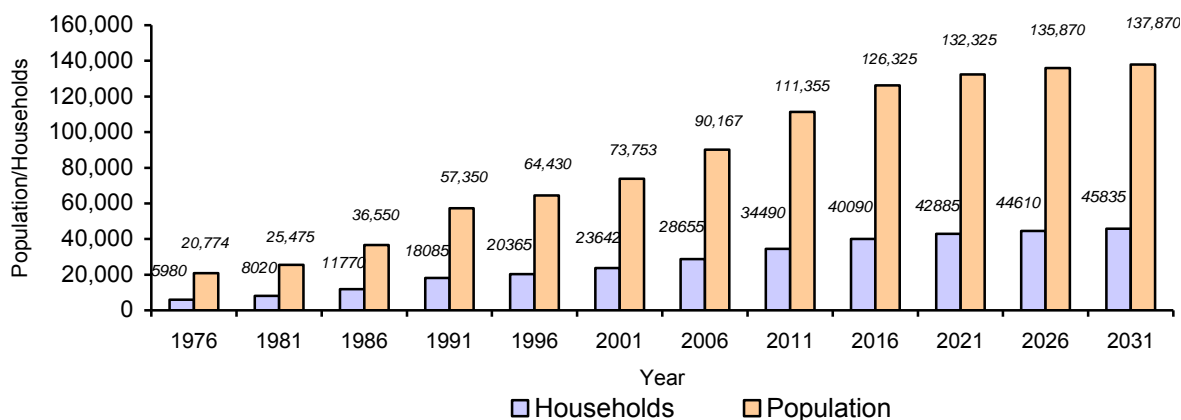
- Existing and Projected Population Growth
- Population Breakdown by Age and Sex
- Education
- Labour Force and Income Characteristics
- Ethnic Origins and Mother Tongue
- Census Families
- Immigration Characteristics
- Religion
- Visible Minorities

This report provides information to inform discussions, highlight potential issues and inform directions, policies, services and initiatives that may be considered over this term of Council.

## **Population**

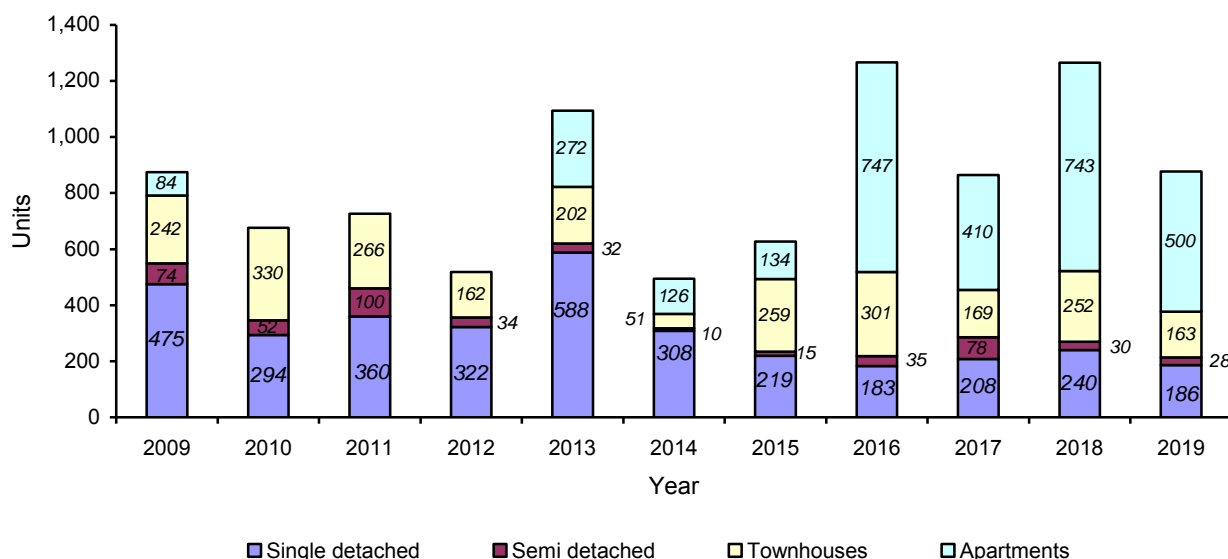
The data indicates that Ajax's population is estimated at 125,666 in 2014. This represents 19.2% of Durham Region's population of 654,041. Ajax is projected to grow to approximately 137,670 in 2031. This is a 627% increase from the Town's 1976 population of 20,774. (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Population and Household Growth 1976-2031**



From 1991 to 2014, the Town has grown from 57,350 persons to 125,666 persons (a 119% increase). This exceeds figures recently released from the Region of Durham, which estimates the Town's population at 119,415 in May of 2014.

**Figure 2: Past and Projected Residential Building Permits**



By 2031, the Town's population is forecasted to increase to 137,670 (a 23.6% increase from 2011). However, based on forecasted rates of growth, the Town may exceed this population forecast by 2031. When compared to historic rates of growth throughout Durham Region, Ajax has been a primary residential growth area since the inception of the Region.

## **Household Age**

The average age of Ajax residents is younger than the Regional average. The largest population cohort in Ajax is between the ages of 50-54, consistent with the Region of Durham and broader North American demographic trends that have witnessed the aging of the baby boom generation (see Figures 2 and 3).

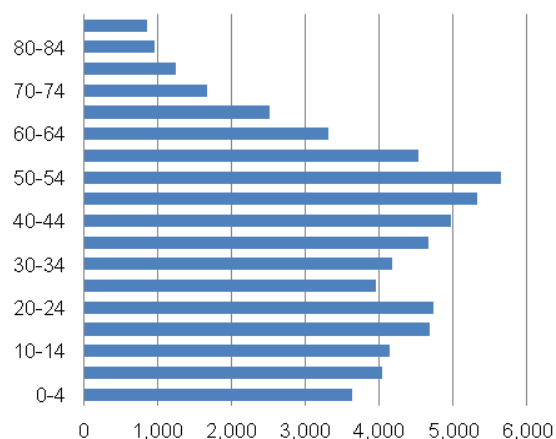
Within Ajax, 13,499 residents (or 10.7% of the population) were reported to be between the ages of 50 and 65. A greater percentage of boomers are reported in the Region of Durham, where 14.9% of residents are reported within this age bracket.

Of increasing importance is the growing population cohort over the age of 65, where it was reported that 12,920 Ajax residents (or 10.3%% of the population) are within this age range. A greater percentage of Durham residents are of retirement age, with 13.7% above the age of 65. Of the total Ajax residents above the age of 65, 55.9% are female.

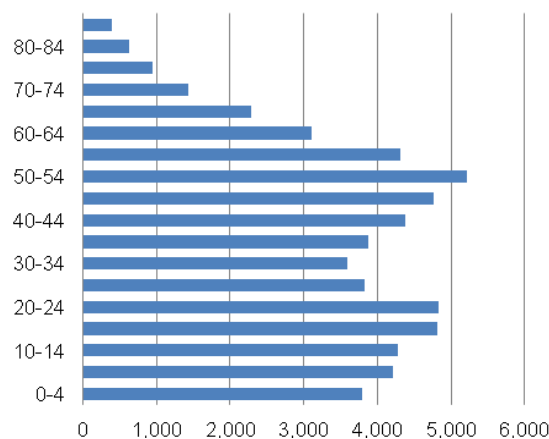
The data also illustrates a larger number of youth and young adults (age 15-24), who represent the children of the baby-boomers (the 'echo' generation).

The age distribution of residents across Ajax is consistent with the growth of the municipality. As illustrated in Figure 5, the youngest average age of residents is generally located where the most recent development has occurred. This is expected, as residential growth in the northern and eastern parts of the Town have been fuelled in large measure by couples and young families that have migrated to Ajax.

**Figure 3: Population Breakdown by Age Females**

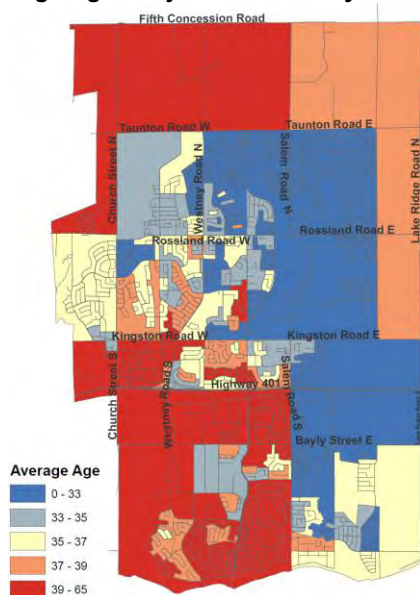


**Figure 4: Population Breakdown By Age Males**

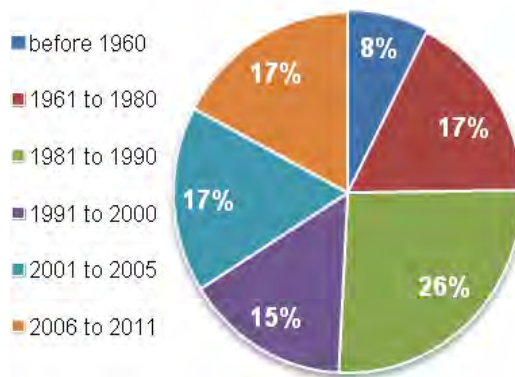


The date of dwelling construction (Figure 6) reveals that 34% of the dwellings in Ajax were constructed in the last 10 years, while only 25% of the dwellings were constructed prior to 1980. This is in contrast with the Region of Durham, where 21.3% of the dwellings were constructed in the last 10 years, but 41.2% of the dwellings were constructed prior to 1980.

**Figure 5: Average Age of Ajax Residents by Location**



**Figure 6: Date of Dwelling Construction**



## **Dwelling Units**

Of the 40,421 occupied dwellings in Ajax, 18,080 dwellings (44.7%) were reported to have 3 bedrooms while 16,435 dwellings (40.6%) were reported to have 4 or more bedrooms. This is generally consistent with Regional percentages. A total of 3,234 condominium units were reported to be in Ajax (8% of the total housing supply).

The data reports that Ajax has a greater mix of housing than Durham's average. Single detached dwellings are the predominant dwelling unit type in Ajax (51.51% of total dwellings). In the Region of Durham, 67.6% of dwellings are reported as single detached. In Ajax, ground related attached dwellings (semi-detached and townhouses [row dwellings]) combined represent 20.3% of all dwellings.

Average housing costs and housing carrying costs tend to be higher in Ajax when compared to the figures for Durham Region. According to CMHC the average price of an absorbed single detached dwelling in Ajax in July of 2014 was \$523,785, which was 9.2% above the Regional average of \$475,625. Average monthly shelter costs for owned dwellings in Ajax was reported to be \$1,705 per monthly. Average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings was \$1,105 per month in Ajax, and \$1,000 per month in Durham Region.

## **Education**

Education levels of the population provide an indication as to the background, employment prospects and interests of the population generally. Figure 7 provides a summary of the education levels of the Ajax population.

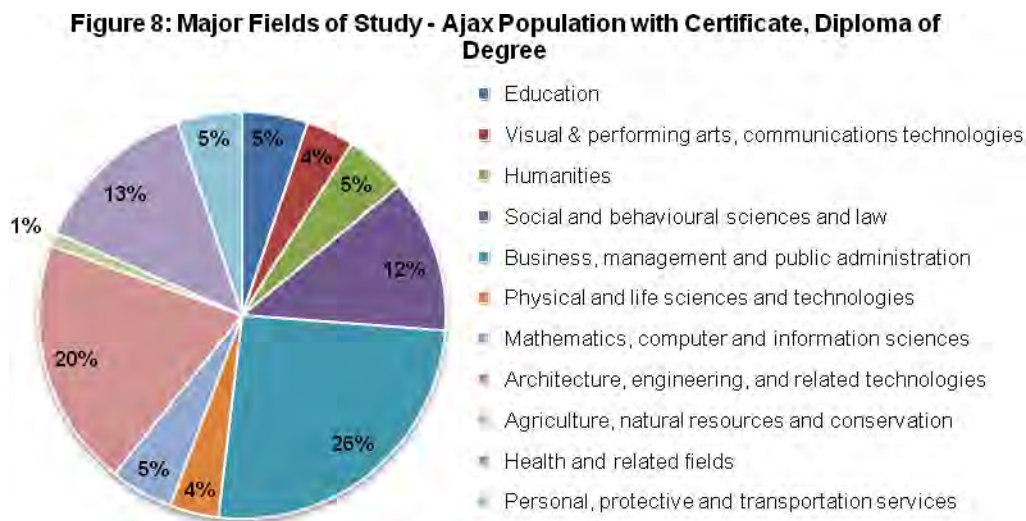
The data reveals that Ajax residents on average achieved higher levels of education when compared to the averages reported for Durham Region as a whole. It reveals that of the Ajax population aged 15 or over, 21,245 residents or 20.9% of the population possess a University certificate, diploma or degree at the bachelor level or above (Durham Region – 17.6%). The data also indicates that 23,522 residents (23.1%) had a college or other non-university certificate or diploma (Durham Region 24.2%), and 29,630 residents (29.1%) had a high school diploma or equivalent (Durham Region 29.8%).

**Figure 7: Ajax Population 25-64 - Highest Level of Education**





The data reveals that the predominant fields of study include Business, Management and Public Administration (26%), Architecture, Engineering and related technologies (20%) and Health and related fields (13%) (see Figure 8).



The data also reveal gender differences in the various fields of study for Ajax residents. For example:

- Of the 14,664 persons in Business, Management and Public Administration, 8,918 (60.8%) are female;
- Of the 11,294 persons in Architecture, Engineering and Related Technologies, 10,244 (90.7%) are male;
- Of the 6,971 persons in Social, Behaviour Science and Law, 5,073 (72.8%) are female;
- Of the 2,871 persons in Mathematics, Computer and Information Science, 1,901 (66%) are male;
- Of the 2,989 persons in Education, 2,298 (76.9%) are female.

## **Income**

Average Ajax resident income levels tend to be higher than the average incomes reported for the Region of Durham as a whole. Average household income for Ajax was reported as \$104,850 annually. Annual average after-tax income was reported to be \$87,516. This is higher than the average annual household income for Durham Region, which was reported as \$100,634. Durham's annual average after tax household income was reported to be \$83,576.

Figure 9 provides a breakdown of the average total income of private households in Ajax.

**Figure 9 - Ajax: Average Total Income of Private Households**

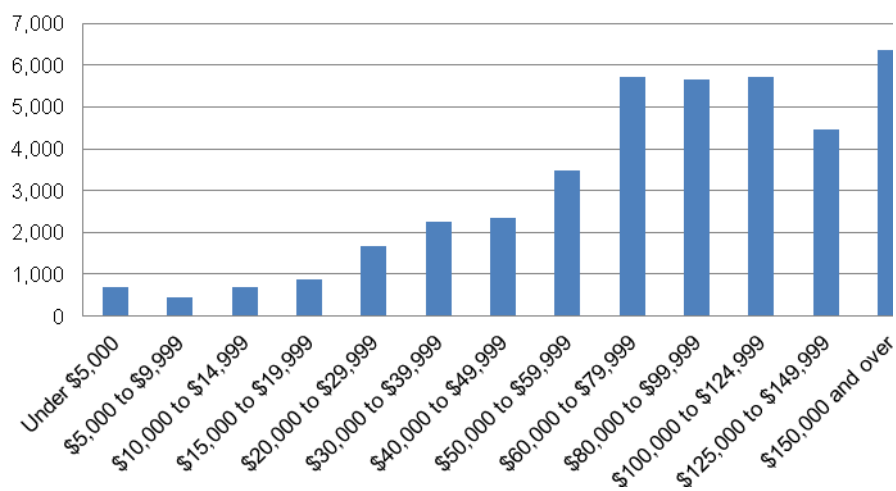
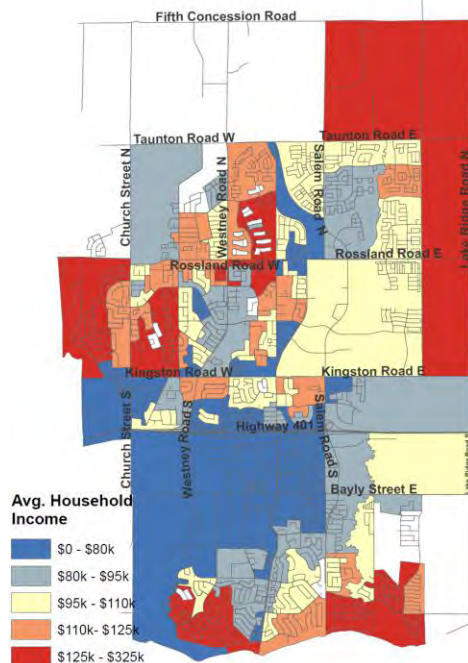


Figure 9 illustrates the spatial distribution of reported average household income in Ajax. In general, the highest average household incomes were reported in Pickering Beach, parts of Lakeside, Hermitage, Discovery Bay, Riverside and Deer Creek. The lowest average annual household incomes are reported in areas including in the vicinity of the Downtown, Pickering Village, portions of Midtown and other locations.

**Figure 10 – Ajax: Distribution of Total Average Household Income**



As a traditional measure of affordability, Statistics Canada and Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation use the percentage of income households spend on shelter (including rent, mortgage, taxes, repairs, etc.). If a household spends more than 30% of their income on shelter costs, they are considered to be experiencing affordability issues.

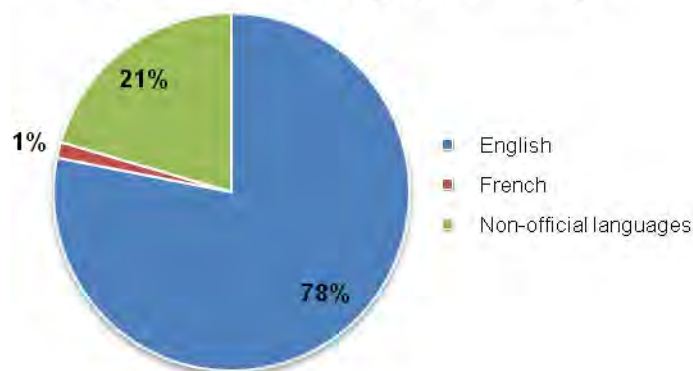
The statistics reveal that 28% of households reported spending more than 30% or more of their total household income on shelter costs. This is higher than in Durham Region as a whole, where 25% of such households were reported. It is also indicated that 75.8% of owned households in Ajax had a mortgage, compared to 67.8% for Durham Region as a whole. It also indicates that in Ajax, 25.7% of owned households spent 30% or more of their household total income on shelter costs, compared to 21.5% for Durham Region as a whole. In 2011, this figure was 27.6% in Toronto.

The poverty line (after tax low income measure) for a single adult was reported by Statistics Canada to be \$19,930 annually. The prevalence of low income based on the after tax low income measure was reported as 9.91% in Ajax (Durham Region - 11.2%). This measure was 8.11% for residents age 65 and over (Durham Region - 6.81%), but 13.37% for households with children under the age of 6 years (Durham Region 14.54%).

## **Mother Tongue**

Mother tongue refers to the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual on May 10, 2011. Figure 11 illustrates that in Ajax, 78% of residents reported English as their mother tongue, followed by 21% for other non-official languages (or 25,056 residents). The greatest numbers of non-official languages reported as mother tongue include Urdu (2,773 residents), Tagalog (Filipino) (2,606), Tamil (2,332), Persian (Farsi) (1,645), Arabic (1,371), Spanish (1,251) and Italian (1,089).

**Figure 11: Home Language by Mother Tongue**



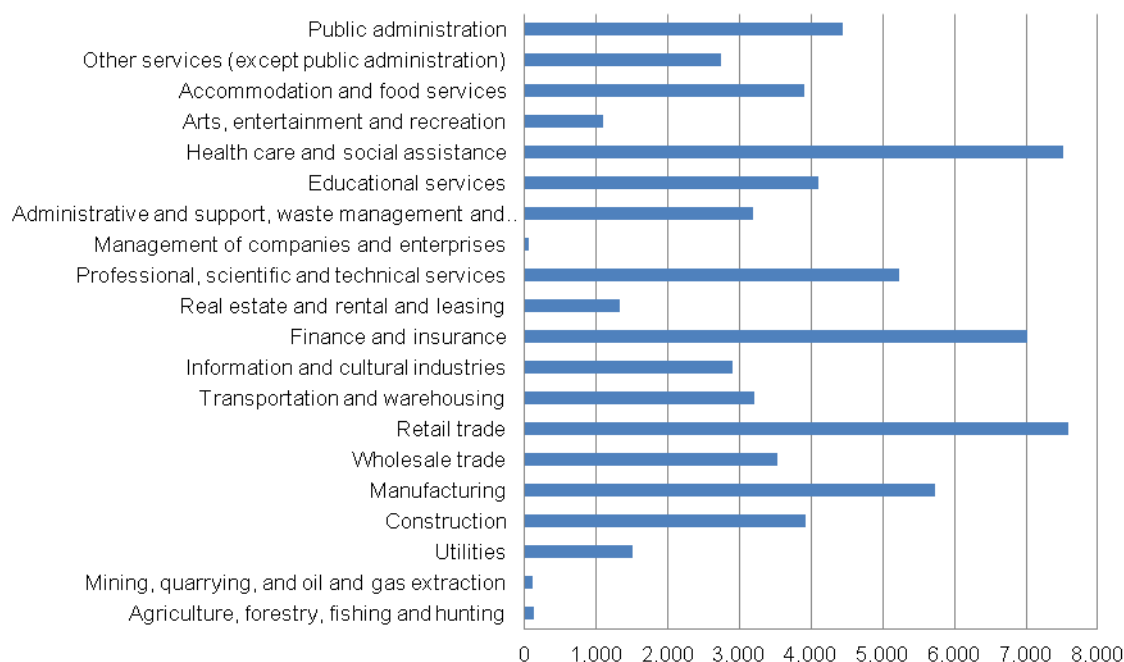
## **Labour Force**

It was reported that there are 71,656 Ajax residents in the labour force. Of this number, 50.8% of the Ajax labour force is female. The statistics also indicate that 7.3% of the labour force is reported to be self-employed. It is also reported that 4.5% of the Ajax labour force works from home.

In terms of the occupation of Ajax residents in the labour force, it is reported that 15,487 persons (21.6%) are in sales and service occupations. A total of 14,723 Ajax residents (20.5%) are in Business, Finance and Administration occupations. A breakdown is provided in Figure 12.

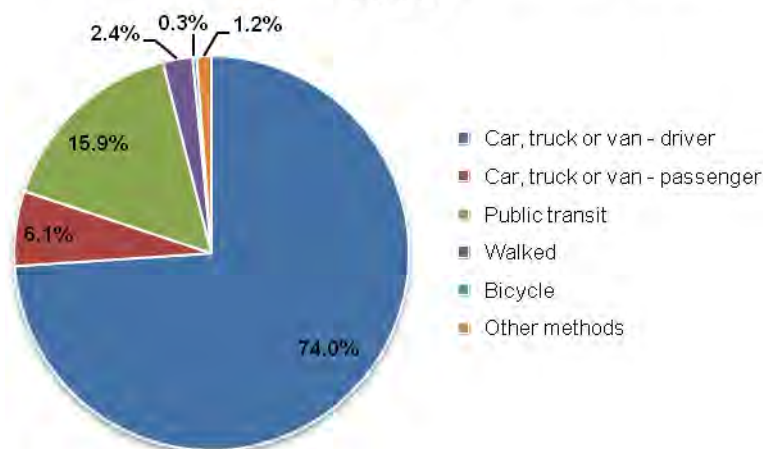
Of Ajax's total labour force, 75.8% reported working full time and 17.6% working part time. This is generally consistent with Regional percentages.

**Figure 12: Ajax - Labour Force by Industry Type**



The Ajax labour force has the highest number of workers employed in service industries, including the retail trade (10.6%), followed by health care and social assistance (10.5%), and finance and insurance (9.8%). This is followed by lower employment figures for traditional manufacturing (8%), and professional, scientific and technical services (7.3%). The data also reveals that the vast majority of the Ajax labour force drives to work with nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the labour force driving to work (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Ajax Labour Force by Mode of Transportation to Work**



The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy indicated that nearly half (47.3%) of the total employed labour force that resides in Ajax worked in the City of Toronto and nearly 80% of the Ajax work force was employed outside of Ajax. Only 20.4% of the resident labour force was employed in Ajax. Two other communities that have attracted the Ajax labour force include Pickering (11.5%) and Markham (6.3%).

The data also reveals that Ajax benefits from a regional labour pool. The data indicates that approximately 39% of local jobs are filled by Ajax residents. People employed in Ajax also reside in Whitby (15%), Oshawa (14%), Pickering (10%), Toronto (8%), Clarington (7%) and other municipalities.

The unemployment rate was reported to be higher in Ajax than in the Region of Durham overall. In 2014, the unemployment rate for Ajax was reported to be 8.07%. The male unemployment rate was reported to be 7.83%, and 8.3% for females. The unemployment rate for Ajax residents age 15-24 was reported to be 19.46%, whereas the unemployment rate for Ajax residents age 25 and over was reported at 6.15%.

The unemployment rate for the Region of Durham residents age 15-24 is reported to be 17.7%. For Durham residents age 25 and over, the unemployment rate was reported at 5.44%.

## **Families and Households**

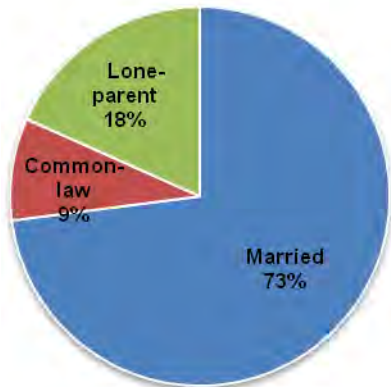
In 2014, there were 35,134 census families in private households in Ajax. There were 25,637 married couples comprising 73% of the census families in Ajax. A total of 18,081 married couples with children at home were reported, representing 51.5% of Ajax's reported families.

In terms of common-law couples, a total of 3,063 families were reported, 1,668 (54.4%) of which had children at home.

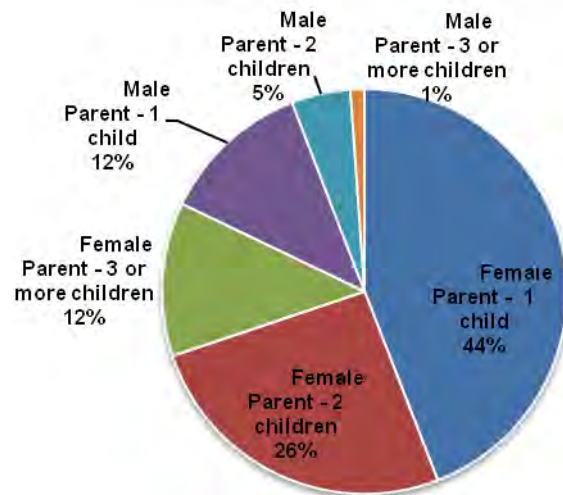
A total of 6,434 lone parent families with children were reported in Ajax in 2014 which represents 18% of all Ajax families. This is in contrast with lone-parent families reported for the Region of Durham as a whole, where lone parent families represent 13.2% of all families. Notably, 5,285 (82%) of lone parent families were headed by a female parent in Ajax.



**Figure 14 -  
Ajax: Census Families in Private  
Households**

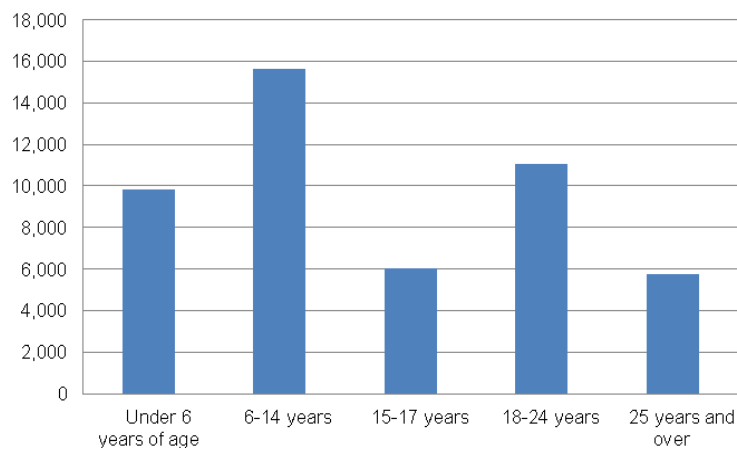


**Figure 15 - Ajax: Lone Parent Families**

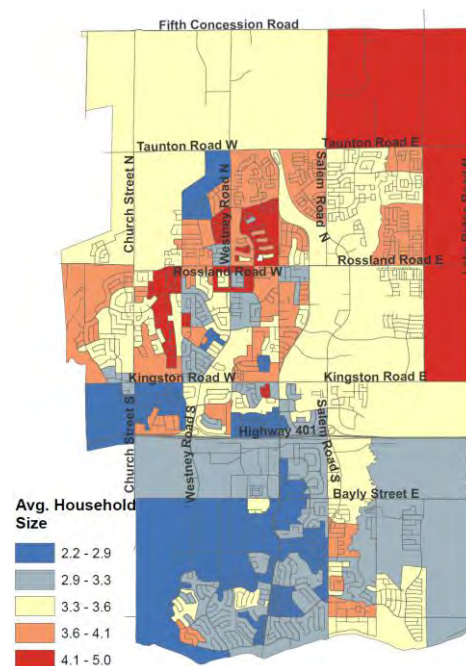


Of Ajax's reported population, fully 48,307 (38.4% of Ajax's population) consist of children living at home. Also noted is that 1,977 persons aged 65 years or older are reported to be living alone.

**Figure 16 - Ajax: Number of Children at Home**



**Figure 17 - Ajax: Distribution of Average Household Size**

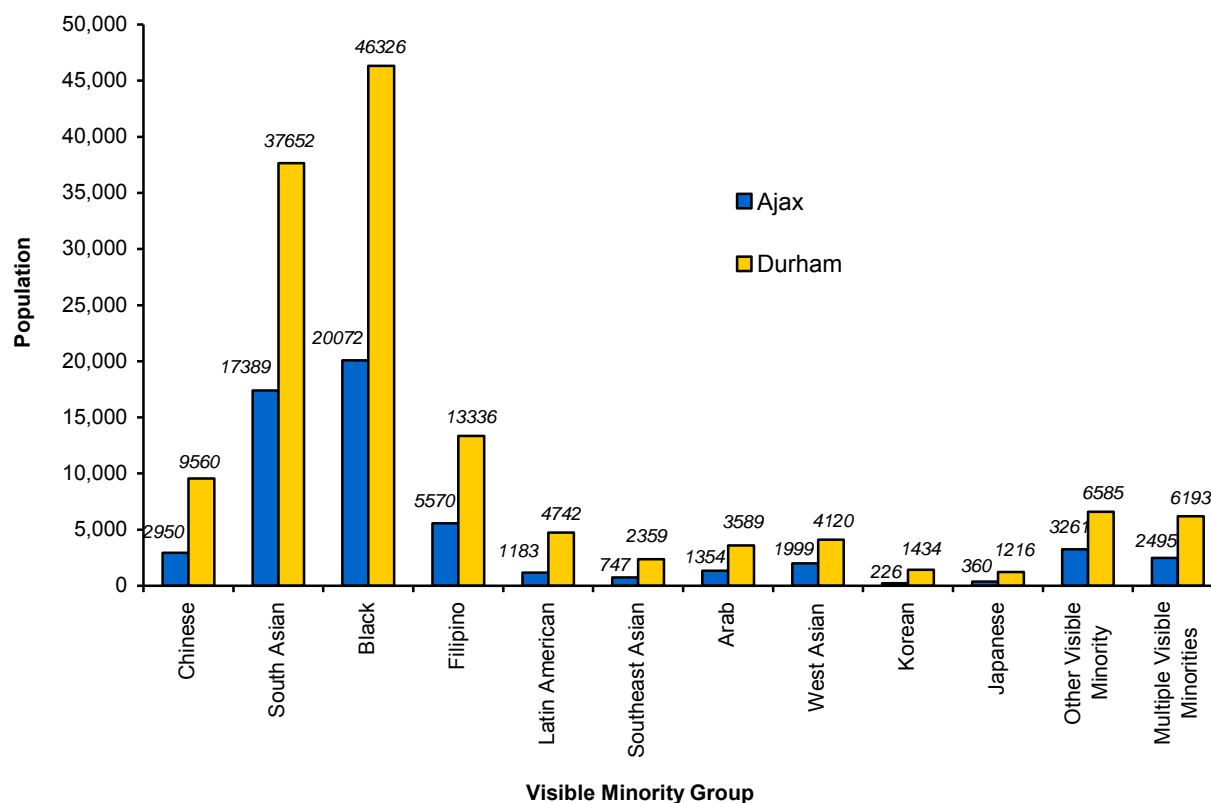


## **Visible Minorities**

The data indicates that there were 57,606 residents who were visible minorities in Ajax in 2014, representing 45.8% of the total population.

The data also indicates that Ajax is a more diverse community than other municipalities within the Region of Durham. The largest visible minority group was the Black population, with 20,072 residents representing 16% of the Ajax population (or 35% of all visible minorities). There were 17,389 south Asians in Ajax in 2014, representing 13.8% of the total Ajax resident population (or 30% of all resident visible minorities in Ajax). A total of 5,570 residents reported to be Filipino, representing 4.4% of the Ajax resident population (or 10% of the the Ajax resident visible minority population - See Figure 18).

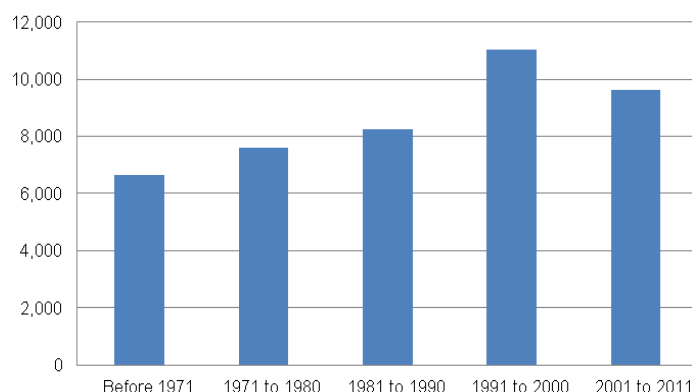
**Figure 18 - Visible Minorities: Ajax and Durham Region**



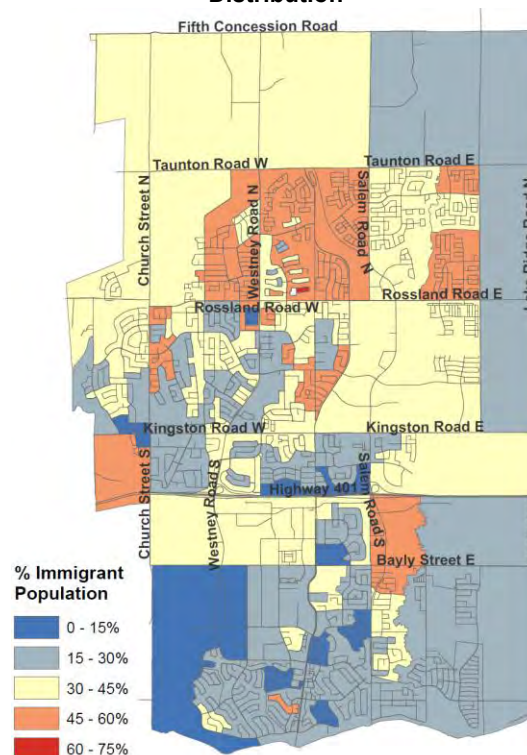
## **Immigration**

Ajax also presents a diverse and varied immigration picture. The data indicates that 34% of Ajax residents are immigrants from other countries. Of this total, nearly half (48.2%) reported having European origins, followed by South Asian origins (14.3%) and Caribbean origins (13.8%). The greatest number of immigrants in Ajax arrived in Canada between 1991 and 2000 (See Figure 19).

**Figure 19 -  
Immigrant Population in Ajax by Period of Immigration**



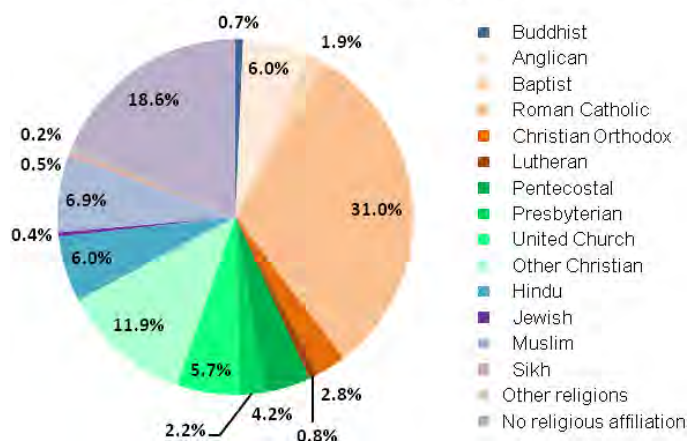
**Figure 20 – Ajax Immigrant Population  
Distribution**



## Religion

Of the total 125,666 residents in Ajax, 83,623 (66.5%) reported being Christian, with 38,927 Roman Catholics representing the largest share. A total of 18,622 residents (14.8%) reported practicing other religions, with 8,733 residents (6.9%) being Muslim and 7,537 residents (6.0%) being Hindu. The data notes that 23,421 Ajax residents (18.6%) reported no religious affiliation.

**Figure 21 - Ajax: Religion of Population**





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## **Building Permit Summary**

Building permit values are expected to return to more consistent levels of approximately \$223 million by year-end 2014, down from \$367 million in 2013. The high values in 2013 were attributed to a surge in ground related residential development ahead of changes in local and Regional development charges and permit issuances for key new projects including Medallion at Pat Bayly Square (Tower A), the Index Energy Steam Plant, Endras Infiniti and St. Mary and St. Abraam Coptic Orthodox Church. The 2014 figures include Lifetime Athletic (a three-storey health and fitness facility), a new public elementary school in the Imagination neighbourhood and a 126 unit retirement residence at 240 Old Harwood Avenue.

The total value of residential construction in 2014 is estimated to be over \$172 million (77% percent of the overall value of construction in Ajax). Of this figure, over \$149 million can be attributed to the construction of new homes.

It is estimated that 627 permits for new homes will be issued in 2015.

Over the next five years, over 2,300 new residential units are anticipated with estimated construction value of over \$840 million (See Figure 2, Page 3). Approximately 159,000 m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floor area is also projected during this period. Overall, the total construction activity over the next five years is expected to be fairly consistent with an estimated construction value of \$1.4 billion.

## **Future Residential Growth in Ajax**

With redevelopment comes an opportunity to create healthy neighbourhoods where people will want to live, work, recreate, shop and spend time. Redevelopment should incorporate a mix of new housing, neighbourhood-serving retail, employment, schools, daycares, parks and other amenities to serve the local community. The creation of communities that act as hubs for a mix of activity around priority transit areas including concentrated development areas within a five to ten minute walk will maximize public investment and encourage transit ridership.

In terms of new greenfield development sites, the following represents the primary growth areas over the next 20 years:

These areas include:

- i. Northwest Ajax (A9): 1,200 units (including developments such as Cougs (Ajax), and the Workman's Circle sites;
- ii. Southeast Ajax (A3): 1,000 units (including lands owned by John Boddy Developments, Magnum Opus Developments and the Finchrose/Daste sites (Brand)
- iii. Northeast Ajax (A8): 800 units, including lands currently being developed by Sundial Homes, Medallion Developments and Luvian Homes.

Looking forward, although residential growth in Ajax will occur through development of designated greenfield sites, the majority will occur through intensification. Approximately 62% of

the Town's residential units supply from 2015 onward will occur through intensification, including the following locations:

- i. The Downtown – expected to reinforce the Town's civic and institutional heart, supported by compact residential and mixed use neighbourhoods designed with an urban character. Sites within the Downtown that are anticipated to be the subject of new intensification proposals include:
  - a. Bayly/Harwood;
  - b. Ajax Plaza;
  - c. Siemens/Skymark;
  - d. Former Atlas Tag site;
  - e. Harwood Avenue/Falby Court;
  - f. Bayly/Monarch site;
  - g. Harwood Avenue/Clements Road;
  - h. Ballycliffe Lodge.

If residential intensification proposals are advanced on all of the above sites, the Town's intensification target of 1,850 units in the Downtown by 2031 will be easily surpassed.

- ii. The Uptown – expected to transform into a compact mixed use precinct with a commercial focus to support Kingston Road as a priority corridor for transit improvements. Retail and commercial uses should generally be located closer to Kingston Road, and residential uses located to the north where they can comfortably interface with existing residential neighbourhoods. The Official Plan has an intensification target of 1,850 units in the Uptown by 2031.
- iii. Pickering Village (Kingston Road Corridor) – which is a unique corridor location and is expected to transform into a significant tourist and community asset. Although relatively modest residential growth is forecast within the Village, applications will be subject to a high level of public and design scrutiny. Up to 150 units may occur in this area.
- iv. Intensification Sites – Nearly 1,000 units can be expected through intensification, which is expected to occur in Ajax in various locations, including:
  - a. Designated elementary school sites that have been declared surplus by the DDSB, the DCSSB or other agencies;
  - b. Land assemblies of larger residential lots for medium density developments;
  - c. Intensification along arterial road corridors;
  - d. The GO Station mixed use area;
  - e. Other remnant vacant parcels of land.

Fewer new developments will consist of single detached dwellings. There is a market preference for grade related multiple attached housing in all areas (including freehold and condominium townhouses in standard, back-to-back and stacked formats). Staff have also received inquiries for high density apartment developments and anticipate that applications will be filed on one or more sites within this term of Council. The future of development in Ajax will be characterized by "building-up" as opposed to "building-out".

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## **Summary**

Based on the data provided in this report, the following demographic characteristics are noted:

- In the 20 year period from 1994 to 2014, Ajax's population has more than doubled. Residential growth in the future will continue to be strong, but will level off and stabilize;
- New growth will tend to focus on medium and higher density residential developments and non-residential uses;
- Housing affordability is an issue, especially for first-time buyers, empty nesters and non-traditional families;
- Housing forms need to be responsive to the needs of a growing seniors population, first-time buyers and renters;
- The Town needs to facilitate suitable opportunities to address pronounced youth unemployment, given that the youth population represents a sizeable demographic;
- A significant number of young Ajax adults over the age of 25 are still living at home;
- Non-traditional and lone parent families represent a sizeable proportion of households in Ajax (nearly 1 in 5);
- Ajax appears to be the most diverse municipality in the Region of Durham, with nearly 46% of the population being visible minorities;
- English is by far the predominant mother tongue of Ajax residents, but the mother tongue of nearly 1 in 5 residents represent a wide range of languages;
- Additional employment opportunities are needed for Ajax residents, which will help to reduce the strain of commuters on the transportation system;
- Flexibility in the uses and re-use of existing housing is needed to respond to the needs of a diversifying population, extended families or as secondary income opportunities.

## **Potential Strategic Objectives**

The following statements may be considered as strategic objectives to address the observations noted in this report:

1. Encourage the provision of a wide range of housing options to accommodate the needs of an increasingly diverse and aging resident population.
2. Facilitate and support increased employment opportunities that respond to the breadth and diversity of the Ajax labour force, including employment support to serve the growing needs of Ajax's youth.
3. Encourage intensification opportunities along transit corridors and active transportation routes to provide residents with a broader range of travel options.

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# Strategic Planning and Economic Development Initiatives

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Community Action Plan  
Strategy Session  
December, 2014

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Town of Ajax  
Planning and Development  
Services

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## **Introduction**

This paper identifies potential strategies that build upon actions undertaken over the last term of Council. It suggests new initiatives to further strengthen the Town's economic base, build efficiencies, continue to improve its image and make strategic community investments.

## **Facilitating Job Creation**

The Town's role in job creation is to facilitate a climate of investment through:

- assisting in retaining businesses and helping them grow through business support including thorough responses to enquiries and proposals;
- attracting and facilitating private investment through innovation and promotion including: exploring expanded land use permissions in the vicinity of the GO Station, examining the feasibility of an entertainment and tourism node, exploring the implementation of a Development Permit System and streamlining processes through *PriorityPath Prime*;
- ensuring that municipal plans and procedures facilitate positive, well-planned and sustainable development outcomes;
- investing in public infrastructure including roads, trails and environmental improvements.

Over the last term of Council, the Town completed numerous infrastructure projects that will help facilitate private investment and job creation including:

- The reconstruction of Old Kingston Road, a major part of the Pickering Village revitalization, was completed in June, 2011. A new urban square created a central meeting place as a location for events and public activities.
- In 2012, the realignment of Station Street was completed following the acquisition and demolition of the former Avery Dennison building to significantly improve traffic flow from the Downtown to the GO Station.
- In 2014, work started on the Rossland Road realignment west from Church Street, including a bridge over Duffins and Urfe Creeks that will substantially improve traffic flow.
- Improvements to the Achilles Stormwater Management Pond to facilitate four premium auto dealerships in collaboration with Durham Region, the TRCA and business owners.
- Ongoing streetscape improvements in the Downtown.
- Opening of new facilities at Audley Recreation Centre and the Ajax Memorial Pool.
- Constructing trails including: the Carruthers Trail (Kingston Rd. to Rossland Rd.); Achilles Trail (Porte Rd. to Salem Rd.); Taunton Trail (Church St. to Ravenscroft Rd.); Salem Trail (Ringer Rd. to Kerrison Dr.); Westney Trail (401 to Ritchie Ave.); a pedestrian bridge over Carruthers Creek as part of the Waterfront Trail; completing the Audley Trail south of Bayly Street and the Duffins Trail north of Rossland Road.

The following initiatives undertaken in the previous term of Council relate to process enhancements, promotions and incentives to facilitate job creation.

## Priority**P**ATH<sup>®</sup>

Priority**P**ATH earmarks the Town's commitment to streamline municipal planning and building approvals for small to medium-sized employment land developments. Recognized as an industry 'Best Practice' by *Competitive Ready* and ISO, Priority**P**ATH was a catalyst for over \$50 million in private capital investment, including a \$4 million 40,000 sq. ft. premium office space expansion by Intact Insurance, adding 200 jobs.



In 2011, the Town received the *Business Retention & Expansion International Award* for the 'First for Business Corporate Calling Program' by BREI and was named 'The Americas Top 10 Micro-City of the Future' in Cost Effectiveness, Infrastructure and Economic Potential.



In an effort to promote cycling tourism, the Ajax *Welcome Cyclists Network* was launched in 2012. Starting with 10 participating locations and quickly growing to 20 locations, the program won the Economic Developers Council of Ontario's Marketing Award for Tourism Programming.



In 2012, the Town applied for Share the Road's *Bicycle Friendly Designation* that identifies municipalities working toward making safe routes for cyclists. Ajax was one of the first four municipalities in Ontario to receive the designation, and the first in Durham Region.



In 2012, the Town applied for a *Competitive Ready* designation that included an evaluation of over 175 factors in 10 categories. Ajax earned its highest scores in physical infrastructure, organizational effectiveness, sustainable practices, real estate and business climate. Ajax is the first municipality in Canada to be awarded the designation. It enables staff to quickly and efficiently respond to investment inquiries.



OnTrackAjax.ca was launched in mid-2012 to provide one location for updates and videos of business investment. The program promotes business news, expansions, new investment and job creation. The campaign will run through 2015 has promoted over 2,400 new jobs.



A key sector in Ajax is Healthcare and Human Services. In 2013, Council endorsed the *Ajax Physician Recruitment Program* to attract and assist physicians in Ajax.



In 2013, *The New Downtown Ajax* was launched including a redesigned website that promotes new initiatives and provides project updates including "Vision at Pat Bayly Square" and "Grand Harwood Place", two major projects using incentives under the *Downtown Community Improvement Plan*.

## Priority**P**ROPERTY<sup>®</sup>

In 2014, Priority**P**roperty was launched as the first municipal certified site program in Ontario. It identifies qualified properties to ensure that they are "shovel ready" for investors.



In 2013, the *Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan* was approved, allowing the Town to offer development incentives including reduced development charges, building permit fees and planning fees. Grants for façade and signage improvements started in 2014.



*Site Selection Magazine* is a leading publication for the investment industry. Annually, the magazine features leading municipalities across the globe deemed 'best to invest'. In 2014, Ajax was recognized as Canada's Top Economic Development groups.

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## ***Business Support***

The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy recommends the development of a business centre, and a youth/business network. The Business Incubator and Youth Initiative is being developed to combine the two recommendations to create a unique, proactive approach to business connection, while providing Ajax youth with real world experience.

Business Centre Incubation is a process which provides a framework of support to help entrepreneurs build profitable and sustainable companies. Since starting a business can be such a challenge, a Business Centre will help nurture start-up companies until they have established themselves firmly in the community. A Business Centre provides access to business advisory support, management guidance, educational programs, mentor networks, office space, and other resources. The goal of an incubator is not only to ensure the small business survives the start-up period where they are most vulnerable, but to produce confident, successful on-going businesses. The resulting community benefits of a Business Centre are healthy companies and accelerated job growth.

Youth entrepreneurship has been touted by educators and employers as an alternative means for acquiring skills and attitudes necessary for entering the workforce. Becoming an owner of a micro or small enterprise could be an alternative for a young person who has an entrepreneurial mindset and also possesses the desire to gain skills and knowledge applicable in the 'real world.'

The concept of a Business Centre with Youth Entrepreneurship component is new, especially in Durham Region. Staff have been developing the concept with several regional partners with the intent to present the program in 2015.

## **Improving the Downtown**

A series of initiatives are underway in the Ajax Downtown. The following provides an update and proposals for future action.

### ***Ajax Plaza***

On July 15, 2013 the Town and Windcorp Grand Harwood Place Ltd. entered into a Development Agreement and Agreement of Purchase and Sale to sell 0.95 hectares (2.35 acres) of Town-owned land on the west side of Harwood Avenue, south of Kings Crescent but excluding a 20 metre wide road right-of-way next to the existing commercial properties. A ten-storey residential and commercial mixed use development is proposed on the site (Phase 1A). Upon completion, Grand Harwood Place would generate \$120 million in private capital investment, generating \$60.7 million in labour income and \$1.7 million in property tax revenue in the first ten years.

Ajax Plaza is a Priority Site within the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. Planning completed for the overall plaza to-date envisions a grid pattern of urban streets and blocks, broad visioning and massing and an understanding of transportation and engineering implications. However, more detailed site planning outside of Phase 1A is yet to occur. It should be noted that, in accordance with the agreement with Windcorp, the obligation of Windcorp for the acquisition of the Phase 1B lands has expired.

The fundamental barrier to comprehensive redevelopment of the entire plaza is the divided land ownership pattern. The Town is the largest owner, with parking areas and driveways falling



under its jurisdiction. Ideally, the site should fall under common ownership to facilitate redevelopment, but this approach is cost prohibitive. Another approach is needed.

The alternative is to break up the site into manageable pieces. The Town, as a municipality and primary land owner should lead the process by putting in place needed public infrastructure and leading the redevelopment process. To start, the Town should acquire land to guide the redevelopment of the plaza into an urban destination. Action is needed on the following fronts:

1. Land acquisition to implement a grid pattern of new, comfortable, safe and attractive public streets is needed. This will set the stage for phased urban redevelopment on separate blocks. The Town's By-law for the Sale and Other Disposition of Land allocates the proceeds from land sales to the CIP Development Improvement Reserve to acquiring land for new public roads in the Downtown.

The Town is undertaking the Downtown Road Connectivity Review which is a Schedule 'C' Class Environmental Assessment (EA). This EA needs to be completed to inform the design and costs for future roads and related infrastructure.

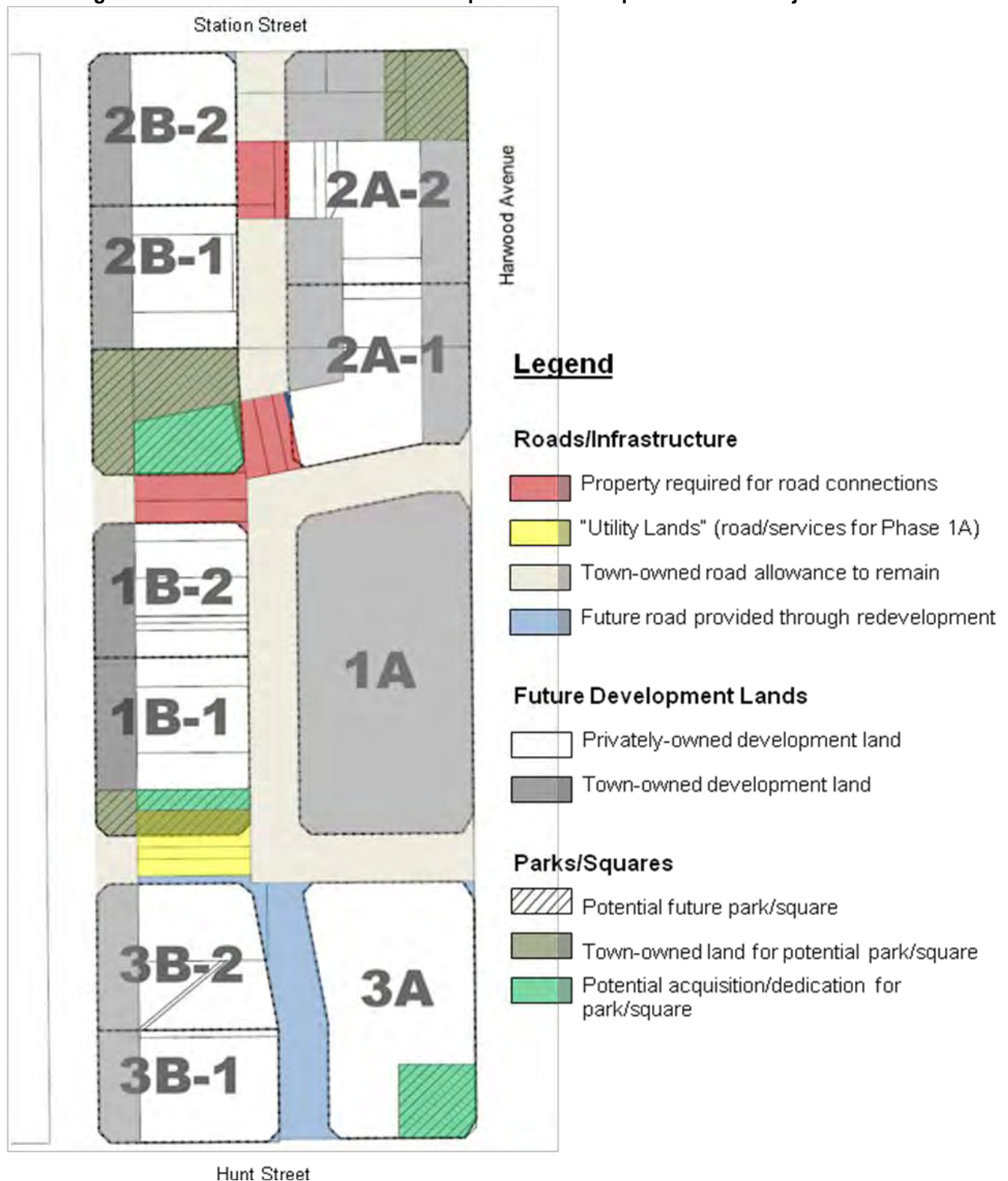
2. Focused land acquisition is needed to allow for the development of two new urban squares/parkettes (in Phase 1B and in Phase 2) to contribute to the quality of life of future residents, provide visual relief in an urban setting, elevate the environmental quality of the area and reduce the demand on stormwater infrastructure. This responds to the need for locally accessible public amenity space as redevelopment occurs and facilitates positive change. Acquisition can be funded through cash-in-lieu of parkland contributions from local area developments, municipal parkland reserves and/or other sources if necessary.
3. The Town should assume a partnership role with potential future developer(s) by enabling the disposal of Town-owned lands at the plaza as part of staged redevelopment. Each future redevelopment phase at the plaza (e.g. Phase 1-B) can be divided into two, which will improve the likelihood of land assembly, while still providing for appropriate redevelopment opportunities. Figure 1 shows the minimum recommended development parcel sizes for mixed-use redevelopment with underground parking.

For example, Parcel 1B-1 would encompass only 3 private ownerships and part of the Town-owned rear parking lot (east side of the Commercial Avenue road allowance). Parcel 1B-1 would have an area of 2,600 m<sup>2</sup> (0.65 acres) with 47 metres of frontage and 56 metres of lot depth. It is estimated that 500 m<sup>2</sup> of ground floor retail space, 500 m<sup>2</sup> of office space and 70 apartment units could be accommodated in a 5 storey building with 2 levels of underground parking.

The feasibility of redevelopment on these parcels would need to be tested through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

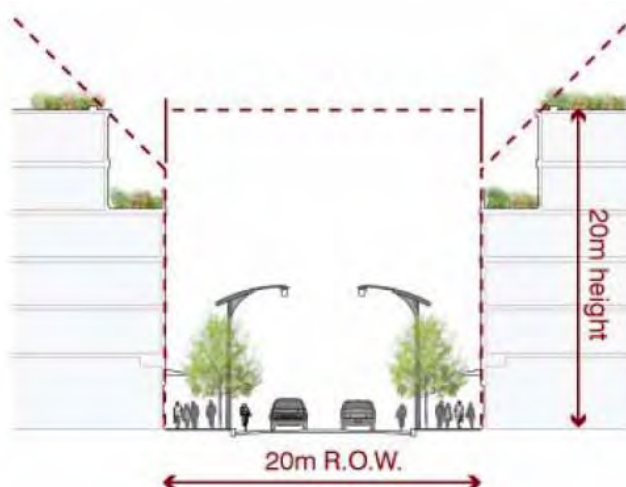
4. The Town's participation as a redevelopment partner should be based on the following conditions:
  - a. Parking should be provided underground. Development parcels need to be large enough for an efficient underground parking layout. Staff estimate that parcels should not be less than 45 metres wide to allow for two drive aisles with parking on either side. If necessary, strategic land acquisitions/sales could facilitate the process.

**Figure 1: Potential Town-owned Land Acquisition and Disposal Scheme – Ajax Plaza**



- b. Access points to future development should be harmonized and placed to the rear of buildings to minimize disruption to the pedestrian environment.
- c. Future redevelopment should provide for active grade-related mixed uses in all project buildings, connections into future steam distribution infrastructure and adherence to other sustainability (green development) criteria.
- d. The Town should lead the process through issuing RFP's to qualified developers in cooperation with interested contiguous owners to enable redevelopment. Consultation with interested owners is the first step for gauging interest.
- e. Densities should be provided at a minimum of 2.5 FSI, consistent with the Town's long term planning for development in the Downtown. Redevelopment should provide for buildings not less than 4 storeys tall along the internal streets which is an appropriate scale next to a 20 metre wide right-of-way. Buildings can be stepped back if they exceed 4 storeys to allow for sun and sky exposure. Building heights should not exceed 10 storeys, in keeping with building height compatibility criteria for the Steam Plant.

**Figure 2: Angular Plane/Building Massing Along Internal Street**



### ***Vision at Pat Bayly Square***

Medallion Developments (Bayly Square) Limited has received site plan approval for the first phase of a three phase development at the southwest corner of Bayly Street and Harwood Avenue. The initial 318 unit, 25-storey building in the first phase (Building A) is under construction. Phase 1 will include two mixed-use buildings at a height of 25 storeys and will accommodate a total of 562 rental residential apartment units.

The following is the anticipated schedule for the completion of the first phase of development:

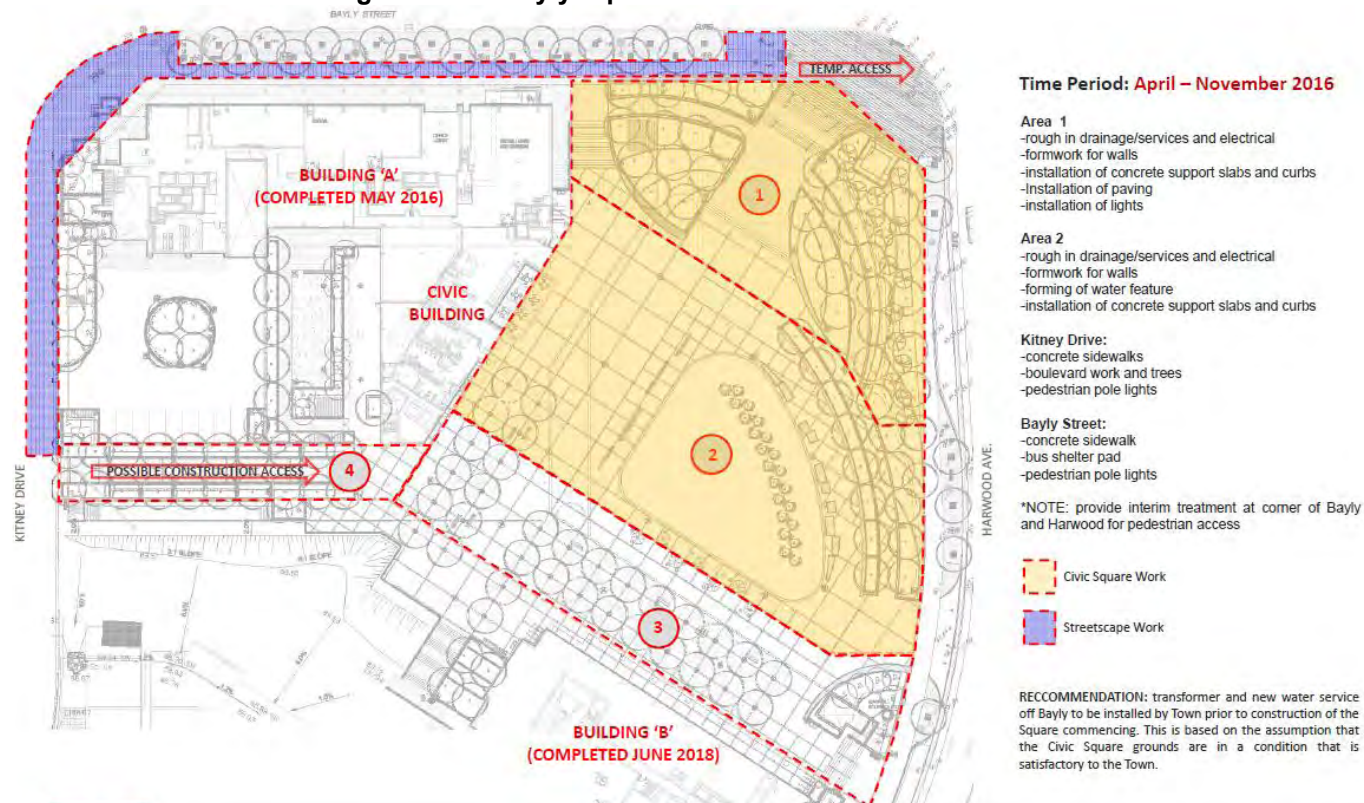
Project Component	Start	Complete
Building A	underway	May, 2016
Building B	June, 2016	September, 2018
Pat Bayly Square	April, 2016	September, 2018

The centre phase of the overall development is slated to commence in 2018 and the south phase is slated to commence in 2022. Upon completion, this project will generate 200 jobs, with 107 spin-off jobs. Total private capital investment for the entire project is estimated at \$300 million. Town of Ajax property tax revenues are estimated at \$36.5 million over the next 40 years, with \$1.4 million per year thereafter.

### Pat Bayly Square

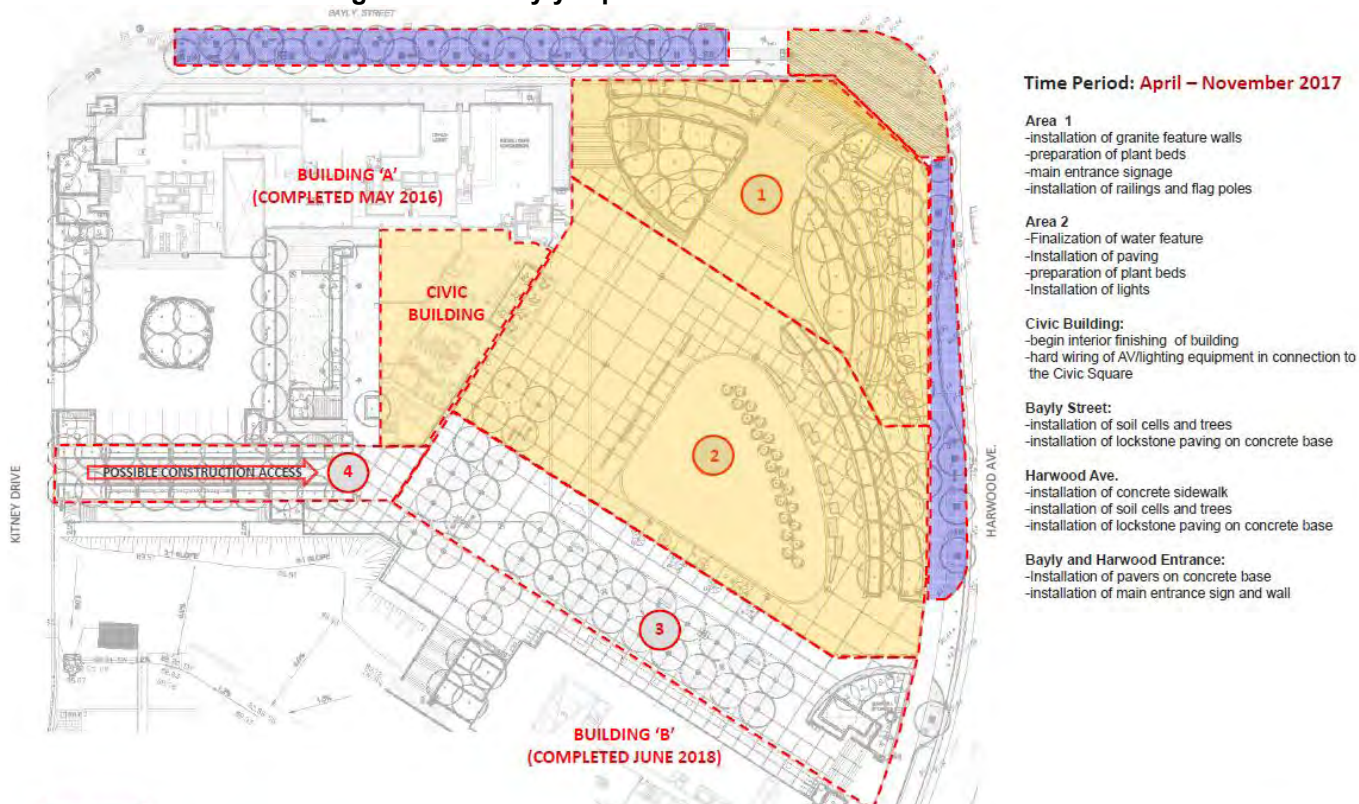
On May 24, 2011 Council endorsed the site plan, general layout and finishings of Pat Bayly Square. Construction phasing and timing for the square is illustrated in Figures 3, 4 and 5.

**Figure 3: Pat Bayly Square Phase 1 Construction**

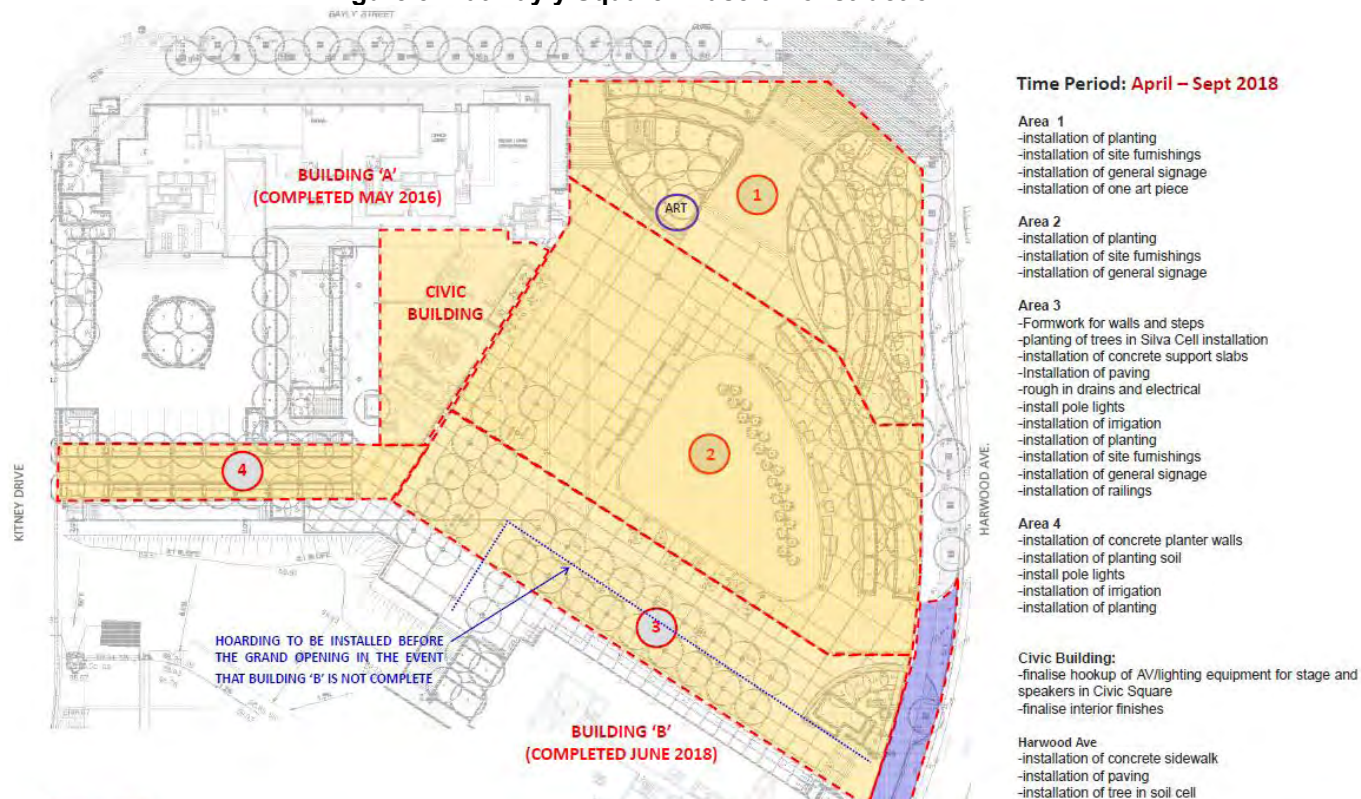




**Figure 4: Pat Bayly Square Phase 2 Construction**



**Figure 5: Pat Bayly Square Phase 3 Construction**



The majority of the Square will be hard surfaced and designed to provide multi-functional spaces to accommodate vendors, entertainers or larger events. Locations for public art have been identified. The potential for a media screen is protected for within the building design above the interior civic space. Landscaping will include two double rows of trees, aligned to reinforce sight lines to the Ajax Community Centre and to soften the edges of the Square.

Timing of the development will allow for Building B to be above grade before construction of the square commences to minimize the potential for disruption between the two projects.

### ***Index Energy Steam Plant***

At the beginning of 2011, an Agreement of Purchase and Sale, Steam Distribution License Agreement and Site Plan Approval was completed for the redevelopment of the Ajax Steam Plant into a modern biomass fuelled carbon-neutral co-generation district energy facility. With a new and reliable facility in place, opportunities will be provided for an efficient and lower cost local energy alternative, including steam and hot and chilled water for the neighbouring Downtown area. Using new emissions control technology and internalized processes, the facility will also generate up to 25 megawatts of electricity. New municipal road infrastructure projects will be designed to include the required piping (as funded by Index) for ready access to a new lower cost energy source.

The project schedule will have electricity production from the facility by year-end 2014 or early 2015. The completion of the site plan works (landscaping, paving, etc.) will be completed by summer, 2015. The grand opening for the facility will occur in summer, 2015. The Steam Plant project represents a private capital investment of \$10 million, creating 15 jobs. Benefits also include reduced waste by diverting wood biomass from landfill, reduced fossil fuel consumption and reduced energy costs for local industries choosing to use steam generated from the plant.

**Figure 6: Index Energy Steam Plant Redevelopment Nearing Completion**



As new development occurs in the Downtown, developers will be encouraged to have projects connect to steam distribution infrastructure as a low cost and sustainable energy alternative. This should be included as a requirement when Town-owned lands at Ajax Plaza are offered for sale.



## **Enhancing Redevelopment Opportunities**

A number of opportunities are possible to achieve physical improvement in well-used areas of Ajax. The following initiatives highlight priority areas.

### ***Central Employment Area and the Ajax GO Station***

The Central Employment Area is bounded by Highway 401, Mills Road, Hunt Street, Mackenzie Avenue/Bayly Street and Westney Road. The area is characterized by a mix of heavier industrial uses, outdoor storage and a mix of older and obsolete industrial buildings that in many cases have been converted to other uses. In spite of its location, it is not well connected to its surroundings. It is an area in need of positive change.

A Class Environmental Assessment is underway to examine the potential for extending Hunt Street through to Westney Road, opposite O'Brien Court. This alignment was incorporated into the Ajax Official Plan in 2010 to provide additional access between the Ajax GO Station and the Downtown, and to deal with potential land use intensification in the area. To accommodate the transportation demand and to address existing operational issues, the most positive impact would come from establishing a grid pattern of streets including extending Finley Avenue north to Frankcom Street and Hunt Street to Westney Road. This future road network will also support the potential redevelopment of the lands between the Ajax GO Station and the Downtown.

**Figure 7: Central Employment Area and the Ajax GO Station**



Through the most recent Official Plan Review, land use policies were adopted that created the "GO Transit Station Mixed Use Area" as one of a series of intensification areas in Ajax. The designation applies to lands within 500 metres of the GO Station mostly on the west side of Westney Road as an opportunity to build upon its accessibility and locational advantages. The intent is to create a mixed use centre that includes services for commuters and enables living and working while minimizing car use.

An important feature of this area is the opportunity for office or live-work employment and residential uses next to high order transit. Based on the current size and configuration of the area, a modest 350 residential units have been projected in the area to 2031. Permission for residential uses is contingent upon the creation of employment spaces to a minimum of 50 jobs per hectare in the first phase of development, while satisfying land use compatibility and other criteria.

Retail or service commercial uses are permissible provided they do not exceed 500 square metres in size or require outdoor storage. The maximum total floor area is prescribed at 2.5 x the area of the site (FSI), provided that in all development, employment uses represent at least one-third of the total density in stand alone or mixed use buildings. The minimum density is 1.0 FSI.

There are barriers to the achievement of these intensification targets. For example, Metrolinx's purchase of lands in the area including Transit Square (adjacent to the GO station) and the vacant site at 180 Westney Road limits the potential for intensification in the vicinity of the GO Station. Regardless, the strategic importance of the GO Station and the land use opportunities for redevelopment and new investment should still be pursued.

On October 8, 2013, the Ontario Municipal Board issued a Decision on an appeal to Amendment 128 to the Durham Regional Official Plan by Nordeagle Developments Ltd. in Whitby which allows for higher density mixed use development including residential, office, commercial and business park uses in the vicinity of the Whitby GO Station. These permissions go beyond the strict 500 metre limit prescribed around the Ajax GO Station.

The ability to extend enhanced land use permissions beyond 500 metres of the Ajax GO Station, including additional properties on the north side of Bayly Street east and west of Westney Road should be explored. To undertake this process, a scoped municipal comprehensive review of the Town's employment lands would be needed, informed by an updated employment land strategy, in order to inform revised policies within the Town's Official Plan. An amendment to the Durham Regional Official Plan may also be required.

### ***Midtown Improvement Strategy***

It has been a long standing municipal desire to pursue improvement to the built condition of Harwood Avenue from Highway 401 to Kingston Road. The area contains a mix of older and obsolete single storey commercial buildings, modest detached dwellings, parking areas and other uses. The Durham Regional Official Plan designates the area as a 'Regional Corridor' and the Town's intensification policies as established through the Official Plan Review (*OPA 41*), contemplates mixed use development including medium density residential, ground floor retail and commercial uses. The Town's Long Range Capital Forecast identifies the initiation of the Harwood Avenue Improvement Study in 2016. The study would evaluate land use, urban design and capital investments to direct long term improvement and rehabilitation along this section of road.

The study would include:

- zoning and urban design recommendations;
- an ultimate road design including sidewalk and bicycle facility locations;
- property requirements,
- access locations;
- utility needs and other improvements.



The study will also address whether a Community Improvement Plan is an appropriate mechanism to spur redevelopment.

**Figure 8: Harwood Avenue - Midtown**



### ***Pickering Village***

A series of strategic initiatives have been completed for Pickering Village including the preparation of a Heritage Conservation District Plan and a Community Improvement Plan. As a result of municipal investment into Old Kingston Road, the Village Square and St. Francis Centre, Pickering Village has begun the process of transformation. In the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, Pickering Village is identified as an area that could, over time, be developed into a tourist destination.

Health + Wellness and Tourism are two of the Town's four key economic sectors. One trend in the Tourism industry is to combine health and tourism pursuits. Wellness Tourism is defined as travel or visits associated with the primary (or secondary) pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one's personal well-being. Travelers will typically plan their trips to include visits to spas, health resorts, fitness centres, yoga events, parks and specialty eating establishments. They seek healthy living options, rejuvenation and relaxation. They also seek meaning and connection, authentic experiences and approaches to managing and preventing disease.

Wellness travelers seek opportunities to maintain their health during their business or other travel (called secondary wellness travelers), including hotels with healthy culinary menus, extensive or unique options for exercise and access to other local active living amenities (trails, parks, water, etc.).

In addition, local tourism based businesses support cycling in Ajax through the "Ontario by Bike Program (formerly the Welcome Cyclists Network). This program promotes bicycle friendly businesses and cycle tourism by designating businesses that offer basic amenities to accommodate cyclists including secure bike storage, healthy food options and local cycling route information. The Town should strive to designate Pickering Village an "Ontario by Bike" District by adding 10 more local area businesses to the program and by developing cycling related packages that provide promotion options for those businesses.

As of 2014, nearly 40 businesses in Pickering Village fell into the Health and Wellness category including Physicians, Chiropractors, Pain Management Clinics, Massage Therapy, Salons and Spas. There are also a dozen unique eateries which can form part of a wellness experience. Wellness Tourism is projected to grow at a rate of 9.1% annually through to 2017. With the

growth of Wellness Tourism, there is an opportunity to position Pickering Village to accommodate this market. Staff intends to explore this approach with the Pickering Village BIA.

### *Heritage Conservation District*

The Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan was adopted by Council on March 25, 2013 under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The principles for future development include preserving and enhancing the heritage character of the area as a distinct district and creating a destination/community focal point for Ajax and the Region. Also important is its support for commercial diversification by creating the conditions for small businesses to thrive with Old Kingston Road as a focal point.

The HCD Plan promotes beautifying the area, improving public spaces, increasing pedestrian friendliness, increasing amenities for cyclists and strengthening the area's identity in people's minds.

Municipal capital works have been recommended by the HCD Plan to improve the image along Kingston Road (Highway 2) by introducing appealing gateway markers and by screening parked cars, garbage bins and undistinguished rear facades. The HCD recommends addressing the lack of consistency and the lack of visual screening on the Kingston Road edge through such measures as using a consistent and more effective fencing system, landscaping, gateway markers and other streetscape improvements.

**Figure 9: Pickering Village**



In addition, it is expected that new and contextually appropriate development will be pursued and facilitated in strategic locations.

### *Community Improvement Plan*

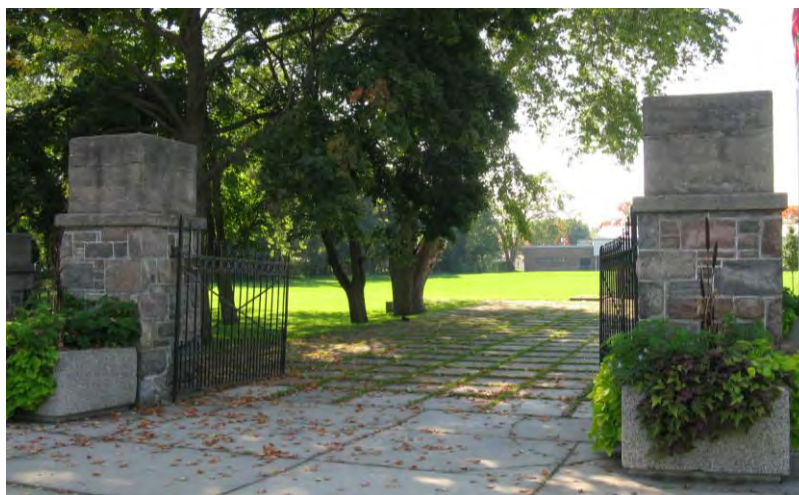
The Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan (CIP) provides positive direction for future development and offers incentives for focused improvement that is sympathetic to the historical character of the area. The CIP is a demonstration of municipal leadership and commitment to community improvement by supporting the rehabilitation of heritage buildings and focused redevelopment where appropriate. The continuation of an annual municipal grant is recommended to facilitate meaningful improvements to existing private buildings, exclusive of municipal capital works.

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### *Memorial Park*

Memorial Park has been identified as a site worthy of special examination to determine whether the existing Village Arena and other buildings can be re-purposed to other uses. A long term vision for the site and abutting privately owned lands is needed in keeping with the recommendations of the Pickering Village Study.

**Figure 10: Memorial Park**



The Economic Development Strategy and the Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Study recommend improving the campus of Town-owned facilities surrounding Memorial Park as an arts and cultural hub. Community centre and library uses should be supported and enhanced through future redevelopment. Town owned facilities are a strong economic benefit, attracting small business and fostering the potential for increased festivals, events and tourism. Enhancements to on-site public parking to support area business would also be explored.

The Recreation, Parks and Culture Master Plan indicates that Pickering Village is an appropriate area for the Town to focus on enriching the presence of the arts and cultural community. A campus-style development is supported at a suitable location in Pickering Village which could provide a range of facilities including indoor and/or outdoor performance venues; studio spaces for visual and the multi-media arts; meeting and gathering facilities; exhibition space and commercial/retail space.

Possibilities to re-purpose the space for community uses and potential (re)development will be explored. The Study will include an extensive public consultation component and is proposed to commence in 2017, subject to the approval of the capital budget.

### **Supporting Tourism**

A number of initiatives within the Economic Development Tourism Strategy have been implemented to focus business investment attraction and expansion efforts on tourism. This includes: dedicated tourism website [www.visitajax.ca](http://www.visitajax.ca); forging strong partnerships with Durham Tourism and Central Counties Tourism; developing Cycle Tourism, including participation in the Ontario by Bike Program (previously the Welcome Cyclists Network); hosting the 2015 Pan American Games; and developing marketing materials promoting tourism in Ajax.

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### ***Leverage Pan Am***

Hosting the Pan Am Games in Ajax in 2015 allows the opportunity to leverage new state-of-the-art facilities to raise Ajax's identity as a destination for major regional, provincial, national and international competition. The typical bid cycle for major provincial and national softball championship events is every two years, which would allow the Town to focus on bids for events from 2016 onward.

In keeping with the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy and the Tourism Attraction Plan, the goal of hosting one major provincial event each year, one major national event within the first five years and one major international event within the first ten years is recommended. Additionally, serious consideration should be given to establishing a recurring annual softball showcase or tournament.

**Figure 11: President's Choice Pan-Am Ballpark**



### ***Using What We Have***

Specific initiatives developed for the Pan Am Games should be considered for re-use in future tourism/event opportunities including: the web portal; sponsorship packages and fact sheets; the Town of Ajax guide; the legacy theme song; legacy videos; post cards; souvenir lines; and the social media strategy.

### ***Building on Relationships***

Volunteers are the foundation of nearly every successful nonprofit organization and competition organizing committee. A legacy of the Pan Am Games is the creation, development and engagement of an anticipated 500 volunteers that will have gained skills and experience through the event. Some of these volunteers could be asked to participate in the future. In addition, the Town has developed greater relationships with local, provincial and federal baseball/softball organizations and partnerships with local sports teams that could support the long term use of the ballpark as a sporting destination and legacy facility.



The Town will be examining its capacity for tourism development with the view of establishing public and tourist destinations with broad regional or provincial draw. This could include a Town-wide analysis of potential opportunities for attracting tourism-related industries with a focus on such areas as the Slots at Ajax Downs and vicinity, the waterfront, Pickering Village and the Downtown vicinity.

OLG completed a comprehensive strategic review of the lottery distribution network and land-based gaming sites with the goal of improving the delivery of gaming. OLG released an RFPQ (Request for Pre-qualification) in order to recruit a qualified service provider to assist OLG in improving service in the market through the expansion of electronic gaming positions.

A series of “Gaming Zones” were established where service providers would be permitted, on an exclusive basis, to continue to operate or relocate an existing Gaming Site or establish a new Gaming Site. These Gaming Zones have been grouped into “Gaming Bundles”, which are intended to create opportunities for revenue and cost synergies by operating multiple Gaming Sites. The Greater Toronto Area is within Gaming Bundle 5. Pickering, Ajax and Whitby are within Gaming Zone C3. Up to 2,500 slot machines and 1,200 live table gaming positions would be permitted in Gaming Zone C3.

**Figure 12: Slots at Ajax Downs**



A casino is being proposed at the Slots at Ajax Downs site. A larger gaming establishment is proposed to increase from the current 800 gaming positions up to 3,700 gaming positions. Applications anticipated to be submitted will include an Official Plan Amendment application and a zoning by-law amendment application to remove the 800 slot limitation that is currently in place. The application will also seek to remove of Alexander's Crossing as a Collector Road from the Town of Ajax Official Plan.

Studies and reports to be filed will include a Socio-Economic Study; a Transportation Assessment; Planning Rationale; a Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report; and Phase 1 Environmental Assessment. The plan will include the closure of Alexander's Crossing in order to enable a larger facility on a consolidated site. Additional parking is expected to be provided by way of an above ground parking structure.

#### *Special Study Area for Entertainment and Recreation (Tourism) Node*

Section 2.5.9 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan was introduced by OPA 42, which designates the lands bounded by Kerrison Drive, Audley Road, the future extension of Chambers Drive and Carruthers Creek as a Special Study Area. The Town will be conducting a study to determine the feasibility and marketability of developing an entertainment and recreation node to accommodate recreation, tourism, entertainment, commercial and employment land uses.

A portion of the lands south of Kingston Road (the "Passvale" site) will also be included in the study and will ascertain whether there is an interdependency of the two sites that can be strengthened and planned for. This study will also examine whether such a node would have the potential to generate spin-off employment opportunities that can enhance its profile as a regional destination.

**Figure 13: Entertainment/Tourism Node Special Study Area**



### ***Cycle Tourism***

The Tourism Attraction Study suggested that Ajax is well suited for a social / recreational cycling event that will utilize the Ajax Waterfront. It also noted that the Town should seek to position itself as a starting/finishing site for pre and post cycling programs. To achieve this, there exists the potential to work with the Region of Durham, Greenbelt Cycling Route, perhaps incorporate such an event into the Regional Legacy Festival, set to launch in 2015. Staff will continue to explore the possibility of a cycling event with these partners.

#### ***Expand the Ontario by Bike Program in Ajax***

Local tourism based businesses are supporting cycling in Ajax through the “Ontario by Bike Program” (previously called the Welcome Cyclists Network). The Program certifies and promotes bicycle friendly businesses and cycle tourism across Ontario by ensuring that they offer basic amenities to accommodate cyclists, such as secure bike storage, healthy food options, and local cycling route information. The Town currently has a “bronze” designation, and should strive to achieve a “silver” designation through facility and program improvements.

In 2012, the Town undertook a Welcome Cyclists campaign which was awarded the Best Advertising Campaign Award from the Economic Development Council of Ontario (EDCO). To date 20 businesses belong to the network. Building on its initial success, a second phase of this Program is recommended, that should include:

- Identifying and supporting Pickering Village as an “Ontario by Bike District”;
- Adding 10 more businesses to the Program;
- Developing cycling-related packages that provide promotional options for network businesses.

### ***Funding Support Program***

The Tourism Development Fund program is a provincially based cost-sharing program designed to provide non-capital project based funding to encourage the development of innovative new tourism products that are provincial or multi-regional in scope, and to support investment attraction and industry capacity building. The program provides non-capital, project-based funding to:

- develop research-based innovative and emerging tourism sectors;
- support tourism organizations' capacity building;
- encourage new private sector tourism investment attraction; and
- enhance Ontario's overall economic competitiveness and opportunities for the Ontario tourism industry.

Eligible expenses for Tourism Development Fund applications include, but are not limited to:

- Consulting services and project management;
- Research costs;
- Tourism sector strategic planning;
- Business plan support, economic assessments and feasibility studies;
- Organizational development and capacity building;
- Conference organization costs including speaker fees;
- Project-related permits, fees and other similar charges;
- Other costs deemed reasonable.

Information on the program can be found at:

<http://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/OSAPQA005130>

Where appropriate and applicable, the Town should explore and leverage these opportunities as they become available.

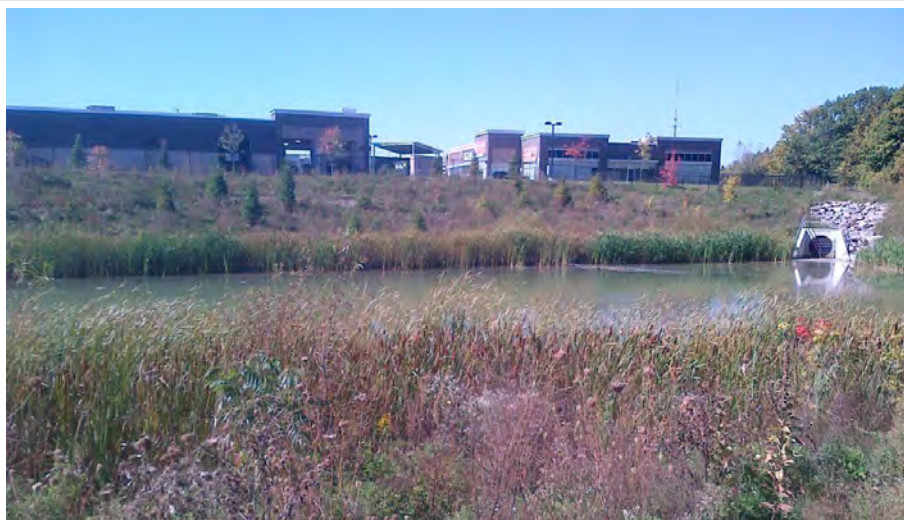
## **Water Quality Improvement**

Water quality continues to be an important concern to Ajax residents. Effective management of stormwater runoff contributes to overall water quality, which affects the health and safety of the public and the natural environment. Municipal infrastructure, including stormwater management ponds, infiltration galleries, oil/grit separators and other infrastructure require regular maintenance, monitoring and upgrades as technology advances. There are currently 58 SWM facilities in the Town eight of which are privately owned.

The Town is currently responsible for maintaining 38 facilities. Over the next five years an additional 12 facilities are expected to be assumed by the Town. Although efforts have been undertaken to assess, evaluate, recommend and execute maintenance related activities to ensure their proper function, much of the Town's existing stormwater management infrastructure is in need of attention. In older areas, development occurred before any form of stormwater quality control was required. Although redevelopment provides opportunities to introduce water quality control measures, this will only make isolated improvements on affected sites. Unless municipal interventions are made, large areas will continue to discharge untreated stormwater into the natural environment.

**Figure 14: Recently Constructed Stormwater Management Pond**





As the owner and operator of stormwater infrastructure, it is the Town's responsibility to provide an appropriate level of flood protection and stormwater quality treatment and to ensure that the system is fully operational at all times. However, the Town cannot depend solely on development charge funds as a sustainable revenue source, especially since improved stormwater quality is most required where new development is least likely. Alternative funding options beyond property taxes must be explored in order to support the need for dedicated staffing for inspections, maintenance, construction and monitoring.

Approaches for short and long term improvement are summarized below.

#### Stormwater Quality Improvement: Approaches to Short and Long Term Improvement

Project	Scope and Status	Short Term	Long Term
<b>Stormwater Sustainability Plan</b>	A Strategy is required to address appropriate levels of service, targets for compliance, financing and resourcing options.  Research undertaken regarding activities in other municipalities.	Prepare a <b>Stormwater Sustainability Plan</b> that makes recommendations on: storm water infrastructure needs, costs and maintenance to 2031; levels of service; targets for compliance; financing options based on other municipalities in Ontario; improving public awareness; a sustainable monitoring program; resource requirements including staffing to inspect, maintain, construct and monitor facilities; and an Implementation Plan.	Implementation of the Stormwater Sustainability Plan recommendations.
<b>Maintenance of Stormwater Management Facilities</b>	Facility assessments have been completed in the last two years on eight Stormwater Management Facilities. One facility was cleaned out and maintenance on control structures done 2013.	Capital Project proposals have been submitted by Operations for five facilities for clean out and assessments for 6 more facilities scheduled over the next 5 years.	A funding source must be established to properly manage these assets.
<b>Capital Projects</b> <b>The 2011 South Ajax</b>	Both projects are completed and set out recommendations.	The Lake Driveway Rain Gardens (Federal Gas Tax funded) is the first to be implemented. Results will be	A Mid-Town, East Town and North Town Stormwater Quality

Project	Scope and Status	Short Term	Long Term
<p><b>Stormwater Quality Retrofit Study EA made recommendations on 14 storm sewersheds and outfalls.</b></p> <p><b>The 2011 Shoreline Improvement Strategy included recommendations to improve water quality at the lake front.</b></p>		<p>monitored for 2 years to guide future projects. Phase 2 of the project is tentatively scheduled within the next 5 years.</p> <p>Continue with the other recommendations of the of the EA.</p> <p>The design for a wetland at Pickering Beach is proposed within the next 2 years and construction to follow.</p>	<p>Retrofit Study EA should be undertaken to evaluate existing stormwater quality controls and recommend treatment options.</p>
<b><u>New Development</u></b>	<p>Official Plan policies, Engineering Design Criteria, Sewer Use By-law, Municipal Salt Management Plan, and service levels for street sweeping and catch basin clean-out have been updated to reflect current technology and practices.</p>	<p>Continue to update and improve Town principles, policies, by-laws and criteria for stormwater management.</p> <p>New development needs to effectively infiltrate, filter and reduce stormwater quantity. Current technologies, Low Impact Development (LID) practices and new emerging technologies should also be explored and implemented where practical and appropriate.</p>	
<b><u>Public Awareness and Outreach Programs</u></b>	<p>The Town developed 4 stormwater awareness brochures. In 2014 the Town hosted 7 storm water events that were posted on Twitter, Facebook and the Town's website. A dedicated webpage provides information on improving stormwater quality.</p> <p>The Town partnered with TRCA on these initiatives and has recently been working with Trout Unlimited.</p>	<p>Different public engagement tactics to engage more residents should be explored. These tactics can be further developed through the Stormwater Sustainability Plan. More partnerships, new initiatives, new events and dedicated staff to host the events would be needed to continue to improve these programs.</p>	
<b><u>Monitoring</u></b>	<p>In 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012 monitoring was completed for existing storm sewers with direct discharges.</p>	<p>A strategic storm sewer stormwater management monitoring program needs to be developed to evaluate the effectiveness, functionality of all SWM facilities and evaluate new technologies installed in the Town. With all the effort in maintaining, retrofitting and installing SWM applications; we need to validate the investment.</p>	

## **Process and Regulatory Improvements**

Through the next term of Council, a number of improvements to various policies, by-laws and processes are expected to take place.

### ***Greenbelt Plan Review***

The Greenbelt Plan was enacted by the Province of Ontario in 2005 to create a permanently protected landscape that prevents urban development from encroaching onto rural areas, natural heritage features and systems, agricultural land and natural resources. The Plan works to achieve a balance between five main objectives:

- Supporting agricultural land and promoting agricultural production;
- Protecting natural heritage features and systems;
- Advancing opportunities for culture, recreation and tourism;
- Providing for viable rural settlements; and
- Promoting sustainable infrastructure and natural resources use.

Overall, the Greenbelt has served the Town well by reinforcing our fixed urban boundary and preserving the rural area (prior to the Greenbelt Plan, the Town had to spend significant funds to defend its fixed urban boundary at the OMB from appeals by Campitelli and Cougs). It should be noted that residential developers have taken advantage of the Greenbelt in Ajax by selling urban residential lots at a premium that abut the Greenbelt, and advising future residents that the Greenbelt is a permanent feature.

The Greenbelt Plan is required to undergo a review process every 10 years, which is slated to take place in 2015. Staff will be participating in this review process and will report to Council as required. Staff have also participated in a process undertaken by the Region of Durham in advance of the Greenbelt Plan review, and provided comments that include the following:

1. to increase the viability of the Greenbelt, additional land uses should be considered that are in keeping with the character of the rural area such as country inns, cemeteries, farm tourism operations, etc.;
2. the Northeast Pickering Lands are currently designated Prime Agriculture Area in the Durham Regional Official Plan. These lands may be considered to be included in the Urban Area as part of a future Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review. These lands should be included in the Greenbelt to protect the environmentally sensitive headwaters of the Carruthers Creek, and to protect downstream infrastructure and private property from potential increases in stormwater runoff.

Although the province has not released the terms of reference for their review, it is expected that it will look at boundary adjustments. When the Greenbelt Plan is reviewed, it will be undertaken in tandem with the Growth Plan review.

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### ***Comprehensive Zoning By-law Update***

The Town is undertaking a comprehensive review of its Zoning By-law. The current Comprehensive Zoning By-law 95-2003 was adopted by Council on July 14, 2003. Since that time, the Town has passed approximately 140 zoning by-law amendments stemming from development applications and Town-initiated studies. During that same time, nearly 700 minor variance applications have been approved by the Committee of Adjustment. The process will also include updating zoning provisions based on over 100 issues gathered internally by staff since 2008.

This process will identify issues with the current zoning by-law, and recommend opportunities for improvement and makes suggestions for proposed zoning change through a comprehensive review and public consultation program. The review will focus on the following broad subjects:

- Residential and Non-Residential Zone Standards;
- Transportation Requirements;
- Minor Variance Trends;
- Best Practices;
- Pickering Village;
- Definitions;
- Greenland Protection;
- Downtown Zone Standards.

Highlights of the project will also include:

- Updating the Town's Parking, Loading and Queuing requirements;
- Introducing new Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Active Transportation requirements, including standards for bicycle parking, carpool spaces, etc.;
- Updating development standards for intensification areas including medium and high density uses;
- Implementing the intensification policies of the Town's Official Plan (OPA 41);
- Updating zoning regulations for employment areas including employment intensive uses along Regional Corridors, implementing policies in OPA 42, and introducing regulations that allow for additional retail permissions, subject to limitations;
- Updating zoning in keeping with the Town's approved urban design guidelines;
- Establishing Low Impact (Sustainability) Development Standards, including community gardens and green development standards.

### ***Development Permit System***

Concurrent with the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Update, the Town will evaluate using a Development Permit System (DPS) as a way to facilitate and streamline development, improve certainty, make further improvements to development outcomes and reduce potential duplication. The Town's Economic Development and Tourism Strategy provides an objective to attract investment to Ajax through improved program and service delivery with an action to ensure a business climate that is understandable, predictable, stable, timely and customer-driven.

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A DPS combines zoning, site plan and minor variance into one application and approval process and would include the following elements:

- A more flexible approvals process that provides for a broader range of conditions of approval not available through other planning tools;
- The delegation of development approvals to staff;
- Removal of potential third-party appeals;
- Ability to consolidate site alteration and tree-cutting bylaws into the DPS.

Should the Town decide that a DPS is appropriate for Ajax, Official Plan policies and development regulations would need to be prepared or refined which may include the following:

- Defining or refining permitted uses;
- Setting out or adjusting minimum and maximum standards for development;
- Outlining any conditions of approval that may be required as part of a Development Permit;
- Setting out the scope of delegated approval authority, including any limitations;
- Setting out a list of discretionary uses that may be permitted;
- Setting out possible ranges of variation from standards for development;
- Describing notification procedures for decisions on development permit applications;
- Identifying proposed DPS area(s).

This project is proposed to be completed by the end of 2017.

### ***PriorityPATH – Prime***

*PriorityPATH Prime* builds upon the current *PriorityPATH* program, but is an exclusive development review process geared to medium to large businesses that are generally familiar with the development review process. This process relies on timely and regular communication based on a mutually agreed critical path. The process sets milestones necessary to achieve an organization's development schedule, while ensuring the timely and thorough evaluation. *PriorityPATH-Prime* will be launched in early 2015.

To qualify as a *PriorityPATH Prime* project, the proposed building or expansion is generally greater than 25,000 sq. ft. in gross floor area, fall within a designated Employment Area; represent a business that falls within the target sectors outlined in the 2010 Economic Development Strategy; meet or exceed the Town's employment lands average employment density of 37 jobs per net ha; and, be in keeping with the Town's Employment Areas Urban Design Guidelines.

## **Summary**

The following is a summary of the Strategic Planning and Economic Development Initiatives that have been discussed in this paper.

### ***Facilitating Job Creation***

- Pickering Village should be supported as an important health and wellness tourism destination.
- The Town should use the facilities and expertise of the Pan Am games to advance sport tourism.
- The Town should continue to support a casino and the establishment of additional tourist related destinations in the vicinity of the Slots at Ajax Downs.
- Business incubation and youth entrepreneurship should be priority initiatives for supporting start-up businesses.
- Additional employment and intensification opportunities should be explored in the Central Employment Area and around the Ajax GO Station.
- Process refinements will be pursued to assist businesses to navigate the development review process in a manner that meets their business needs.

### ***Infrastructure Investment***

- The Town should continue to invest in infrastructure to facilitate redevelopment and improvement in the Downtown and strategic employment lands.
- The Town should continue to invest in projects that support environmental improvement and sustainability.

### ***Strategic Planning Initiatives***

- Focused municipal effort on land acquisition and infrastructure development needs to be considered before appropriate urban redevelopment can occur at Ajax Plaza beyond Phase 1A.
- Phase 1 of Vision at Pat Bayly Square will be completed before the end of 2018.
- The Index Energy Steam Plant will be completed by mid-2015. The Town should encourage new development to tap into this sustainable and low cost energy resource.
- The Midtown is in need of reinvestment and improvement.
- The Memorial Park lands in Pickering Village should be studied in order to enhance the role of Pickering Village as a focal point.
- Municipal strategic effort and investment is needed to support stormwater quality improvement.

## **Potential Strategic Objectives**

1. Prepare and implement a municipal land acquisition and disposal strategy for Ajax Plaza in order to develop an urban pattern of pedestrian oriented streets and public spaces, enabling urban mixed-use redevelopment.
2. Facilitate the timely construction of Pat Bayly Square as a primary pedestrian focal point in the Downtown.
3. Support the expansion of district energy in the Downtown as a sustainable, efficient low cost energy alternative.
4. Investigate the feasibility of enhanced land use planning permissions and physical improvement in the Central Employment Area.
5. Strive for the development of a business incubator for start-up businesses and youth entrepreneurs.
6. Facilitate planning and design improvements for the Harwood Midtown.
7. Partner with businesses and property owners to achieve improvements to properties and buildings in Pickering Village consistent with its heritage character.
8. Support strategies and initiatives to enable sustainable long-term improvement to storm water quality.
9. Support continuous improvement to the Town's development regulations and review processes.
10. Position the Town as a desired destination for sport tourism.
11. Take full advantage of external funding sources to support the advancement of municipal infrastructure, tourism and economic development initiatives.

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# Strategies to Improve Traffic, Transportation and Related Infrastructure

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Community Action Plan  
Strategy Session  
December, 2014

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Town of Ajax  
Planning and Development Services

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## **Introduction**

A 2014 Resident Survey conducted by the Environics Research Group indicates that transportation is the most important social issue facing Ajax. This is further confirmed through the transportation concerns recently brought forward to the Ajax Council. The transportation demands of Ajax residents to travel to work, school, retail facilities, recreational centres and other destinations are impacted by issues such as congestion, speeding and distracted driving.

The Town of Ajax has witnessed a 39% growth in its population to 125,666 people from 2006 to 2014. While greenfield sites are poised to be developed, a significant amount of new growth will occur and is mandated through intensification of existing areas such as the Downtown. By 2031, the Town's population is projected to increase to approximately 137,870.

Travel behavior has remained virtually static. The personal automobile is the most prevalent travel mode choice. Approximately 80% of trips are made by car with the remaining 20% by public transit, cycling and walking. The dominance of the personal automobile places a heavy strain on the transportation network and is the primary factor leading to congestion and travel delays. Eighty five percent (85%) of all work-related trips during the morning commute leave the Town, with the majority of Ajax residents working in municipalities to the west. This directional travel pattern puts a tremendous strain on east-west transportation facilities and north-south connections to major highways during peak weekday commuting periods.

A unique set of transportation strategies, investments in capital infrastructure and a communications campaign is needed to help reduce the strain on the transportation network. This paper outlines the roles of various jurisdictions, and the future initiatives that will help improve transportation in Ajax. Suggested strategies are also proposed for Council's consideration.

## **Infrastructure**

An essential ingredient to improving the transportation system is infrastructure investment. Transportation infrastructure is provided at the Federal, Provincial, Regional and Local levels to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services through highways, roadways, public transit as well as pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

### ***Federal***

#### ***Pickering Airport***

In 1972, the Federal Government expropriated approximately 18,600 acres of land located primarily in Pickering, with the remaining lands in Markham and Uxbridge, to accommodate a new airport. The new airport would enhance access to air travel in Southern Ontario and provide economic development opportunities.

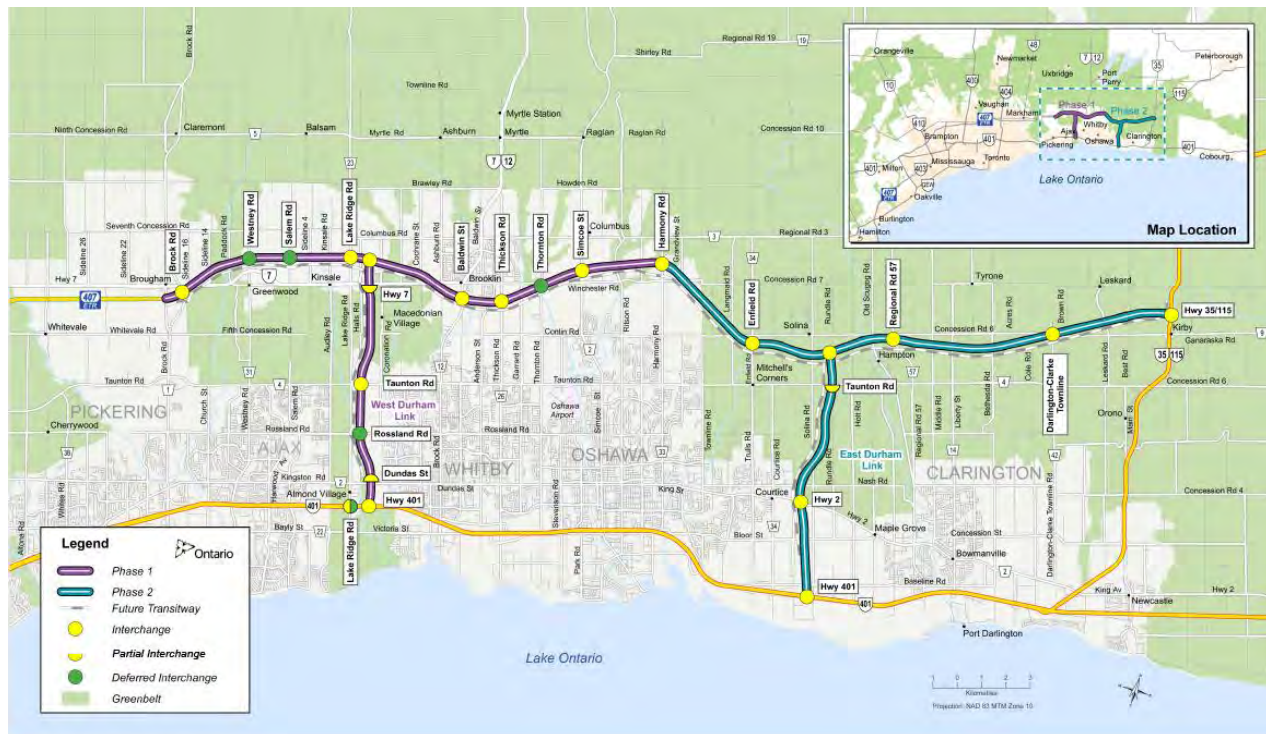
The planning process for the airport began in 2001. In 2007, a Pickering Lands Needs Assessment Study was commissioned by the Federal Government and prepared by the Greater Toronto Airports Authority to examine the existing and anticipated capacities and traffic volumes in the system of airports in Southern Ontario. In 2011, it concluded that there will be a need for an additional international airport between 2027 and 2037 in the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area to accommodate future growth. The next step is for the Federal Government to modify and refine the zoning regulations established in 2005 to reflect a smaller airport with an area of 8,700 acres.

### ***Provincial***

#### ***Highway 407 East Extension***

The Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) completed an Environmental Assessment Study (EA) for the Highway 407 East Extension (407 East) to Highway 35/115 and two north-south highway links with Highway 401. The 407 East EA was approved by the Ministry of Environment (MOE) on June 3, 2010. Construction started in 2013.

Figure 1: Highway 407 East Extension



The following are the completion dates provided by MTO:

**By late 2015** – Phase 1 from Brock Road in Pickering to Harmony Road in Oshawa, and a 10 kilometre north-south highway - the West Durham Link (WDL) - connecting Highway 407 East to Highway 401;

**By 2017** – the initial portion of Phase 2 from Harmony Road to Taunton Road/East Durham Link (EDL);

**By 2020** – the remainder of Highway 407 East (from East Durham Link to Highway 35/115) and the East Durham Link (from Taunton Road to Highway 401).

#### *Future Highway 407 Transitway*

The 407 Transitway is a proposed rapid transit corridor along Highway 407, connecting to Pearson Airport via Highway 427. The timing of this Metrolinx project has not yet been determined. The transitway could be for rubber-based or rail-based vehicles. Commuter parking lots and transit stations would be provided at every interchange. The right-of-way for the transitway is protected for within the limits of the 407 East EA study. Town staff will continue to monitor the progress of this initiative.

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*Highway 401 Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design*

*i. Brock Road to Salem Road and Brock Street to Courtice Road*

In June, 2012 the MTO initiated the Highway 401 Class EA and Preliminary Design from Brock Road in Pickering to Salem Road in Ajax, and from Brock Street in Whitby to Courtice Road in Clarington. The study will establish a preliminary design to widen Highway 401 from 10 to 12 lanes from Brock Road to Salem Road and from 6 to 10 lanes from Brock Street to Courtice Road. Alternative preliminary designs have been prepared to widen Highway 401 to the north and south of the centre line. A public information date has not yet been finalized, but it is the intent of MTO to finalize the EA by the end of 2014 or early 2015.

*ii. Salem Road to Brock Street*

In 2001, the MTO commenced a Class Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design study for the Highway 401 corridor from Salem Road in Ajax to Brock Street in Whitby. Due to provincial priorities, the study was suspended in June 2009 (401 EA). The study was re-initiated in June 2010 and was completed on May 2013. The recommended plan maintains the proposed realignment of Highway 401 as proposed in the 407 East plans and provides a 12 lane express-collector system from Salem Road easterly to the West Durham Link and 10 lanes from the West Durham Link easterly to Brock Street in Whitby.

Although the MTO has not scheduled any plans to widen Highway 401 from Salem Road to Brock Street, a new section of Highway 401 from west of Lake Ridge Road to east of Lynde Creek will be realigned and will connect to the West Durham Link as part of the Highway 407 Extension project. Once the new section is operational, the existing alignment will be decommissioned.

*Metrolinx/GO Transit Improvements*

*GO Lakeshore Rail Service Expansion and Upgrade*

The Lakeshore Express Rail upgrade project is currently in the planning stages. It will determine how to best provide service enhancements along the Lakeshore West and East rail lines. Ajax is serviced by the Lakeshore East rail line. The capital cost to upgrade the existing trains from diesel to electric propulsion, to upgrade the corridor infrastructure and to provide more frequent, faster and higher capacity service on the Lakeshore West and East lines is estimated at \$40 million. The planning study will determine the details and timing of this project.

Another major upgrade for the Lakeshore East Rail Line is its proposed extension to Bowmanville. This project is also currently in the planning stage. Metrolinx will provide project details as the project progresses.

## Ajax GO Station

The Town of Ajax recognizes its GO Station is well utilized and that there is a need to improve accessibility. As a result, the Town's Long Range Capital Forecast identifies commencing an Environmental Assessment for the westerly extension of Hunt Street in 2016. This EA will determine the most feasible option for the Hunt Street Extension.

To further enhance pedestrian connectivity to the GO Station, the Town has scheduled to construct a staircase from Westney Road to the GO Station in 2015. To improve vehicular access, the Town will work with the Region to assess the feasibility of providing eastbound double-left turn lanes and optimizing the signal timings to improve traffic operations.

## Regional

Regional roads within the Town of Ajax include:

- Taunton Road
- Kingston Road (Highway 2)
- Bayly Street
- Westney Road
- Salem Road (from Bayly Street to Taunton Road)

Based on Durham Region's 2014 Budget and Long Range Forecast, the following projects are planned for 2015 to 2024:

Regional Projects 2015 to 2024			
Project	Description	Proposed Timing	
Westney Road – Delaney Drive to Rossland Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes	2015	
Lake Ridge Road –Kingston Road to Rossland Road	Class Environmental Assessment to widen from 2 to 5 lanes	2017	
	Construction	2021	
Lake Ridge Road – Bayly Street to Kingston Road	Widen from 2 to 5 lanes	2019	
Westney Road – Rossland Road to Taunton Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes	2019	
Westney Road – Bayly Street to Hwy. 401	Class Environmental Assessment to widen from 5 to 7 lanes	2020	
Westney Road – Hwy. 401 to Kingston Road	Class Environmental Assessment to widen from 5 to 7 lanes	2021	
Westney Road and Finley Avenue	Intersection Improvements	2022	
Bayly Street – Westney Road to Harwood Avenue	Class Environmental Assessment to widen from 5 to 7 lanes	2023	

The timing for the above projects is subject to change as the Region prepares the budget each year.

#### *Highway 2 Bus Rapid Transit System*

As part of Durham Region's Long Term Transit Strategy (LTTTS) implementation plan, it completed an Environmental Assessment for a Rapid Transit System along Highway 2 (Kingston Road). This EA covered Stage 1 (Bus Rapid Transit for Pickering and Ajax), Stage 2 (Bus Rapid Transit for Whitby, Oshawa and Clarington) and Stage 3 (Light Rail Transit along the entire corridor based on demand). The EA was approved in May 2012. Construction of the dedicated bus lanes and bicycle lanes were completed in September 2014. The Region has not announced the timing of Stage 2 of the Highway 2 BRT project.

Figure 2: Typical Highway 2 BRT Cross Section



### *Accessible Pedestrian Signals*

In response to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Region of Durham has developed and implemented Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS). The APS is a device that informs pedestrians who are blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind when it is appropriate to cross at signalized intersections using the appropriate sounds. A “cuckoo” sound indicates that the “walk” symbol is on and pedestrians have the right-of-way in the north/south direction while a “Canadian Melody” sound indicates that the pedestrian has the right-of-way in the east/west direction. The following signalized intersections are equipped with APS technology within the Town:

- Harwood Avenue and Hunt Street
- Bayly Street and Harwood Avenue
- Harwood Avenue and Falby Court
- Harwood Avenue and Station Street/Achilles Road
- Westney Road and Harwood Avenue
- Bayly Street and Monarch Avenue
- Westney Road and Monarch Avenue/Rands Road
- Bayly Street and Kitney Drive
- Highway 2 and Harwood Avenue
- Highway 2 and Westney Road

The Region plans to implement additional APS devices at signalized intersections on a case-by-case basis as budgets allow.

### *Road Rationalization*

The Town has been working with the Region of Durham for a number of years on the rationalization of roads that has resulted in the transfer of various roads from the Town to the Region and vice versa. The remaining roads to be transferred are Rossland Road and Westney Road from Bayly Street to Harwood Avenue. Rossland Road is currently under the jurisdiction of the Town and will be transferred to the Region. Westney Road is currently under the jurisdiction of the Region and this section will be transferred to the Town. The timing for the transfers has not yet been determined.



## ***Town of Ajax***

The following are the major traffic and transportation related capital projects anticipated to be underway in Ajax over the next five years.

### *Major Capital Road Projects*

The following is a list of major capital road projects currently underway or planned within the next five years. It is noted that all future projects are subject to Council's approval of the annual capital budget.

Town of Ajax Capital Projects (2015 to 2019)			
Project	Description	Estimated Timing	
Rossland Road Phase 1 (East of Riverside Drive to Church Street)	Reconstruction/ realignment including a new bridge over East Duffins Creek and reconstruction of the Rossland Road/Church Street intersection.	2014 to 2015	
Rossland Road Phase 2 (Southcott Road to East of Riverside Drive)	Reconstruction including a new bridge over Urfe Creek	2015 to 2016	
Audley Road (Taunton Road to Rossland Road)	Road reconstructed in 2014. Final lift of asphalt to be placed in Spring 2015.	2014 to 2015	
Hunt Street and Finley Avenue	Class Environmental Assessment for the extension of Hunt Street and Finley Avenue and removal of offset at Hunt Street/Dowty Road/ Monarch Avenue	2014 to 2015	
Ajax Downtown Road Network Improvements	Class Environmental Assessment to review improvements to the road network in the vicinity of Ajax Plaza	2014 to 2015	
Range Road	Reconstruction	2016 to 2017	
Riverside Drive – Rossland Road to Delaney Drive	Reconstruction	2017	
Church Street – Rossland Road to Hydro Corridor	Reconstruction of Church Street including a new bridge over East Duffins Creek	2018	
Hunt Street – Westney Road to Mackenzie Avenue	Extension	2019	

In addition, based on the Transportation Master Plan Update and the Development Charge Study, there are road construction projects that should be undertaken in the short to medium term that may not have sufficient funding to proceed within the required time period. These projects include:

Projects Requiring Funding to Complete	
Project	Description
Achilles Road - terminus to Lake Ridge Road	New 2 lane road
Audley Road - Bayly Street to Achilles Road	New 2 lane road
Audley Road – Kingston Road to Chambers Drive	New 2 lane road
Commercial Avenue – Station Street to Hunt Street	Reconstruction
Chambers Drive – terminus to Audley Road	New 2 lane road and bridge
Church Street – Hydro Corridor to Taunton Road	Reconstruction
Finley Avenue – Bayly Street to Frankcom Street	New 2 lane road
Harwood Avenue – Woodcock Avenue to Taunton Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes
Lake Ridge Road – Bayly Street to Ontoro Blvd.	Reconstruction
Rossland Road - Church Street to Westney Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes
Rossland Road – Westney Road to Audley Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes

In particular, the extension of Chambers Drive, the extension of Audley Road from Kingston Road to Chambers Drive and the reconstruction of Commercial Avenue are considered a priority for construction as they have the greatest impacts for economic development. Innovative funding solutions may be required to proceed with the construction of these projects within the next 5 years to permit development on adjacent properties.

### *Active Transportation Facilities*

In 2010, the Town of Ajax Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan was approved by Council with the goal of creating a well connected network of pedestrian and cycling facilities. To date, the Town has constructed roughly 130 km of that cycling facilities, 100 km of trails and 30 km of on-road facilities. While this is a significant accomplishment, the Town plans to continue this success with the implementation of the following within the next 5 years:

#### Multi-Use Trails:

- Rossland Road – West Town Limit to Church Street
- Rossland Road – Ravenscroft Road to Mullen Park
- Carruthers Trail – Rossland Road to Taunton Road
- Carruthers Trail – Chambers Drive to Beck Crescent
- Carruthers Trail – Shoal Point Road to Mayor Crescent
- Bayly Street – Harwood Avenue to Porte Road

New Sidewalks:

- Westney Road – Clements Road to Monarch Avenue
- Centennial Road – Ajax Community Centre to Clements Road
- Finley Avenue – Westney Road to Bayly Street
- Mills Road – Hunt Street to Station Street
- Monarch Avenue – Clements Road to Hunt Street
- Commercial Avenue – Bayly Street to Station Street

On-Road Bicycle Facilities:

- Williamson Drive East and West - Bike Lanes
- Knapton Avenue, Beatty Road, Elm Street, Finley Avenue, Sherwood Avenue East and West - Sharrows
- Gillett Avenue, Fishlock Street, Ventris Drive - Sharrows
- Seggar Avenue, Dreyer Drive, Ravenscroft - Sharrows
- Turnerbury Drive - Bike Lanes
- Harwood Avenue - Cycle Track

*Roundabout Update*

Staff are developing a set of Roundabout Guidelines that will be tailored to the Ajax context. Once the guidelines are in place, eleven existing roundabouts will need to be updated with appropriate regulatory signage, pavement markings and configurations. This construction contract will need to be supported by a public communications campaign to educate the public on how to properly operate a roundabout.

*Traffic Calming and Roadway Safety*

A Traffic Calming Warrant Update is underway to better meet the dynamic traffic calming needs within the Town, through an improved delivery process. In addition to Traffic Calming, there may be potential roadway safety improvements at roadways where the Traffic Calming Warrant is not met but where major incidents have occurred. Therefore, the scope of traffic calming priorities could be enhanced to implement roadway safety improvements.

Rather than fixating on one roadway segment in each year for traffic calming, it is recommended that a list of warranted roadways be eligible for traffic calming and roadway safety implementation in any given year. This will provide needed flexibility while ensuring that budgets are used effectively and that the needs of residents are met.

## **Strategy Development**

The following strategies are underway or will be initiated within the next four year period related to traffic and transportation improvement initiatives.

### ***Region of Durham***

#### *Transportation Master Plan Update*

The Region is currently updating their Transportation Master Plan that was developed in 2005. This update will undertake a multi-modal approach to transportation. There is a need in the Region to improve Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management. Further, the update will consider the implications of the Highway 407 Extension, any Highway 401 improvements as well as on Regional Roads.

#### *Smart Commute Durham*

Smart Commute Durham was established in 2007 to help local employers and commuters explore and promote different commuter choices such as carpooling, teleworking, transit, cycling, walking or flexible work hours. This initiative aims to reduce single occupant vehicles into and out of Durham Region. More detailed information can be found at the following website: [www.smartcommute.ca/durham](http://www.smartcommute.ca/durham).

#### *Regional Redlight Camera Study*

The Region reinitiated their Redlight Camera Study in 2013 in response to requests from local municipalities. The study is evaluating the effectiveness of redlight cameras as well as a cost/benefit analysis. The study will conclude with the appropriate recommendations for any future plans for implementation. The Region has not released any information regarding specific timelines for this project.

### ***Town of Ajax***

The approach to improve transportation and traffic deal with strategic transportation planning, and implementing operational improvements to facilitate more effective responses to local issues.

#### *Strategic Transportation Planning*

The following Strategic Transportation Planning initiatives will be undertaken over the next four years.

### Transportation Master Plan Update

The Transportation Master Plan Update was completed in early 2013 to define a comprehensive, fully integrated and sustainable transportation network to accommodate population and employment growth to the year 2031. The update met the Town's objectives of promoting mobility for all modes of transportation and improving existing and future transportation infrastructure. The next Transportation Master Plan Update is scheduled to commence in 2016 and will inform the next Development Charge Background Study.

### Transportation Demand Management Plan

The Town is undertaking a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan to explore ways to alleviate congestion in the Town. This plan will explore alternative forms of transportation and soft programming including incentives and programming to encourage Ajax residents to make different travel choices. The TDM Plan is scheduled to be completed in May of 2015.

Staff have proposed Bicycle Parking Design Guidelines that help to simplify the decision making process for developers. These guidelines will provide recommendations for bike parking space ratios based on land-use, building size or number of units of residential. Once approved, the Guidelines will provide direction for bicycle parking locations on private property and preferred styles for bike racks. These guidelines will be incorporated into the TDM Plan.

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update

The most recent Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan was developed in 2010 to establish policies, guidelines and Active Transportation (AT) network recommendations for implementation. An update to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan is proposed in 2017. It will revisit the Town's AT needs and will provide staff with strategies, policies and specific direction to increase Active Transportation within the Town.

### Comprehensive Wayfinding Signage Strategy on Active Transportation Facilities

This strategy will commence in 2016 to improve the functionality of AT facilities by providing clear and concise information to all user types including commuters, tourists and recreational users to effectively orient themselves along a facility, enabling informed decisions for reaching destinations. It is anticipated that easy to read signs and maps would identify route locations, intersections, advance route signage, destinations, directions and amenities and regulatory signage would be established in this strategy.



### Church Street Redesignation

The Ajax Transportation Master Plan Update that was completed in 2013 and recommends that the designation of Church Street between Taunton Road and the hydro corridor be removed as a Type B Arterial Road. This designation would result in the closure of Church Street to vehicular traffic but would be maintained for active transportation purposes. TRCA supports this initiative as this action would correspond with their Greenwood Conservation Lands Master Plan. The section of Church Street south of the hydro corridor will be maintained for local traffic to provide access to existing developments. In keeping with Council's direction, an application will be filed this winter to remove this segment of Church Street from the Durham Regional Official Plan.

### Bicycle Community Designation

Since receiving a Bronze Designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community in June of 2012, Council and staff have been aiming to upgrade to a Silver designation. Feedback received from Share the Road Canada with regards to our most recent application indicates that there is more work to be done before Ajax can receive a Silver designation.

The Town will continue to work with neighbouring municipalities and the Region to improve cycling connections across Town borders. Staff will also continue to promote cycling as an option for residents in order to increase mode share. In 2015, staff also plan to obtain a better understanding of the number of cyclists using our network for both utilitarian and recreational purposes.

### *Operational Improvements*

The following operational improvements will be undertaken over the next four years.

#### Traffic Calming Warrant Update

A Traffic Calming Warrant Framework and Process was established in November 2007 to address the growing demand for traffic calming devices to be implemented in the Town. After utilizing this framework and process for approximately seven years, staff have gained extensive experience and have initiated a Traffic Calming Warrant Update (TCWU) that is essential to meet the Town's dynamic traffic calming related challenges. The TCWU will incorporate best practices in the local context to provide a more appropriate, efficient and flexible framework to address the variety of traffic complaints relating to excessive speeding, traffic infiltration and collision history.

#### Roundabout Guidelines

Staff are developing a set of Roundabout Guidelines that will be suitable to the local context. It will reference information from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), and the Draft Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15 (OTM Book 15), which is planned to be finalized late 2014 or early 2015. The Town's guidelines, which hinges on the finalization of OTM Book 15, will provide information on the planning and design of single-lane roundabouts.

#### Lake Driveway and Rotary Park Improvement Plan

The Town is proposing to undertake a comprehensive assessment of Lake Driveway and Rotary Park in response to resident inquiries as a combined effort amongst between Operations and Environmental Services, Planning and Development Services and By-Law Services.

Demand to access the Ajax waterfront, especially within the vicinity of Rotary Park has increased significantly, and parking continues to be a major concern. Staff will develop a plan to manage on and off street parking supply and will recommend additional measures to encourage users of the waterfront to take alternative travel modes. A parking analysis will be carried out to establish a thorough understanding of parking demands on a typical summer weekday, weekend, during a public long weekend and during a private event.

#### Traffic By-law Amendments

The Town receives numerous requests that relate to transportation operations. Some of these requests include the need for parking prohibition signs, all-way-stop signs or even sight distance issues at intersections. Upon thorough assessments of each request, Town staff would subsequently provide the most appropriate and technically sound recommendations, which may include amending the Traffic By-law. Town staff aim to continue making the appropriate amendments to the Traffic By-law on an on-going basis.

#### Radar Message Board Program

The Town's Radar Message Board Program is designed to increase driver awareness as a temporary traffic calming device. These boards are equipped with radar to detect vehicular speeds which are then displayed. Although these boards also act as a communications tool, they are most effective when rotations are undertaken frequently. The current radar message boards are past their functional life and should be replaced. As a result, staff are proposing to purchase new boards that can be rotated more frequently to maximize coverage within the Town to provide increased customer service responses.

## **Communications, Outreach and Awareness**

The following are communications outreach and awareness initiatives that will support the transportation and traffic improvements identified in this paper.

### ***Province of Ontario***

#### ***New Provincial Cycling Legislation***

Prior to the recent Provincial election, the Liberal Party brought a bill forward that included new regulations for cyclists. According to recent reports, this legislation will be reintroduced by the Minister of Transportation in the fall of 2014. Changes proposed in this bill included the institution of a 1 metre passing clearance for cyclists, legalizing cycling on paved shoulders, and increased fines for “dooring” of cyclists.

### ***Region of Durham***

#### ***Cycling Communications Strategy***

In 2014 the Region of Durham established a Cycling Communication Strategy which outlines a three year plan of key objectives for the Region. In summary, the plan states that the Region requires more coordination among existing staff in relation to cycling initiatives and projects. The strategy recommends that the Region hire an Active Transportation Coordinator to oversee all cycling related projects. The Region would also like to create a coordinated communication plan with all area municipalities in an effort to have one cohesive message reach Durham residents. The strategy also seeks to coordinate events relating to cycling to capitalize on any local tourism opportunities.

### ***Town of Ajax***

#### ***Transportation Awareness Campaign: Get Ajax Moving***

With Transportation being the top priority to the Town’s residents, Planning and Development Services Staff will coordinate closely with Communications Staff to develop and implement an overarching Transportation Awareness Campaign that will provide residents with information on the Provincial, Regional and Town initiatives and encourage residents to actively be a part of the Transportation solution through innovative approaches.

This campaign will build upon the Town’s existing communications efforts and bear the same brand as the Town’s current TDM Plan, “**Get Ajax Moving**”, and will utilize the existing social media outlets.

In particular, the Town will continue to provide annual transportation updates that are included in the *Planning and Development Services Annual Report* that documents the construction of new infrastructure, the design and implementation of traffic calming and AT facilities, customer service statistics and the progress on any other transportation projects.

The current *Ajax Moves 3 Ways* campaign was developed to promote road safety and respect among the different types of road users (pedestrians, cyclists and drivers).

The ongoing *Active and Safe Routes to School* program reaches out public schools across Ajax to educate students on the importance of being active and providing them with tips and tools for walking or cycling to school safely through a series of special events.

As part of the ongoing development of the TDM Plan, a public survey was established to gather feedback on commuting experiences. The survey was accessible via the Town's website and was promoted through a variety of means including social media, public consultation and local print media. The results of the survey will be thoroughly assessed to obtain a better understanding of the commuting patterns of Ajax residents in order to develop the TDM Plan. Detailed results of the survey will be presented in the TDM Plan report.

Further to the existing communications efforts noted above, Get Ajax Moving will inform residents on the latest transportation related information from various jurisdictions, identify current transportation issues and most importantly, how residents can be a part of the transportation solution in Ajax. The communications outlet will utilize conventional, digital and new innovative forms of media.

### *Committees*

Town staff play active roles on a number of committees to that comprise of staff from the Region of Durham, Durham Region Police Services, neighboring Municipalities within the Region as well as the residents to discuss current and future Transportation-related initiatives. Keeping current in these committees support Town staff on the development of future Transportation strategies.

#### Transportation Advisory Committee (formerly Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee)

The Transportation Advisory Committee has evolved from, and replaced the Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee.

The previous Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee advised Ajax Council on matters related to active transportation and trails, monitored the implementation of the Ajax Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and encouraged, promoted and participated in the planning of active transportation policies, programs and facilities. The former Committee also participated in Town events including Trailfest and Pumpkinville which helped to promote active transportation throughout the Town.



The proposed Transportation Advisory Committee aims to broaden the scope to encompass all important issues on Transportation within the Town. The Committee will focus on transportation topics that pertain to Provincial, Regional and Town policies, strategies, plans and infrastructure projects.

#### Ajax/Pickering Road Watch Committee

The Ajax Pickering Road Watch Committee is comprised of a group of community volunteers, Durham Region Police Services (DRPS) and municipal staff that come together to educate drivers and provide awareness in an effort to promote safety for all road users. Through their website, [www.ajaxpickeringroadwatch.com](http://www.ajaxpickeringroadwatch.com) residents have the opportunity to submit Citizen Report Forms directly to DRPS, who in turn send out warning letters to the vehicle owners as appropriate. These forms simply require residents to provide the make, model, colour and license plate of the vehicle as well as the infraction that has occurred. This process makes it easy to determine the repeat offenders, and will be noted by DRPS as they receive multiple Citizen Report Forms for the same vehicle.

#### Regional Traffic Advisory Committee

The Regional Traffic Safety Committee is comprised of Regional and municipal Staff together with DRPS. The committee focuses on Region's transportation issues, initiatives and projects within the Region.

#### West Division Roadway Safety Coordinating Committee

The West Division Roadway Safety Coordinating Committee is hosted by DRPS. Meetings are held to discuss roadway safety and enforcement related transportation topics.

## **Summary**

### Federal

- A new airport is being considered in Pickering between 2027 and 2037.

### Provincial

- Phase 1 of the 407 East extension to Harmony Road in Oshawa and West Durham Link will be open to traffic in late 2015. Phase 2 from Harmony Road to Taunton Road/East Durham Link will be open to traffic in 2017. The remainder to Highway 35/115 is scheduled to be open to traffic in 2020.
- MTO has not scheduled any plans for construction for the Highway 401 expansion projects at this time with the exception of a new section from just of Lake Ridge Road to east of Lynde Creek as part of the Highway 407 Extension project.
- The GO Lakeshore Rail Service Expansion and Upgrade is in the planning stages to determine feasibility of upgrading existing trains from diesel to electric and providing more frequent service.
- The Lakeshore East Rail Line expansion to Bowmanville is in the planning stages.
- Staircase from Westney Road to the GO Station will be constructed in 2015 to improve pedestrian access.

### Regional

- The Town will work with the Region to assess the feasibility to provide eastbound double left turn lanes and optimize the signal timings at the GO Station Access to improve vehicular access.

### Town of Ajax

- The EA to extend Hunt Street began in 2014 to improve accessibility to the Ajax GO Station.
- The Town's Operations and Planning and Design staff will undertake a Lake Driveway and Rotary Park Improvement Plan. One of the objectives of this plan is to understand parking demands and provide the any appropriate recommendations.
- The Town will undertake a Roundabout Update including signage, pavement markings and configurations supported by a communications campaign to educate the public in 2015.

- A Traffic Calming Warrant Update has been initiated to streamline the current approach, add additional technologies for consideration and refine the prioritization method. Roadway safety improvements will be proposed where the Traffic Calming Warrant is not met and where major incidents have occurred.
- The Town will continue to provide Active Transportation facilities as per the Town's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.
- The Town will be developing and updating a series of strategic transportation plans and strategies over the next four years including a Transportation Master Plan Update, a Transportation Demand Management Plan, a Traffic Calming Warrant Update, a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update and Roundabout Guidelines.
- The Town will continue to apply, improve and monitor the effectiveness of existing policies and programs.
- The Town will strive to achieve a Silver Designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community in based on feedback from Share the Road Canada.
- The Town will continue to monitor and provide updates on external initiatives including new Provincial Cycling Legislation, the Regional Cycling Communications Strategy and the Regional Transportation Master Plan Update.
- The Town will develop an overarching Transportation Awareness Campaign: Get Ajax Moving that will provide residents with information on the Provincial, Regional and Town initiatives and encourage residents to actively be a part of the Transportation solution through innovative approaches.

## **Potential Strategic Objectives**

1. Improve transportation infrastructure, policies and programs for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services within, into and out of the Town of Ajax.
2. Provide transportation information, guidelines, policies and infrastructure to meet the dynamic needs of the Town.
3. Promote the use of public transit and active transportation.
4. Implement programs aimed at reducing speeding on Town roads through public awareness, implementation of traffic calming devices and enforcement.
5. Increase the connectivity and accessibility of Town roads and active transportation infrastructure.
6. Increase multi-modal travel opportunities in new developments.
7. Develop and implement a Communications Strategy that provides residents with information on the Provincial, Regional and Town initiatives and encourages residents to actively be a part of the Transportation solution. Specifically the Town will focus on Transportation infrastructure projects that are either proposed, planned or under construction by the Province, Region or Town; Transportation Safety Etiquette; and Town-lead Strategies and Projects that aim to reduce roadway congestion and to calm vehicular speeds.
8. Advocate the timely delivery strategic transportation projects in the Town under the jurisdiction of external agencies including the Region of Durham Metrolinx/GO Transit and Durham Region Transit.

**Strategic Plan Session**  
**2015-2018 Staffing Forecast Report**

## **Municipal Staffing Comparison**

The following chart provides an overview of the full-time staff compliment to population ratio based on 2011 census data. This information below is not an absolute performance measure, however provides some insight into staffing complement..

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Current FT Staff</b>	<b>Staff/Pop</b>	<b>Staff per 1000</b>
Ajax	109,600	328	334.15	2.99
Whitby	122,000	448	272.32	3.67
Clarington	84,500	291	290.38	3.44
Oshawa	149,600	873	171.36	5.84
Pickering	88,700	355	249.86	4.00
Average	111,200	492	226.13	4.42

*\*Population based on 2011 Census*

## **Payroll Costs Comparison**

	<b>Ajax</b>	<b>Clarington</b>	<b>Oshawa</b>	<b>Pickering</b>	<b>Whitby</b>
Population	119,800	89,184	157,000	94,883	131,360
Total Payroll	\$42,815,700	\$37,016,141	\$75,857,328	\$43,884,158	\$55,481,497
Per 1,000 Pop. Costs	\$357	\$415	\$483	\$463	\$422
Per Household	\$1,158	\$1,163	\$1,245	\$1,430	\$1,293

*\*Data provided by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Annual Financial Information Report*

## **Comments**

- While MMAH does a high level review of the FIR's submitted, the FIR's are not subject to review and audit by the municipality's external auditors.
- Not an absolute comparison for a number of reasons. Differences in service levels, methods of service delivery, types of service delivered, pay scales, geographic size, etc. cannot be objectively quantified to provide the required context.
- Excludes Library.

### **Summary of 2007-2014 New F/T Staff**

Department	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
CAO			1	1				
HR								
LIS	3	3	1					
Finance	2	1	1					
Fire	1	1		3				
Operations	1	2	2	3				1
Recreation		3	1	1		1*	6*	1
P&D	1	1		1				
Total	8	11	6	9	0	1	6	2.0

*\*Required for the new Audley Recreation Centre*

*For 2014, excludes a request for 0.5 of a position for the Library*

### **Comments**

- During the Council term of 2007-2010, 34 new FT staff were hired as compared to 9.5 for the same period between 2011-2014.
- Staffing requests from 2011 to 2014, with the exception of the positions for Audley Recreation Centre, were deferred due to ongoing hire pressures.
- The hiring freeze has resulted in significant gaps in capacity and ability to implement and manage new initiatives and services.

### **2015-2018 General Levy Staffing Forecast**

Department heads have identified the need for 53 full-time staff between 2015 and 2018. In addition, 33 part-time requests from 2015 to 2018 have been identified.

All requests were openly discussed with the senior management team so that there was an understanding of the linkage to continued service excellence and priorities. Full-time and part-time staff requests for the period of 2015-2018 are attached as a separate document for review and consideration.

### **Review of 2015 Staffing Requests**

For 2015, 11 new full-time staffing requests were submitted by seven departments (includes the Library). The 2015 staffing requests prioritize essential staffing investments to provide excellent customer service as well as implementing and managing various new initiatives/strategies year over year.

Attached to this report is an overview of the eleven (11) positions requested for 2015 as well as the 2016-2018 requests for both full-time and part-time staff.



<b>Full Time Staff Requests</b>	
<b>Department</b>	<b>2015 Request</b>
Office of CAO	1.5
Finance	0
Human Resource Services	2.0
Legislative & Information Services	1.0
Fire & Emergency Services	1.5
Operations & Environment Services	2.0
Recreation & Culture	0.5
Planning & Development Services	1.0
Library	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.0</b>

### **Funding Strategy 2015-2018 Staffing Recommendation**

Currently, the additional taxation revenue generated from assessment growth is allocated in accordance with our Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP). As such, 15% is allocated to the Post Growth Reserve, with 25% used to increase the annual general levy reserve allocations. The remaining 60% is used to offset other budget increases, both growth related and non-growth.

Given that growth puts added pressure on our ability to maintain existing services and service levels, the use of a portion of assessment growth to increase staff resources is appropriate and will allow us to better manage and support new growth. Therefore, it is Senior Managements hope and intention to utilize approximately 35 per cent of assessment growth revenues or approximately \$275,000 annually for additional staff.

Subject to the 2015 budget pressures, this recommendation will be included in the 2015 Budget for Council's consideration. Should this strategy prove to be sustainable over the next few budget cycles, it will be incorporated into a future update of the FSP.



## 2015 Full Time Staff Requests

### OFFICE OF THE CAO

#### Administrative Coordinator ( 0.5 Conversion from PT to FT)

Reporting to the Manager of Strategy, Communications and Policy, the Administrative Coordinator – Mayor and Office of the CAO is accountable for providing professional administrative support in order to enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of the office by assisting with various administrative tasks/procedures, public relations activities, scheduling and financial tracking. Key responsibilities include:

- Responsible for ensuring administrative activities for the Office of the CAO are handled efficiently and professionally.
- Coordinates meetings, including setting meeting dates/times, manages attendees, draft agendas, attends meetings, takes/transcribes/distributes minutes.
- Develops and maintains database of contacts which includes staff, the public and other agencies/institutions that have connection with Mayor and senior staff.
- Prepares, edits and reviews correspondence and messaging including preparing reports, various acknowledgements and communication pieces.
- Receives office documents and correspondence and requests information from appropriate internal/external sources and follows-up for timely and complete response.
- Assists the Manager, Quality Service and Special Projects to review and approve corporate documents within the Document Management System (DMS).
- Prepares and edits reports, spreadsheets, templates, charts, tables and graphs using software packages, compiling information and data with attention to formatting.
- Prepares and designs (power-point) presentations for Management staff.
- Reviews and proof reads all outgoing communication for content, spelling, grammar, attachments etc. and maintains follow-up system.
- Oversees the Mayor's calendar, in consultation with the Executive Administrator-Council, and works with the Administrative Assistant to ensure appropriate materials are prepared for various events/occasions, including certificates, correspondence and messaging as well as briefing materials in advance of event/meeting.
- Accesses the Mayor's e-mail and voicemail and takes appropriate action by responding to or forwarding messages.
- Acts as back-up for the Executive Administrator -Council and CAO Administrative Coordinator during vacation/days off.
- Accurately maintains the record management system and exercises discretion and confidentiality in the handling of reports, correspondence and other matters.
- Assists with the co-ordination of constituency inquiries either in person, by phone or email.
- Works within the Council Constituent Inquires procedure to ensure timely, consistent and accurate follow-up to requests from constituents
- Monitors the CAO Office budget, including collecting and filing invoices and ensuring

- timely reimbursement.
- Tracks expenses & reconciles Mayor's corporate purchasing card.

#### Web & Social Media Coordinator (1)

Reporting to the Digital Media Specialist, the Web & Social Media Coordinator will manage and maintain the Town's Web sites and assist with the coordination of the Town's social networking efforts. Key activities include:

- Serve as central source for content entry and editing of programs, news and information online
- Collaborate with Corporate Communications Team and departments to promote Town initiatives, programs and services, and events online
- Assist with the Town's social networking efforts, including developing a corporate strategy and supporting policies (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, YouTube and other relevant Web 2.0 sites)
- Provide advice on news/social media opportunities to staff and Council and work across departments to ensure proper messaging is being executed online and is relevant to organizational goals
- Produce and distribute the Town's electronic newsletter (Ajax E-news) – 24 editions per year
- Multimedia communications – produce and disseminate videos, Power Points, podcasts and identify budget needs
- Perform other communications and marketing related activities as requested

## **HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES**

#### Compensation & Benefits Specialist (1)

Reporting to the General Manager, Human Resources, the Compensation & Benefits Specialist is responsible for compensation and benefits programs and related policies and processes. This includes salary administration, benefits plan design, OMERS, job evaluation administration and analysis, salary increases and compensation/benefits policy development to ensure programs attract, retain and motivate the best talent.

The position is responsible for making recommendations to ensure programs meet compliance, market competitiveness and internal equity guidelines. Some of the duties include:

- Regularly assess the impact and effectiveness of compensation policy against market trends and comparators; contributes to the overall Corporate and HR Strategy by recommending programs, adjustments to ensure alignment with business strategy and total compensation philosophy. Some of the high level duties include:
- Conduct compensation research and analysis with respect to pay line to determine overall market position. This includes external benchmarking, best practice reviews and environmental scanning. Prepare detailed and complex reports relevant to compensation function in order to support corporate information needs.
- Pro-actively reviews and reports on the organization's efforts related to Pay Equity maintenance for non-union and union groups. Provides advice and counsel on compensation with regard to internal and external equity and pay equity maintenance for all and non-union group

- Overseeing the phased transfer of third party benefits and service administration to human resources in an efficient and cost effective manner; Oversee the administration of all facets of the insured benefits plan administration, recommending strategies for reducing benefits costs, improving processes and changing plan designs to support the attraction and retention of qualified talent
- Research and recommend competitive benefit program design consistent with market trends and alignment with the corporation's culture, business and HR strategies.
- Manage the modifications or enhancements of the benefit program and renegotiate fees with vendors to reduce internal administration, simplify claims procedures and reduce premium fees

#### HR Business Partner (1)

Reporting to the GM, Human Resources, the HR Business Partner provides support and consultation to both management and employees on HR programs and policies. Key responsibilities include:

- Providing HR support as part of the business relationship with client groups, and meeting their HR needs through a customized service approach which is aligned and integrated with cross-organizational initiatives. Coordinates incoming line of business requests and transactions related to client groups.
- Understanding department objectives, adding value and providing strategic HR support and guidance on business plans and programs, and translating business strategies into HR people strategies.
- Implementing change management and intervention strategies to support major transformational plans that impact human resources.
- Acting as the primary liaison for assigned client group managers and employees, providing prompt resolution of issues and consultation in the consistent application of all HR processes and programs, in compliance with corporate policies, collective agreements, and legislation.
- Supporting the team in the deployment and administration of HR projects, researching best practices, and contributing to the continuous development and enhancement of HR practices.
- Provides back-up to team during vacations and absences.

### **LEGISLATIVE/INFORMATION SERVICES**

#### Municipal Law Enforcement Officer (1)

Reporting to the Supervisor By-Law Services, the MLEO is accountable to:

- answer and respond to calls and inquiries from the public, other Town departments, other law enforcement agencies and Council.
- investigate complaints utilizing the appropriate legislation, conduct investigations; initiating legal action when required ensuring that all court documentation is complete, accurate and presented in an efficient and timely manner.
- review permit and licence applications to ensure compliance with applicable by-laws and ensuring that they are complete and accurate.
- undertake to review and renew By-laws ensuring accuracy, proper format and researching the relevant legislation to enact the By-laws within given time lines.

## **AJAX FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES**

### Administrative Assistant ( 1 FT and 0.5 conversion from PT to FT))

Reporting to the Administrative Coordinator, the Administrative Assistant is accountable for working in a support capacity ensuring administrative responsibilities within the three divisions (Administration, Fire Prevention & Training) are carried out in an organized, efficient and accurate manner. Key responsibilities include:

- Ensuring administrative activities within the division are handled efficiently and professionally
- Ensure vehicle inventories, equipment and training manuals are up to date
- Arrange station tours for all three stations and schedule fire trucks for offsite public education events
- Responsible for checking the daily duty rosters for all divisions and entering all department clothing issues in the Crisys System. Process correspondence to staff through Target Solutions
- Assist customers by directing inquiries and maintaining excellent customer service
- Assist Administration staff with daily workload when required and provide daily counter coverage

## **OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

### Gardener (1)

Reporting to the Supervisor – Forestry, Horticulture & Sports Fields, the Gardner is accountable for planning, preparing, planting and maintaining all flower and shrub beds ensuring a pleasant, visible environment throughout the Town. This involves participating in coordinating the Request for Proposal, reviewing submissions and deciding on successful vendor.

In addition, the position provides direction and guidance to a horticulture crew which includes student, seasonal employees. During winter months, the position assists with winter control duties.

### Journey person – Plumbing (1)

Reporting to the Supervisor of Building Maintenance this position provides plumbing preventative maintenance, new plumbing installations and repairs in Town facilities, which will ensure a safe and comfortable environment for the users of these buildings.

- Maintain all plumbing equipment by performing scheduled preventative maintenance inspections, tighten and replace all facility parts as necessary to ensure minimal interruption of plumbing service
- Analyze, diagnose and perform repairs to plumbing equipment to ensure proper performance of equipment
- Perform on-call duties as required on a rotating basis
- Responds to all emergency service calls from customers as required to keep downtime to a minimum
- Performs other maintenance related duties as assigned by supervisor

## **RECREATION & CULTURE**

### Group Fitness Supervisor (0.5 conversion from PT to FT)

This part-time position is responsible for providing leadership and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Town-operated Fitness & Health Centre and Group Fitness Program located at the Ajax Community Centre and Satellite Centres.

Reporting to the Active Living Coordinator, this position is responsible for providing leadership and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Town-operated Fitness & Health Centre and Group Fitness Program located at the Ajax Community Centre and Satellite Centres. Key responsibilities include:

- Provide leadership, staff supervision, training and development for fitness staff
- Maintain a comprehensive preventative maintenance program ensuring equipment is checked regularly and maintained in safe operating condition; administration of participant health screening following fitness industry guidelines to ensure compliance in all areas is maintained with the Canadian Fitness Standards and CSEP Facility Accreditation requirements
- Provide customer service to the community and staff responding to concerns, complaints or suggestions in a professional and timely manner
- Assist with the development and implementation of policies and procedures with respect to the fitness staff duties, operating procedures, ISO documentation, member code of conduct
- Program planning, development and ongoing management of program schedules
- CLASS administration including: input of program information, program maintenance, printing and distribution of class lists and attendance sheets
- Prepare guide content and complete draft reviews for the Ajax Community Centre and Satellite Centres for Fitness Centre and Group Fitness pages
- Maintain an ongoing evaluation of the fitness centre and group fitness programs including monitoring participant numbers, providing recommendations for enhancement, and follow-ups.

## **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

### Transportation Technologist (1)

Reporting to the Senior Transportation Planner, the position is responsible to ensure municipal transportation requirements are in place to facilitate safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian movement. Key responsibilities include:

- Coordinate, collect, organize and analyze transportation data in support of the Town's Traffic Management initiative
- Analyze the merit and appropriateness of traffic calming in existing areas and implement traffic calming measures where required
- Implement and coordinate the radar speed board program
- Review and process traffic related complaints through direct response, instructions to other departments and/or agencies as well as the preparation of reports and recommendations to Council for their decision

- Administer changes to the municipal traffic by-law and its schedules for both existing and new development
- Prepare for and attend public open houses and/or meetings
- Provide technical support to Senior Transportation Planner for transportation related capital projects (i.e. Environmental Assessments) as required  
Cooperate with Provincial, Regional and other municipal departments to encourage innovative techniques to calm traffic and enforce traffic violations such as photo radar, red light cameras and outsourcing enforcement
- Reviews and responds to traffic related complaints and enquires.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of municipal traffic controls by carrying out detailed analysis and studies and makes recommendations to ensure compliance with legislation and appropriate standards.

## **AJAX PUBLIC LIBRARY**

### E-Tech Assistant (0.5 conversion from PT to FT)

- Provides effective technology support to customers by answering technical inquiries related to: the library's public computer equipment and its applications, personal mobile devices, the Internet, and other emerging personal communication devices. Identifies and recommends appropriate sources of technical information; and instructs customers on the use of technical resources.
- Provides input for the assessment, enhancement and purchases of applicable public computer applications, innovative and emerging technology as well as mobile devices to ensure the achievement of the Library's goals and objectives.
- Develops and provides training on office applications, Internet, social media, web resources and other appropriate technological resources on demand for public and staff.
- Provides input, updates and feedback on the evaluation of technology resources and maintenance of the Library's mobile devices
- Maintains awareness of emerging technologies and identifies those that could enhance customer services.
- Maintains awareness of public experience, offers excellent and proactive customer service, and builds community connections.
- Prepares reports and statistics as required.
- Works effectively in a collaborative environment, uses initiative, is self-directed, and is committed to innovation and creativity.
- Other library related duties as assigned.



### Custodian (1)

The position is responsible for maintaining building cleanliness by performing custodial tasks in order to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the public and staff. Key activities include:

- Public washrooms checked and cleaned daily
- Staff offices cleaned, vacuumed daily
- Clean staff kitchen area, washing floors as required
- Log and report a variety of information as well as deficiencies
- Use and maintenance of safety equipment as well as safe working practices
- Provide exceptional customer service to patrons and staff, answering any questions and/or enquiries

## **2015-2018 Community Action Plan Consultation Options**

### **Option 1**

This option includes Council meet & greets and launch of a new interactive online consultation tool called *Rank it*. The Council meet & greets would be organized by staff, in consultation with Councillors, and held in each ward in early January 2015. The meetings would be very similar in format to those previously hosted by Councillors. In addition to providing an opportunity for Councillors to meet local residents, the Community Action Plan process would be outlined and the new online consultation tool – *Rank it* – would be demonstrated. The new *Rank it* tool would allow residents to submit 2015-2018 Community Action Plan initiatives for consideration by Council and staff, as well as rank/prioritize and comment on submitted initiatives. The consultation tool would be available over a four-week period from January to February. A comprehensive communication plan would be developed to promote the new tool, including facility displays (with paper submission stations), social media outreach, print and online advertising and targeted communications with key community groups. Following the approval of the 2015-2018 Community Action Plan (April 2015) and the design of the new electronic 2015-2018 Community Action Plan (May 2015), the Mayor would host a Virtual Town Hall in May/June 2015 to officially kick-off the 2015-2018 Community Action Plan.

### **Option 2**

The Town hosts one public meeting in mid January to outline the Community Action Plan process and unveil the new online consultation tool – *Rank it (as detailed above)*. Councillors would each be given an opportunity to speak during the meeting and lead focus groups. Staff would like to caution that similar public meetings in the past have not been well attended. The consultation tool would be available over a four-week period from January to February. A comprehensive communication plan would be developed to promote the new tool, including facility displays (with paper submission stations), social media outreach, print and online advertising and targeted communications with key community groups. Following the approval of the 2015-2018 Community Action Plan (April 2015) and the design of the new electronic 2015-2018 Community Action Plan (May 2015), the Mayor would host a Virtual Town Hall in May/June 2015 to officially kick-off the 2015-2018 Community Action Plan.

### **Option 3**

Staff implement the Community Action Plan *Rank it* tool (*as detailed above*) and focus their efforts and resources to ensuring a successful online consultation process. Council would kick-off the process through a launch video. The tool would be available for an extended period of six-weeks from January to February. A comprehensive communication plan would be developed to promote the new tool, including facility displays (with paper submission stations), social media outreach, print and online advertising and targeted communications with key community groups. Following the approval of the 2015-2018 Community Action Plan (April 2015) and the design of the new electronic 2015-2018 Community Action Plan (May 2015), the Mayor would host a Virtual Town Hall in May/June 2015 to officially kick-off the 2015-2018 Community Action Plan.

## **TOWN OF AJAX REPORT**



**REPORT TO:** General Government Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:** Rob Ford, CPA, CMA, AMCT  
Director of Finance/Treasurer

**SUBJECT:** 2015 On- Line Budget Builder Survey Results

**WARD(S):** All

**DATE OF MEETING:** December 5, 2014

**REFERENCE:** 2011-2014 Community Action Plan Strategic Objective

- Excellence in Service Delivery and Governance

On-Line Budget Builder Survey

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the report on the 2015 On-Line Budget Builder Survey Results be received for information.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The initial survey that was undertaken for the 2014 budget was very successful in achieving the objective of increasing resident's engagement and involvement in the budget. It also served to further educate the public about the Town's budget process. The results of the survey, along with any comments or suggestions made, are a valuable tool for Council and Department Heads during the capital and operating budget discussions.

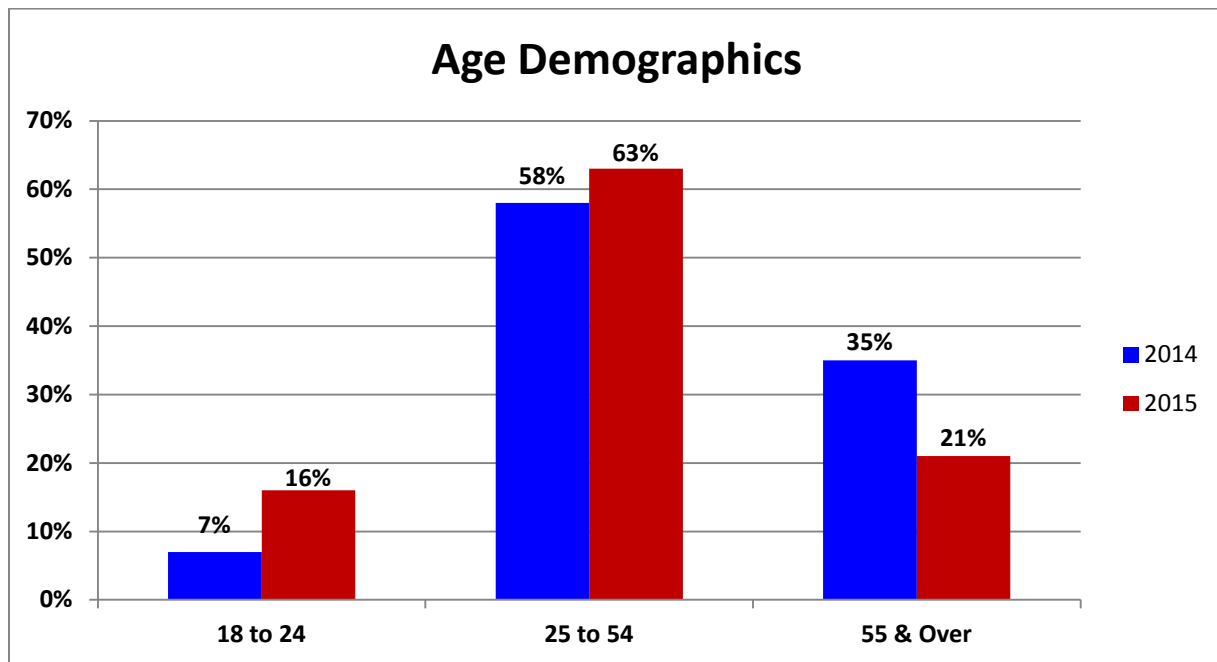
The following improvements, which were implemented for the 2015 survey, focused on increasing people's understanding of the types of expenditures made by the Town:

- spending categories were revised and renamed, with additional examples added
- amounts and categories used in the survey now match the budget documents
- where applicable, expanded information was added to provide necessary context

The survey was available from September 3 to October 1. A total of 208 responses were received, significantly higher than the 138 (51% increase) submitted last year. Similar to last year, comments and suggestions are included as Attachments 1, 2 and 3.

**DISCUSSION:****Total Responses**

The age demographics of those who completed the survey have changed slightly for 2015. Very encouraging is the increased engagement of the 18 to 24 age group, whose participation has doubled.

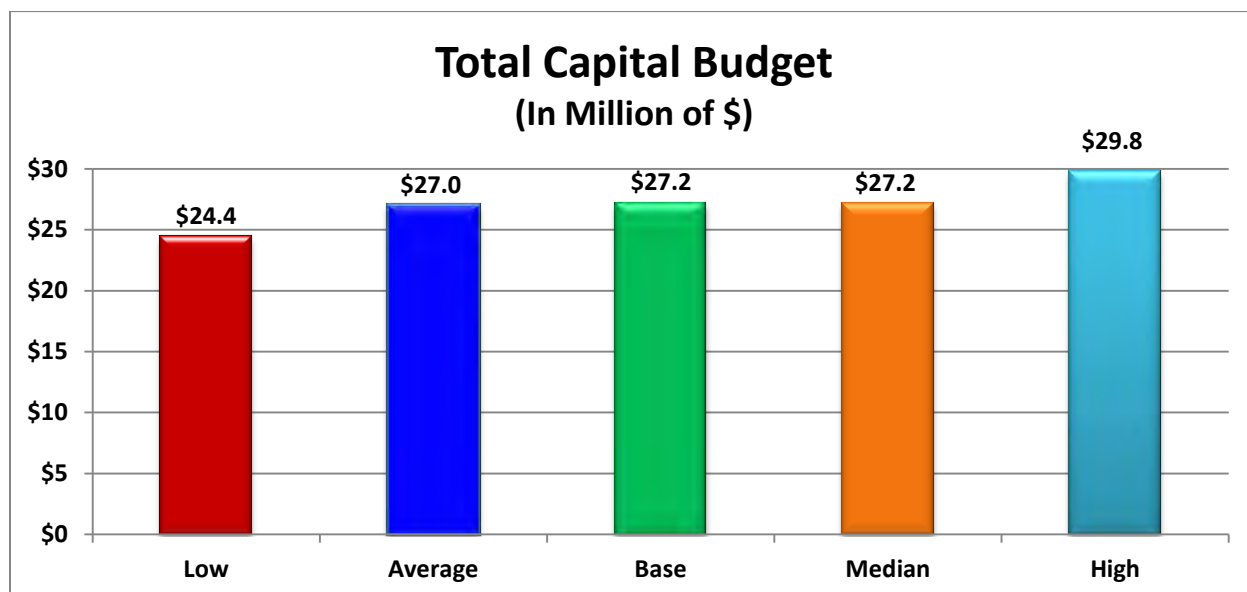
**Capital Budget**

The 2015 spending options provided in the survey were:

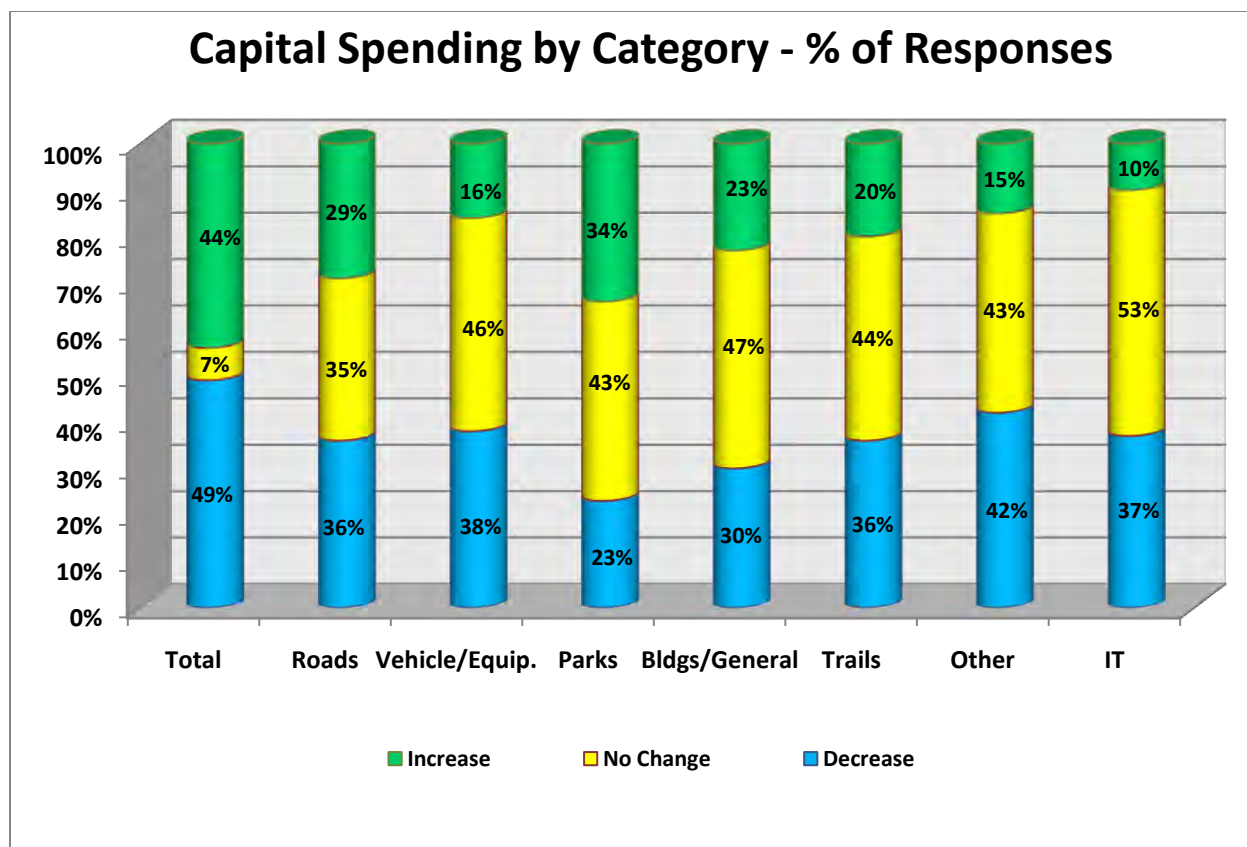
Category	10% Reduction	2014 Base	10% Increase
Roads, Sidewalks, Streetlights, etc.	\$15.4M	\$17.1M	\$18.8M
Vehicles & Equipment	2.9M	3.2M	3.5M
Parks & Playgrounds	2.4M	2.7M	3.0M
Buildings & General Infrastructure	1.8M	2.0M	2.2M
Trails & Walkways	1.1M	1.2M	1.3M
Other Capital	0.4M	0.5M	0.6M
Hardware & Software	0.4M	0.5M	0.6M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$24.4M</b>	<b>\$27.2M</b>	<b>\$30.0M</b>

**Capital Budget** (cont'd)

The survey produced a wide range of opinions on the level of capital spending, both within each category and the overall total. Similar to last year, the Median level of spending people chose is identical to the current level of spending, with the Average just slightly lower.

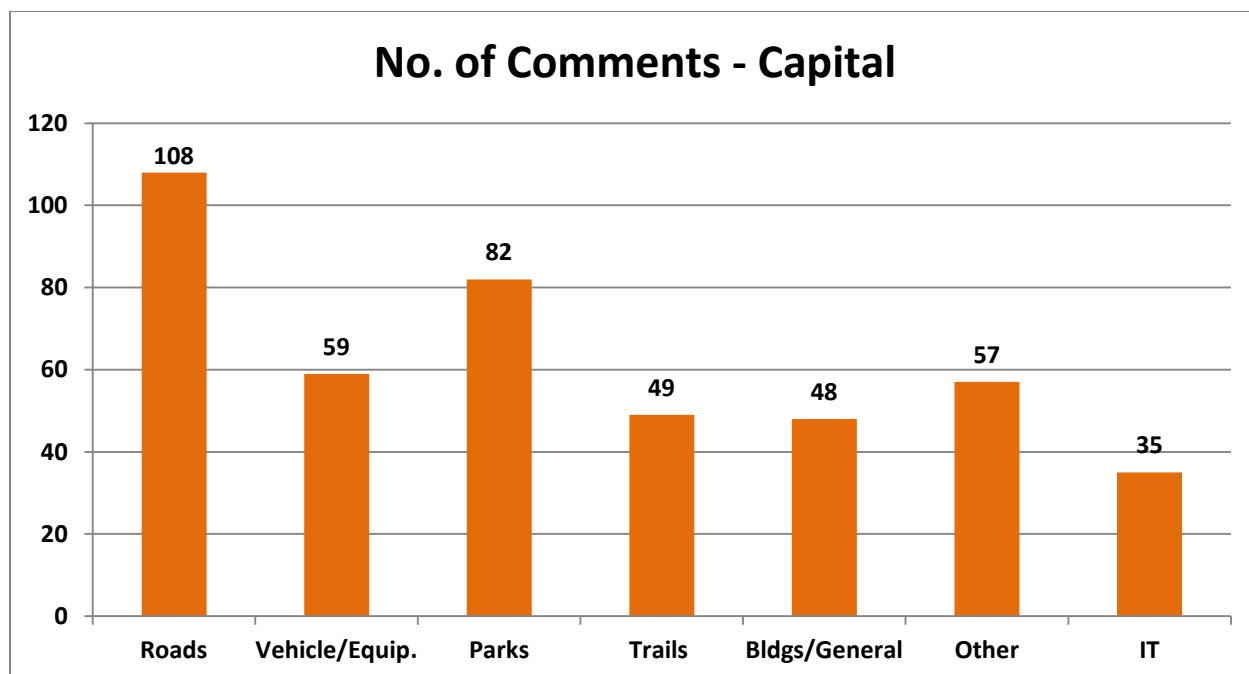
**Observations/Analysis**

- Residents continue to be generally satisfied with the total amount being spent on capital projects, but have suggested a spending shift between categories; however, the Town's ability to do so is limited by a number of factors (e.g. Development Charges legislation, Federal Gas Tax agreement, etc.)
- Freezing or reducing capital spending would have negative consequences and is not recommended for a number of reasons:
  - due to inflation, there would be a reduction in the number of projects completed
  - need to account for the parks, roads, streetlights, sidewalks, storm sewer systems, etc. assumed from developers
  - while the Town has built a number of new facilities, existing buildings are aging
  - delaying capital spending will ultimately cost more in the long run; e.g. road resurfacing vs. reconstruction



#### Observations/Analysis

- There has been a shift in people's opinions on total spending; 49% (2014 - 40%) decreased spending, 7% (2014 - 14%) kept it the same, while 44% (2014 - 46%) increased
- An interesting change from 2014 is that Parks, Playgrounds, Sportsfields has replaced Roads, Sidewalks, Streetlights, as the number one category where people want to see spending increased
- Between categories, there is a much broader range in the percentage of people who recommended no change in spending; in 2014, the range was 9% who recommended no overall change, (47% to 56%), while the 2015 range has doubled to 18% (35% to 53%)



The number of comments, suggestions, questions, etc. received for each category, is a valid measure of the level of public interest in each area. As expected, Roads and related expenditures continue to generate the most interest. At the lower end are categories that have smaller budgets and a less visible impact on service delivery.

As with any survey that allows for open comments, a wide range of responses were submitted. It was not unusual for comments to be at opposite ends of the spectrum. For example, comments stating something like “in terrible condition” or “need to spend less” were usually bookended by “in excellent condition” and “need to spend more”.

While all of the comments received are attached to the report, there were some very clear themes and messages which have been summarized below:

- Traffic, in particular the widening of Westney Rd. N. and Rossland Rd, plus increased traffic calming, continue to be the most important issue for residents
- Three items that represent less than 1% of the total capital budget, attracted higher than expected feedback; specifically bicycle lanes, public art and fitness equipment
- The importance of an Active Transportation Network must continue to be communicated to the. It is not well understood that along with roads, trails, walkways and bicycle lanes are also essential elements of the Town wide transportation network
- The commonly made suggestion to keep vehicles & equipment and computer hardware & software longer before replacement, remains a long standing Town wide practice

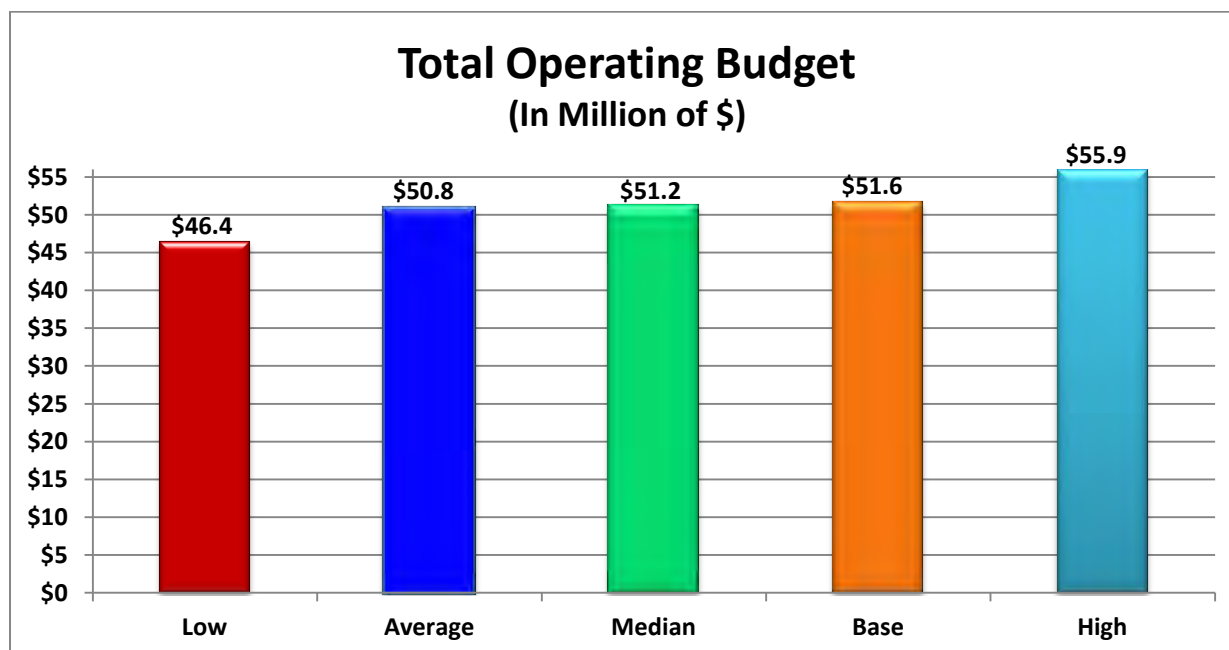


### **Operating Budget**

The 2015 spending options provided in the survey were:

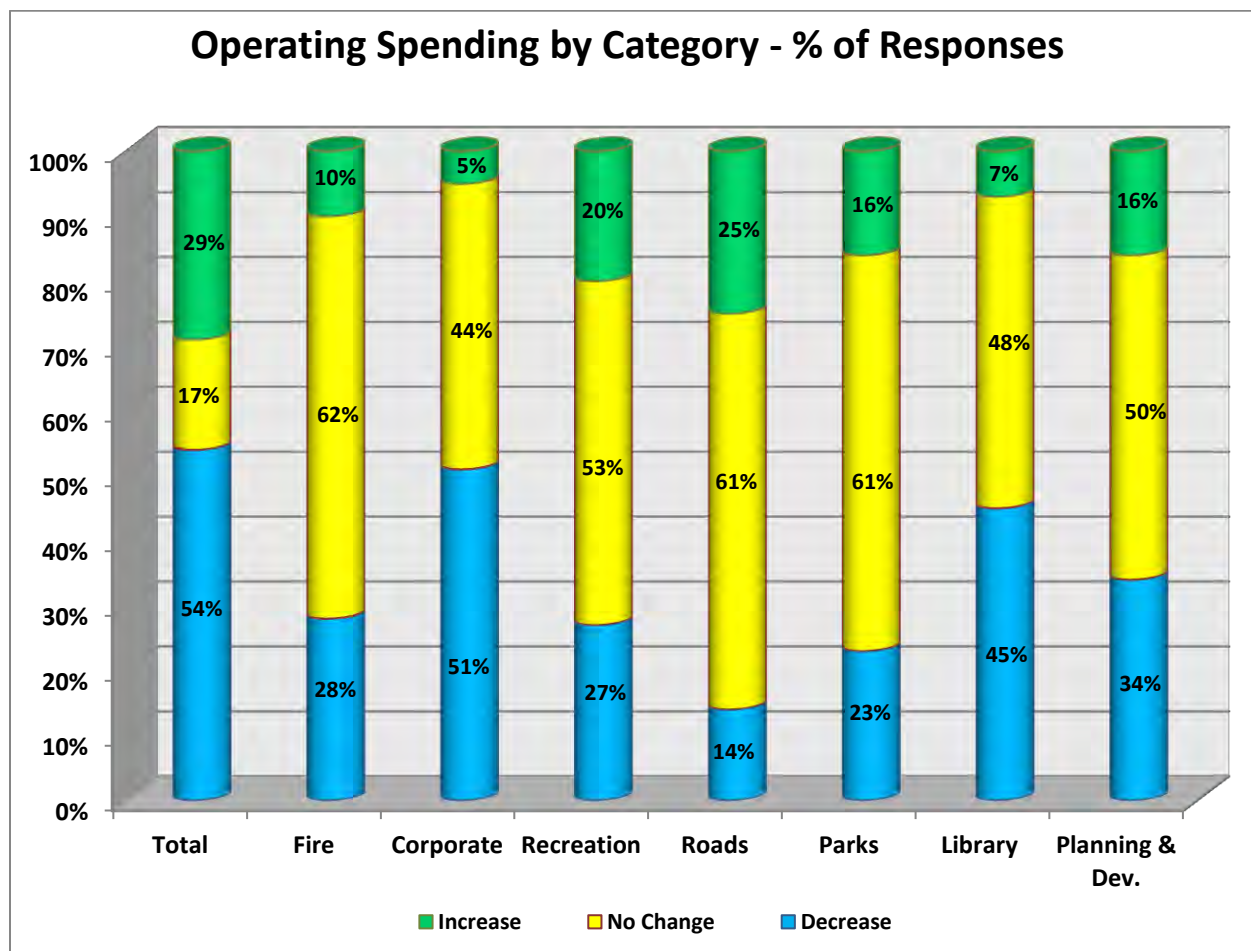
Category	10% Reduction	2014 Base	10% Increase
Fire & Emergency Services	\$13.9M	\$15.4M	\$16.9M
Corporate	7.9M	8.8M	9.7M
Recreation	7.4M	8.2M	9.0M
Roads & Related Maintenance	7.3M	8.1M	8.9M
Parks Maintenance	4.2M	4.7M	5.2M
Library	3.6M	4.0M	4.4M
Planning & Development	2.2M	2.4M	2.6M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$46.5M</b>	<b>\$51.6M</b>	<b>\$56.7M</b>

The survey also provided a chart which allowed residents to determine the impact of their recommended changes on their property taxes. A \$550,000 (estimated) change in the Operating Budget is equal to a 1% change in property taxes.



### **Observations/Analysis**

- Results are consistent with 2014, where both the Median and Average are slightly lower than the base spending level
- A reduced or unchanged operating budget presents a number of challenges:
  - inflationary increases in the cost of goods and services
  - salary and benefits, a large component of the operating budget, is governed by collective agreements, arbitration rulings and payroll taxes
  - reducing the budget would result in lower service levels or a loss of services
  - if the desire is to retain the services, then existing user fees would have to be increased, as well as new ones added



### Observations/Analysis

- Six of the categories had spending at No Change or Increase, with Corporate being the only category with a net decrease of 51% (2014 – 43%)
- Roads, Sidewalks, Streetlights, etc, has replaced Recreation, as the category with the largest number of people who suggested increased spending
- Similar to last year, Corporate was the category that received the most suggestions for reduced spending. This is a budget category that is not always well understood, for a number of reasons:
  - includes legislated requirements that are unique to the municipal sector; e.g. By-Law and Clerks
  - a continuing perception that the costs for Mayor & Council make up a large portion of the budget; in fact, they only represent 1.4% of the total budget
  - many of the corporate services expenditures (e.g. Information Technology), directly support day to day service delivery

**Comments/Suggestions**

All of the comments and suggestions submitted by the public are included in the report as Attachments 1 & 2. Language/comments deemed by staff to be inappropriate/offensive, duplicates, as well as those that identify an individual or a specific group of employees, have been removed. In order to improve readability, obvious spelling errors, typos and grammatical issues were corrected. Otherwise, the information is presented as submitted by the residents.

**COMMUNICATION ISSUES:**

This report will be posted on the Town's website along with all of the existing budget and forecast information and reports.

**CONCLUSION:**

The 2015 survey achieved the goal of increasing the number of residents who participated. The survey is now a standard part of the budget/forecast process.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

ATT-1: Suggestions/Comments - Capital  
ATT-2: Suggestions/Comments - Operating  
ATT-3: Suggestions/Comments - General

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Rob Ford, CPA, CMA, AMCT  
Director of Finance/Treasurer

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Roads, Sidewalks, Streetlights, etc.

Would like to see rush hour traffic improved.
If bike lanes are really that important, which they are not, wait until the road has been completed instead of painting lines and then putting the second layer of asphalt over the ones that have only been painted for a year.
Reduce bike lanes coupled with the need to continuously re configure sidewalks which end up accomplishing nothing. Except for Dollars spent.
Push the province to widen key roads like westney north and put sidewalks as well. Shame that you approve all those homes and businesses without the supporting infrastructure.
I have rarely seen anyone on a bicycle use a bike lane.
Finding some traffic relief along Salem and between Westney and west along 401.
Less focus on bike lanes... the disruption to the already congested traffic isn't worth it! Ajax isn't a bike-friendly city no matter what you do. Things are spaced too far apart.
Lower property taxes - Property taxes - should be lower than \$15.4M - not sure where this money is going or exactly how it is spent the roads are fine and being resurfaced for no reason in certain areas.
For the most part, I believe that the roads, sidewalks etc. in Ajax are in fairly good repair. I have watched bike lanes installed that nobody uses, which is a waste of my tax dollars.
Worst town planning to connect the north Ajax to 401. The following road expansion is urgently needed Bayly Street from Brock to Westney-4 lane Rossland road: 4 lane connecting Ajax to Whitby.
Get rid of roundabouts on Pickering beach road. That project was the biggest waste of energy and good sense I have ever seen in 35 years living in Ajax. Street lighting needs improvement at many intersections.
Less bike lanes because they are NOT being used. More advanced left green lights.
Your traffic calming plan is not working, don't waste any more money until a real plan is brought forward.
Less unnecessary "bike lane" wasted dollars. eg. Ontoro rd.
Widen Westney Rd north to 4 lanes to Taunton; Widen Rossland all the way to 4 lanes. As two of the most important and used roads for all people living north of Hwy #2, it is ridiculous that they are already not this wide.
Traffic light co-ordination should be improved Everything else should be reduced.
Traffic is the biggest problem in Ajax. We need to widen westney all the way north. Widen hwy 2 and rossland. If we did that, we would not need bus lanes (waste).
More effort required in the street lighting department, hydro costs could be reduced by using a lower wattage light such as LED's.
Ajax has the worst roads in the Durham Region. Money Sense Magazine says Ajax has the highest property tax of any medium size (100,000 to 400,000 residents) in Canada. This is because the Town is grossly overstaffed and overpaid.
More bike lanes and bike paths. These are used by cyclists, families, etc. We are a bicycle (sic). Lots of gaps that could easily be filled by proper planning.
I run all over the city, and there are still a few areas that need paths/sidewalks (e.g. Rossland Rd, from Hilton Gate to Audley; Salem south of Rossland still missing some).
Most Ajax roads in terrible shape please repair them.
Good streetlights and sidewalks, terrible condition roads. Disgrace to Durham Region. Please repair.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Traffic is a big issue in Ajax, especially with the new bus lanes that take up that extra space for cars. The buses don't run often, this is not Toronto. The transit system needs revamping.
Stop spending money on bike lanes on main roads (Kingston Road etc) it increases congestion, is dangerous for bikers and have very little usage wintertime. Get them OFF the main roads. Kids on bikes in high volume traffic?, accident lawsuit coming?
Decrease bike lanes and traffic calming on the roads which has a disastrous effect on cars and pedestrians. A special lane for bikes at the waterfront rather than all the roads.
Ajax has terrible condition roads. Get them repaired and repaved even if it is going to cost more.
Fewer bike lanes - this isn't downtown Toronto. Road re-surfacing seems to be done for streets that really aren't in bad shape.
Ajax roads are a blight on Durham. Fix them.
Start replacing street light fixtures with LED style lighting as is being done in Mississauga. Replace old Yield signs with Stop signs to reflect heavier traffic levels now (Turnbull/Taylor area).
Resurface and repair where needed but do we really need to paint pictures of cyclists on the roads, do we really need to replace basis street signs with street signs that show pictures of cyclist.
Bike Lanes would be great on general streets.
Bike lanes are a huge waste of money, cyclists are only on the roads for less than half the year due to weather conditions, we should concentrate more on making our sidewalks in better condition for those of us who walk to schools with children.
More street lighting in areas that currently do not have lighting like Lakeridge.
Decrease spending due to still slow economy and residents not typically receiving pay increases, especially pay increases of 10%.
Overall, I believe Ajax is in a good state for roads and money could be better spent for 2015.
Street lighting and resurfacing. Wouldn't add more bike lanes. Have enough already that re not being utilized.
Westney and Rossland road should be 2 lanes both ways the whole road at very least. Kingston should have 3 lanes no bus lane. If you want bike lanes can't be used in winter and are under used to justify expense.
Please widen Westney Road to 4 lanes to Taunton. Rossland should also be 4 lanes throughout Ajax. From my home I can see the traffic on Westney between Delaney and Rossland - seriously deficient for a major road with a highway interchange.
Widen Westney Rd to four lanes from McGill Rd to Taunton Rd. It currently does not support the amount of traffic that runs through it during the rush hours. Have bull noses for right turns and bus stops.
Westney road north of hwy 2 should be widened to 4 lanes all the way to Taunton. All you have to do is drive on that road during rush hour to see that it is in desperate need of an additional lane in each direction.
We don't need anymore bike lanes. I have yet to see anyone biking in them. Useless. The bus lanes are so badly laid out. There is not enough space to get in or out of lane before solid line.
Though I have chosen to increase the budget, the bike lanes and new street signs indicating bike lanes should be decreased. Many of our roads need resurfacing and that should be the higher priority.
The roads have been done, the money was obviously wasted on bike lanes which to this day I still have never seen anyone use in south Ajax.
Ajax roads desperately need repairing, please give priority to this in the budget. They are a disgrace to the Town.
Slow down on Bike lanes..... many in the north end of the city are not used....

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Widen Rossland to 4 lanes. Backups are from Lake Ridge to Audley now !! Widen Westney up to Taunton. Both roads should have been done years ago. These are "must do" projects, delay the "nice to have" projects if necessary.
Unnecessary road construction!
I believe Ajax is sufficient in all of these areas therefore less of a budget will be needed.
I would like to see more lane widenings for certain areas (Westney Road north of Delaney, Taunton Road especially near Simcoe and Ritson).
More sidewalks in the south of Ajax where school kids share the road with rush hour traffic and less bike lanes most cyclist do not obey traffic rules.
Traffic calming on Rands Road, between Westney & Finley. 3 cars have crashed into my property in the last few years. 2 surveys put out, none acted on. I guess a death will only bring this issue to a solution. Sad, and unfortunate.
Traffic calming didn't work on Range Line Rd at all! Cars drive right through the circles without slowing at all. It's extremely frustrating! Make the entire road thinner or put back the speed bumps please!
Expand Rossland to 4 lanes and also Westney Rd.
Driver are using residential side streets to by-pass traffic, creating dangerous situations. Please consider traffic calming and stop signs in more established neighbourhoods in addition to new areas.
Forget the bike lanes. With all the lanes painted on Kingston Rd near Salem, the perfect storm is being created.
Sidewalks are not accessible for those in wheelchairs and with baby strollers as they are too rough and uneven. Certain roads need to be widened, such as Westney Rd and Rossland Rd, in order to address the increase in traffic.
Keep it the same.
Increased Spending on Roads Such as Westney North from Kingston Road to Taunton road. The widening of Rossland road from Lakeridge to Church. We need better roads in Ajax.
Need to widen Rossland and Westney to 4 lanes. Church needs to be widened as well as everyone is "racing" down Elizabeth and Delaney to avoid the congestion on Church.
More resurfacing, less bike lanes.
The budget for this should be lower. Reduce property taxes since the city has so much overhead to repair/fix these types of issues. Its ridiculous on how much we pay for property taxes, every year assessment is provided, property taxes is still high.
Ajax roads are a disgrace to the Durham Region. Get them fixed even if you need to spend more of the budget to do so.
I live on Ravenscroft rd and I would like to see a stop sign at Ravenscroft and Brennan travelling North and South at Brennan. Now that buses are running on Ravenscroft for the last 5 years the roads are wearing down and need a resurfacing.
At this point there is not need for any changes.
Make smart signals...many signals in Ajax create unwanted traffic as they can not detect live traffic.
Less bike Lanes and money wasted changing perfectly fine street signs. Particularly so on narrow streets.
We want the Westney road North widened to two lanes for each direction up to Taunton. The current single lanes are causing serious delays during peak hours. But do not increase the property tax as already we are paying high taxes.
The road system in Ajax is the worst in the GTA. Ajacians pay one of the highest property tax in Canada, where is all the money going?
1. Cross walks & bus stops must be well lit 2. Street lights must be brighter, some are dim. 3. Bike lanes on areas around sec.schools.4. Snow & ice clearing on roads, bus stops, & sidewalks going to schools.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Roads such as Dryer need serious resurfacing and this should be attended too soon.
Separated bike lanes and traffic circles.
Bike lanes should be decreased as most of them are bike lanes to nowhere anyway and also only used by a very few people anyway.
Roads, etc. are in pretty good condition in Ajax.
Westney road north of Ravenscroft needs to be widened to 2 lanes in each direction.
Brighter street lights in housing areas especially where there are heavy boulevard trees.
Improve roads. Specifically the Salem & Bayly intersection which is terribly constructed.
Terrible roads in Ajax. Please fix them ASAP.
Bike lanes in the suburbs? Complete waste of money and headaches for home owners in the area.
Funds should be committed to expanding Rossland Rd and Westney Rd (north of Magill Dr) to 4 lanes to ease traffic congestion.
I would use some of that money for other purposes. Downtown revitalization or perhaps services for seniors.
I think we should repair the expansion joint on the bridge on bayly west of Westney it's almost getting dangerous.
In Ajax dedicated bus lanes are a total waste of money, drivers do not know how to use them and there is not enough bus traffic, the money spent on bike lanes is also wasteful.
Keep fixing the roads but we don't need to get crazy with all these restrictive/custom lanes like at Kingston Rd and salem Rd.
More bike lanes to separate cyclists and drivers because it is safer and better to separate lanes for both drivers and cyclists rather than sharing it.
Install Traffic Calming Measures on Williamson Rd. E.
Tax dollars should be better used than by i) creating poorly implemented bus lanes or ii) painting bike lanes on residential roads with no other modifications to the roadway. These appear to be merely frivolous spending.
More roundabouts! They keep traffic moving nicely. Maybe Bayly and Westney for a big one?!
Fixing streets.re surfacing some residential roads.
Either more street lights in older areas or prune back the mature trees. Signs to signal left when turning at roundabouts - too many cars turn left without signaling.
Bike lanes increased. For Safety sake. Also, I like what the town is doing to make our waterfront accessible. Upgrading of the walkways/bike paths is money well spent. Thanks for making our parkland beautiful!
Put the yellow lights on the floor of the road like in the states it will save a lot of money it will be seen at night and no electricity needed.
Better roads, and infrastructure makes the town roads safer and more efficient, smoother roads also makes vehicles last longer.
Westney Rd. double lanes between Magill Dr. and Taunton Rd.
A lot of streets need resurfacing. Bayly and some internal streets.
Please fix bayly and westney.
Less spent on bike lanes.
Tons has already been spent recently. Roads are not in bad condition in most areas. I even have seen some sidewalks redone that barely needed it. Save the money for elsewhere.
Example/ resurfacing on Salem - I've seen way worse roads. Does not need!



### ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

STOP SPENDING MONEY ON BIKE LANES (and associated signs, etc.)! We need user fees for bicycle riders.
We do not need any more bike lanes in the town of Ajax. Please reinvest the money used for bike lanes in either improvements to the roads or savings to the tax payers.
Bike lanes are not necessary as it is more recreational then for transportation purposes. Street light synching should ease some traffic congestion but the off-ramp traffic is horrible.
We have enough bike lanes!! Sidewalks in some areas are needed more.
Need more bike lanes, transit lanes.
I would like to see a reduction on the number of bike lanes in Ajax , I live close to the lake and although many of the street have bike lanes they are grossly underused. It is also an amenity that is only usable for a limited time due to weather.
I'd like to see traffic calming increased - I've only lived in Ajax for 1.5 years, but 6 months in the calm drive because a hectic rushed (sic) drive due to the pace of all cars. 20 over is a norm now. I didn't leave the city to be back in the city.
Cont'd improvements eg. repaving/fix Finley between Westney-Bayly; Kingston Rd.; increase safety by forcing drivers to follow rules-eg. hard medians that prevent turns where there should not be: along Westney approaching the GO station from the south.
Don't see value in some of the changes that have recently been made to the Hwy 2 & Harwood area. Extra lanes are confusing and it hasn't helped with traffic flow. I question that this money is being spent wisely.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Vehicles & Equipment

Just maintain the current ones better.
I can understand all of the above but why fitness equipment? People can pay for a gym membership like everyone else.
All non public Safety Vehicles can be placed on a freeze or reduced, from what I have seen. Some of these non essential vehicles are high end.
Plenty spent on this in past.
I hope they can manage with what they have. You don't say if any of the equipment they have now has become obsolete.
Lower Property taxes - snow plows are never on schedule anyways - cannot justify spending more for [comment removed] service
Street snow cleaning takes 2-3 days which is higher than most of the cities and towns in GTA.
Need to see a report on the condition of the equipment we already have before commenting on this.
Unnecessary to spend so much every year.
Less pick-ups - 2 workers per truck? driving the "trails" - can't walk 20m to pick-up garbage?
The group fitness is terrible at the ACC. The Commodore's room is not a fitness studio and the classes/time/schedule are terrible. I live in South Ajax and I always drive to McLean for the classes as the schedule and studio are better.
All other budgets should be lowered as needed to achieve the goal of widening Westney and Rossland immediately.
Not sure why fitness equipment is included, surely this would come in community centre budgets.
From the looks of the municipal vehicles in Ajax, it seems like the Town upgrades to new vehicles far too often and early. Perhaps we can use the vehicles for at least 10 years before upgrading them to new ones.
I would need further info to comment more.
I think we have enough of this equipment from previous years, and we do a good job of snow plowing/garbage collecting, etc, so I would think now that no (or nearly no) new equipment need be purchased.
Use current fleet of vehicles and fitness equipment for at least 3 to 4 years longer rather than updating them for new vehicles/exercise equipment so early in their cycle.
Make do with lower cost pick-up trucks and use them for longer.
Find savings, fitness equipment? Go to the gym on your own dime or run, do squats, pushups etc in the local area.
Cars and pick up trucks, what are these used for regarding taxes for the town?
Make existing vehicles and equipment last longer through better maintenance.
More snowplows. The response time sucks compared to other municipalities.
Buy lower cost vehicles and use them for longer.
We should have modern emergency response vehicles both fire and municipal.
Major town fire station one of the most modern. Residents can buy their own fitness equipment or join a private fitness center, don't need to spend tax payers money on this type of equipment for government workers.
It would be nice to see snow plows out on the side streets faster.
While essential services are important, I do think we can spend less in this area too.
Stretch out the vehicles for one more year.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Clear roads before bike lanes in winter.
We seem to have enough fire trucks and town of Ajax vehicles. They are always sitting parked in library and acc parking lot not being used. Fire seems well equipped to me.
The town is growing not decreasing. Better equipment may be the difference between saving lives. Winter snow removal is key to less accidents and based on last years winter we were underprepared.
Fire services are doing more with less. We need to support those women and men.
Please improve maintenance so that equipment, vehicles and equipment last much longer which will need them to be upgraded less often.
Where plausible....look at moving to hybrid/gasoline vehicles.....
Better to have more then less.
Why are we not buying north american manufactured vehicles ie ford /gm / Chrysler .... stop buying these hybrid vehicles.
The budget for this should be lower. I don't even use any of these and why am I paying for them [ex: fitness equipment, cars, etc]. I hope the city is looking for affordable alternatives.
Fine customers who misuse and damage fitness equipment and use those fines to defray the cost of updating and maintaining the equipment.
Would like to see much better and more timely snow plowing of the secondary streets.
Due to the few fires a year we get through out the region I do not believe new equipment is needed every year, or every other year. snow plows are used 5-10 times a year so no need to improve on, fitness equipment many people are going to local gyms.
Stay with the budget.
Use vehicles and equipment longer before replacing them.
Fitness equipment? I pay for my own fitness equipment.
With winters becoming increasingly more snowy, there should be an increase in snow removal planning and equipment.
Fitness equipment. This question is very vague, however, with everything combined have chosen fitness equipment.
Fitness equipment should not come out from taxes but financed by GYM membership fees.
Town updates vehicles/fitness equipment too often. Use vehicles/fitness equipment for many more years before updating them.
The town is growing we need to ensure there is adequate service.
Vehicles and equipment are satisfactory as of this moment. Canadian weather is a bit unpredictable but our city's resources should aid us well in times of need.
This one is hard to know - what's the age of the current infrastructure? What kind of service agreements are in place? And how can you lump in vehicle fleets and exercise equipment?!
Better maintained vehicles run better and last longer, newer vehicles are better on fuel and keep the town greener. Newer equipment provides new features and efficiency.
Also not been deficient is recent years. Lower it to add in other areas.
I am not sure why fitness equipment is in the same question as fire trucks. Is this survey trying to push a certain agenda. Let the people who want to use the fitness equipment pay for it.
The grouping of these without the context for what is actually being purchased is horrible. Why is the town buying 'cars', how many cars did the town buy last year? Why did the town buy these cars? What are the cars used for?

### ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Essential services such as firefighting and snow removal is necessary for a functional city.

Less fires, and calls for firefighters. EMS is far busier.

The population has grown - you need more of this.

I certainly wish you didn't group life saving equipment (aka fire trucks) in with "fitness equipment". I selected "current budget" but I trust I won't be seeing ancient life saving devices and top notch, brand new fitness equipment...

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Parks, Playgrounds, Sportsfields

We seem to have more then other towns.
I am pretty sure we can manage with what they have now.
There are currently enough Parks, Playgrounds and Sportsfields for everyone in Ajax and their extended families from anywhere else in the GTA.
Let's see a list of what is planned before asking for comments on this item.
More places for kids and families to go.
More parkettes for the younger families are needed. With all the town houses going up there are more young families and no place for children to play.
Small neighborhood parks should be re-established [comment removed] naturalization areas.
Why is Ajax the highest cost in Ontario for baseball. Minor sports should be free for facilities.
Would like to see more improvements on the waterfront, is the idea of a marina out of the question, when I look at the pickering marina it is thriving and attracts customers for the local businesses.
I will always support ideas that beautify our community. And increase our children's and adult activity levels while lengthen our lives. Make it your legacy.
Some of our playgrounds (for kids) do not get regularly cleaned up or maintained. At Horne Park (for example), there is garbage scattered all over the place all the time. We need some more maintenance people to clean this up more regularly!
Parks in good shape. [comment removed]
More soccer turf fields, but for crying out loud, don't install them in the middle of soccer season, that's just bad planning. Pickering installed between Sep 15 to Dec 1, good planning and common sense. Ajax = fields destroyed from over usage!
As previously stated stop bikes speeding along the path at the lakeshore and also put up bollards on the bridges so that they are unable to cycle across the bridge as they do not dismount as the signs indicate they should.
More low cost/maintenance facilities like soccer fields. Less high maintenance facilities like ice rinks.
Invest more in high growth/low maintenance games like soccer and reduce expenditure in low growth/high maintenance games like hockey.
We are in good shape now for recreational areas and can hold the line at current expenditures for a few years.
Recently upgraded Baseball diamonds, plus Pan Am games upgrades, no need to spend money here. We have also just spent money on soccer fields at the Ajax Community Centre This could be a good area to save some money for this coming year.
How is this different from Park maintenance?
If you want to decrease obesity in children, creating more places for them to play is important, however so is the safety of the parks and areas, well lit locations that are safe and not secluded are important to encourage play.
The town parks are a DISASTER, weeds and thistles have taken over and the McLean Centre park is not useable by small children because the thistles are bigger than they are.
City can use Perennial plants in parks so the cost is lower than using annual plants that don't survive winters.
This should remain a priority for the Town of Ajax. We are a growing Young family community and when these areas are invested in, families will use them and it helps keep our kids out of trouble.
Spend money on maintaining fields rather than converting soccer fields to baseball diamonds and baseball diamonds to soccer fields.
Have a bigger off leash dog park as more younger families are getting dogs instead of having kids.
I live on the ravine and it is filthy. Garbage in the water built up over years of no maintenance. You can't just mow the lawns and walk away. The ravine lights don't work, the few that do are totally blocked by trees.
So much money thrown away on perfectly functioning parks. An incredible waste. Eh didn't you just add on?

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Ajax has enough parks, just maintain them [comment removed] Get more soccer fields and less ice rinks. The are cheaper to maintain and attract more
Support our community and active members.
Improving the waterfront seems redundant when it's already beautiful.
Priority given to cleaning up the water algae problem.
More green space parks such as the neighborhood parks.
Let users pay for the services they use. No one should get a free ride regardless of income.
The budget for this should be lower. I hope the city is looking for affordable alternatives in making the improvements and maintenances.
The waterfront is fine as it is, no further improvements required.
I think the investment in outdoor fields such as lights and proper bench stands for people to watch their kids and friends play sports at the baseball diamonds/field would be greatly appreciated.
Stay with the current.
Town needs to put footings in at turf fields being built at Monarch fields so it can be domed in the future. several Ajax groups spend thousands of dollars every winter at domed facilities outside of the region
The ARC is barely functional. Residents in north Ajax still have to drive south for everything except swimming.
Too many parks in Ajax. No more. Just maintain the currents ones well. Waterfront looks good, don't waste more money on further improvements. Just maintenance.
Cleaning of lake from algae & other pollutants/bacteria.
I think there needs to be more space for kids to play and more space for families to go and have at the lake, and there should be some investment in cleaning up the lake.
Waterfront improvements. Leave our waterfront alone. Placing picnic tables along the waterfront was a big mistake as they are misused eg portable BBQ's are placed on them and most of them are scorched or burned.
Please do not go ahead with building a soccer field on Gillett Drive, there is already one on Williamson - 1 minute away.
I would like to see the ball fields at Sportsplex at Taunton and Audley kept and not changed after Pan-Am games keep the covered dugouts. There should be a fitness facility inside ARC as well.
Baseball diamonds, soccer fields, tennis courts should not come out from taxes but financed by membership fees.
Waterfront improvements - such as washroom facilities at Paradise Beach. Expand existing snack bars to include cappuccino machines and grown up treats in both snack bars could be profitable and popular.
Build more parking near the lake front in order to improve access. More baseball diamonds to replace ones taken away in recent years.
Focus on the basics like roads before spending on nice to have things like parks and sports facilities.
These are why I like living here as opposed to the city.
I would go lower and get developers to agree to provide this type of thing as a condition to build.
We need no parking on one side of Lake Driveway and adjacent side streets, need increased security for evenings and nights to discourage youths hanging about drinking and smoking dope and then vandalizing adjacent properties.
More grounds. This isn't intended only for the young population but also to adults and elderly to urge them to be active. People playing sports or taking a walk gives a great atmosphere as a community.
More to help sports in Ajax. Soccer/Hockey.
I'd like to see more tennis surfaces in Ajax.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Loving the change made to the boat launch at Rotary Park. Due to its increased popularity as a launch site more parking will be needed.
I'd like to see a new park for the children in my neighbourhood. Picov Parkette is not sufficient to meet the needs of the kids in the area. We need the play structures replaced!
Picov parkette looks disgusting and needs a new playground.
Playground equipment, although ok in general, doesn't compare to the quality of those in Whitby. Try some imaginative designs (Whitby's "Rocket Ship Park") and install the rubberized ground instead of the wood chips.
Every group of streets should have parkettes.
Organize free sport teams for all ages use balls and other sports at are cheap.
People need places to play and relax.
Ajax FC was one of the top soccer clubs in Ajax. It is only right to give them the full support in terms of building a dome and turf fields. When Whitby and Pickering can do it why not Ajax?
I would like to see an increase of green space to promote active living. The convenience of having nearby parks, playgrounds, and sports fields could improve the overall health of all communities within the town of Ajax.
House league teams/local kids are not allowed to play on the sports fields (eg. sportsplex) so why are we paying to build them.
Keep Exeter park wading pool going...but it needs to be resurfaced. Better heating for Ajax community centre pool.
Would like to see more outdoor skating rink and basketball courts
Parks attract residents, which injects money into the city.
Would like to see a dome put over one of the new turf field/s in Ajax so that they can be utilized in the winter for soccer, Frisbee, etc. etc. if the amount already allocated does not include this.
The two new turf soccer fields should have a dome option as without a dome the use of them is severely limited. We have no indoor facilities in Ajax for field space.
Waterfront and parks make neighbourhoods.
With the completion of two new soccer turf fields paid for by the Pan am games, the town should make the investment in a dome to cover at least one field.
There are too many empty or sparsely used parks/playgrounds/recreational areas. let the utilization of existing resources increase first - then revisit spending next fiscal.
NEED a few indoor soccer pitches & an artificial outdoor turf. Best if funded jointly with soccer clubs that have the expertise & the town that has the funds. Losing our BEST soccer players & their money to other locales.
Often I see new schools being built with a play yard only to find out a year later its covered with portable classrooms. I feel the city should do a better job forecasting.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Buildings & General Infrastructure

Just maintain what we have.
The buying and restoration of wartime buildings "Mackenzie Rd." and the creation of a Town Museum.
Ajax library should meet the standards of Whitby Library (Example Central Library).
Do maintenance and repairs are needed, to keep things operating properly and safely. No need to replace furniture just because somebody likes a different colour better. Get full life from equipment and assets the town buys.
A community centre with a pool in north west Ajax near Pickering high school . All the new houses are being built without more facilities in the area.
Why is the town paying for any cemetery infrastructure?
All other budgets should be lowered as needed to achieve the goal of widening Westney and Rossland immediately.
I found it ironic that Ajax would spend so much money on a fancy new office building and for a very ostentatious renovation of the church on Church Street, rather than spend on improving the condition of its roads.
What is going to happen to the Pickering Village Arena? I realize soccer fields are the growth area. But once you lose an arena. You never get it back. Invest in recreation of our family community.
Make users of community centers pay more for services and reduce maintenance costs of same. [comment removed]
Install town wide free wifi and remove the library. These days we don't need a library in every city, maybe one for Durham Region?
Ajax has more than enough community centers. No more please. The burden on tax payers is too much. This and the very high remunerations to an overstaffed town has made Ajax the highest taxed municipality in Canada according to Moneysense magazine.
Make community center users pay more for services and reduce staff to bring down maintenance costs by 50%.[comment removed]
We have adequate facilities now.
Community Centers and Fire Stations have been recently upgraded. Town needs to add a couple of arenas, there has been no development here for years. We have new soccer fields, new baseball diamonds, need new arena complex.
So many new buildings were developed it would be good to spend money elsewhere, and to spend this on keeping the current centres running as they are.
Lets build more hockey rinks, since they have spent money on the swimming club and baseball diamonds, lets see the hockey and figure skaters get a decent facility and demolish Village arena.
City should audit the public buildings like libraries and park washrooms to see how the upkeep or maintenance is before allocating any more money.
I frequent the community centre, arenas, libraries and all seem more than adequate. No extra money needed. We should not be funding the library millions of dollars to buy DVDs, the book selection is dwindling yet the DVD selection is outrageous.
We need a fire station near Asbury and Warrick Drive.
Ajax has enough Community Centers [comment removed]. Charge more for Community Center services so that less tax dollars are used.
Don't know a lot about the stormwater gardens..... are those essential or "nice to have"....; not sure around costs to implement/maintain versus.... are they helping us avoid some costs due to flooding...
Ice rink addition to Audley Rec Centre. It was proposed for 2016. Start the ball rolling so we can get the kids off the storm retention ponds. There's no hockey/skating rinks in the north end.
Support our community as a whole.
Get back to basics.
Again, users need to pay for the services they use as these buildings.



### ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

The budget for this should be lower. I hope the city is looking for affordable alternatives options in reducing the cost for this section.
Charge more for use of Community Center amenities and facilities so that less taxpayers money is used to maintain them.
I would only consider an increase if you were going to build more arenas for winter sports (hockey, figure skating, speed skating).
All are in good shape.
As mentioned earlier I find the ARC barely functional. The ACC is severely outdated.
Make users of Community Center pay more for programs so less tax payers money is used to maintain the community centers.
Cemeteries ? I thought they were privately owned?
Please provide a digital clock in the workout studio across from the gym room at Mcleans. Also, please consider converting the wall between the studio & community room at ARC.
Build a new library.
Stop wasting tax payers money on renovating old churches and on ultra fancy Ajax Corporation HQ and buildings.
We are growing and need to stay apace.
I think you can spend less here and accomplish what needs to be done.
Keep up the good work. The new Fire Station, community centres and main library are very nice. Fix up whatever electrical infrastructure is your responsibility!
Also can lower greatly.
I didn't know the Town was in the cemetery business.
Poor grouping with no context.
Attract residents to live in the city.
Just got the new community centre on Audley.
Again - I don't see fully used resources (community centres, libraries) - but you've lumped Fire Stations into this - for that reason I think you should increase. Based on population growth, we should need higher funding for the fire stations.
The town is growing...should apply to be considered a city.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Trails & Walkways

Just maintain what we have.
The current ones are not being used as it is. I use them daily and they are minimally used.
Where else could you possibly build anymore trails, asphalt walkways and pedestrian bridges? I can't see the need for any more money spent on these items. Maintenance is the key.
Budget must be increased to keep the weeds away from the pathways, I know if numerous people who stay away because of the lack of maintenance.
Widen pathways used most (e.g. lake side) with separate bike lanes.
Maintenance of the waterfront trail is very important to me!
More connecting trails, nature walks & routes that reach Pickering & Whitby. Move people away from the traffic for a safer, healthier community.
Re-pave the walking trails and roads at Greenwood Conservation. The asphalt there is in quite rough shape.
Ajax already has too many trails. Don't add to them. Just maintain the current ones.
Too many trails. Enough already. No new ones. Just maintain current ones well.
Just keep up what we have, no need to plan new, we're in good shape!
As indicated above control the bicycle use on these walkways.
No more please. Just maintain the current ones well.
Ajax has more than enough trails. No more. Just maintain the current ones well.
An extremely good investment for the citizens of Ajax.
Once again, we have spent quite a bit of money in this area in the past few years. Lets take a break here and save some money.
So many unlit pathways or sections of path discourages public activity.
Worry about the bridges.
This is where bike paths and lanes money should be taken from if any.
Increase bike lanes both on and off road.
All new roads should have sufficient pavement to allow cycling along the roads.
More should be put into the ravine walkways and upkeep, greenwood conservation trails. Beautiful spaces not being maintained.
Ajax has all the Trails and Walkways it needs. [comment removed]
Need to keep moving forward with trail development in the northern (new) sections of the city....; carruthers creek, etc.....
I feel funds can be better used.
Scale these pet projects back.
I use the trails in West Ajax, but there's very few others except teenagers go to/from school or on a Friday night.
The budget for this should be lower. I hope the city is looking for affordable alternatives in reducing the cost for this section.
Ajax has more than enough trails and walkways. Don't build any more.
We do not need anymore Trial and Walkways. I would lower this budget even more.
Trails are all looking good. No need to spend more.
I see lots of missed opportunities to create walking trails and mini picnic type spots by ponds. We have an unused/unkempt pond in our Wyndam Manor neighborhood at Salem and Taunton.
We have enough trails and walkways. No more. Just maintain current ones.

### ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Pedestrian bridges. One on Bayly and another on Church St are not used near enough to warrant having them.
More trails throughout the town can be enjoyed by so many in a variety of ways - walking, jogging, biking, skate-boarding etc. which can only be a good thing to encourage people to be active.
The Town has more than enough trails and walkways. Stop building more.
We have a pretty good trail system now. Send maintenance for tender or get volunteer groups involved.
I do not believe the usage justifies the expense.
Get the trail south of Bayly along Westney opened up and operational again!
Good job being done here too - in the south end anyway.
These are things I use all the time.
I would like this to be decreased by more than 10 % however the survey does not account for this.
We have excellent trail systems. Maintenance of them would be sufficient.
An active community is a healthy community.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Other Capital

We don't need more then what we have.
Don't need any more public art!
Do we need so many planning studies?
Cost efficiencies can definitely be found.
There is a webpage on Facebook where everyone is suggesting that the building on Mackenzie south of Bayly be converted to a museum to show the history of Ajax and how Ajax came to be such a lovely town.
I would like to see more money put into the arts. Places like the St. Francis Centre etc need upgrades.
Wait until all the construction projects are finished before improving downtown. Many improvements will probably have to be redone after the construction is over because they do not compliment the new look of the town. Don't spend money twice.
A museum to showcase why Ajax is here. Most of the historical buildings have been torn down.
Put this into widening roads.
First take care of the basic infrastructure like the roads and then spend on the nice to have things like art.
Library services are excellent. Downtown is being upgraded by corporations; please ensure they include park space & trails in all designs.
Do on line customer polling, much cheaper. Stop all expenses on art till all Ajax roads are brought up to Pickering, Whitby and Oshawa standards.
What downtown? Drop the library! Tell your web designer to install a counter in these forms *lol* it's so easy and saves being annoyed from typing too
Get roads repaired before you spend on art and downtown improvements.
Fix roads before you spend another dime on art. Do only on-line polling, it's is much cheaper.
We are OK now.
I would maintain budget in this category.
The fact that there is such a tiny percentage of the budget (0.6M max.) set aside for helping to support art and culture is upsetting. Ajax residents will continue to go to neighboring towns and cities for art related activities.
Ajax is an embarrassment in terms of a lack of public art. As an arts entrepreneur this town is behind in every category. If you can count your towns public art on both hands its not enough. The arts create 8\$ in jobs for every 1 publically spent.
I read a lot about autism and learn as much as I can. We don't have any funding for therapy so the therapy has to come from me. I have to self educate as much as I can and use materials from the library for it.
Downtown really could use a facelift but remainder of our town is in good shape compared to other municipalities.
Less on art and planning.
Take money away from closing down the downtown Harwood Ave. Closing that to cars and opening to pedestrians is a horrid idea as congestion well be terrible.
The ridiculous amount spent on some of these art pieces to put out front of community centre. Makes me yearn for rob ford in Ajax.
We have enough polls and art!
Spend more on a good planner and a marketing campaign to promote tourism on Ajax's waterfront. [comment removed]
Like to support public art....but it's very expensive! Seek to increase # of ebooks available from library and decrease # of DVD's being purchased....
I feel funds can be better used.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

Basics don't need to pay some artist thousands.
Studies are a waste of time. Ask the people who live and work in the area what they think....it's free!!!! Again, if you want to use a service, pay what it's worth and forget about various levels of gov't providing the funding to offset costs.
The budget for this should be lower. I hope the city is looking for affordable alternatives in reducing the cost for this section.
Get more music compact discs from the 1950 to the 1980s into the library to cater to the predominantly boomer population of Ajax.
What downtown improvements I do not even know where are downtown is.
That should cover costs.
Ajax downtown needs to be revamped.
The landscaping on the various islands across town don't seem to getting the requisite amount of maintenance. They look neglected.
Stop wasting money on public art till you get basics like roads, fixed.
It is a travesty to use public money for 'culture' like that silly sculpture hidden behind a parking lot near Rotary Park. I have yet to meet a single person who has any appreciation of that piece of junk metal.
More planning studies allow for greater improvements.
When selecting public art, please consider including us in the process.
I would like to see the library receive a greater budget to ensure they can provide a wide variety of the latest fiction and non-fiction from around the world.
Expand the library's collection, specifically non-english materials to meet new demographics.
Plan the Town better especially to realize the tourism potential of our waterfront.
Don't touch libraries. They are important.
Increased predominately to benefit the library.
Public art isn't necessary on our beautiful waterfront. It is the art!
It would be cool to have a impression art museum where the community can place their art their for free also poetry hearing.
This is way too high a figure for "other". Stop spending so much on polls when really all the Town is trying to do is manipulate the polls to get a result with furthers the agenda of the council and Town bureaucracy.
We do not have a downtown no do we need one, and all the money spend on putting these surveys together is a waste since they are pathetic bias surveys.
Non essentials.
A general improvement of the area across from the Town Hall is sorely in need of renovation. It gives the centre of Ajax a very shoddy look and is not an impression to encourage investment.
The city has grown, you need a bit more in this coffer.

## ATT 1 - Suggestions/Comments - Capital Budget

### Hardware & Software

For a small investment we could be town leaders.
Market is competitive...
Many corporations update hardware before it has finished it's useful life. New software is also not needed as often as the manufacturer produces it. Get at least 5-6 years from hardware and software before scrapping it.
Ajax residents don't use this.
See traffic light co-ordination in question 1.
Upgrading software just because a new version is released is irresponsible. Try delaying the upgrade till the new version price goes down after a couple of years to save taxpayers money.
Continue to upgrade at reasonable levels.
Update software only when absolutely necessary rather than every time a software releases a new version. Replace computers only when old ones fail rather than replacing perfectly functioning computers with new ones.
Do system upgrades and update computers only when absolutely necessary.
This has nothing to do with me.
Switch to open source software and stop paying Microsoft and Apple such large sums for software upgrades so often.
Upgrade systems and replace computers only when absolutely necessary.
I would keep the budget at current levels. It is important to stay up to date with technology however the cost of desktop and laptop computers are lower every year so smarter buying can keep costs down here.
We the people use computers less than 3 years new, no reason why town employees can't!
I am sure we could do with current technology for another year to put focus on some other priorities that are needed.
Can keep computers for one more year.
We all need to work on keeping the budget down, you people have newer computers than I do. Not in my budget to buy new, nor should it be in Ajax
Maintain current computers better so that they have to be updated less often. Upgrade software only when absolutely required, not every time a new version is released.
Consider Cloud services for storage, software services.....; laptops only for truly "mobile" employees.
I feel funds can be better used.
Assuming the current hardware and software isn't out of date.
The budget for this should be lower. I hope the city is looking for affordable alternatives in reducing the cost for this section.
Make Ajax employees use their computers for much longer and update software only when absolutely necessary.
It is important to keep the systems updated; a systems update also causes process protocols to be critically renewed.
Technology changes cost \$'s if and when needed. Not sure if the current budget will cover costs.
Make staff use computers for longer and update software only when absolutely required, not when new releases are available.
Make employees use their computers for much longer and update software only when absolutely necessary, not when new versions are introduced.
Again - hard to know without details about service agreements.
Information communication is the future. It is this online survey!
No context provided.
Overall Ajax is doing well with technology (usage for its citizens) - but speaking as an IT & Operations Director, I know these costs have increased.

## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

Fire & Emergency Services
Explanation?
Costs are out of control. Reductions everywhere are necessary unless efficiencies are effected.
Check to see how other municipalities find economies without compromising service quality and emulate them.
Communication and public interaction is key to prevention.
Ajax could use a police station!
Operate these services more efficiently rather than just throwing money at them thoughtlessly.
Lower maintenance costs and bring down employee count to bare minimum.
Look at overall numbers to find efficiencies.
Too much being spent on this. Consult other municipalities to see how they are doing it more efficiently.
Reduce these services to bare minimum and charge more for those who avail of these services to significantly reduce costs.
Fire vehicles and personnel should have the most modern equipment.
Plenty has been spent here in the past few years.
Unionized salaries and benefits must be held in line. Public service unions at all levels continue to demand compensation packages which are unsustainable and create an undue burden on the taxpayer.
This should remain a priority for our growing community. Money invested in this area is well spent dollars.
Fire stations are new, well stocked and maintained. No new money needed. EMS is doing well as well. Have more than enough staff and vehicles. Police on the other hand could use more.
We need a Chief! Who can expand the service to reflect the population growth.
Seriously how many fires are there in a year in Ajax? More ambulances are obviously what's needed. Also more Police.. It would be nice to feel safe walking
Increase maintenance costs on the stations and vehicles so that the vehicles have to be updated less often.
I'm sure there are some efficiencies that can be gained.....
Essential for the community.
Use Fire & Emergency vehicles for much longer before replacing them.
Overall, I believe that Fire and Emergency Services are bolted. Keep paramedics funded but firefighters and their training should be lowered.
Adequate.
Use vehicles for much longer.
Why do emergency services get salary increases every year while most other 'government' workers have taken pay freezes?
Stop increasing salaries every year!
Use vehicles for much longer before updating.
We are growing we need to be prepared.
We can't pay our emergency responders nearly what they're worth!
Better equipment and training makes it safer and easier to fight or prevent fires.
We have very few fires and established equipment. Lets make some lay offs.
Concentrate on ems. Fire is not needed as much anymore.
Population has increased, and with those responsibilities have as well.

## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

### Corporate

The corporate end of Ajax should be able to find savings somewhere in these many departments without impacting the taxpayers.
Not sure why they need so much money. Some of these offices don't do anything that the public sees as useful.
Still a crazy figure.
Costs are out of control. Reductions are necessary everywhere unless efficiencies are effected.
Why does the CAO office need \$1.5 million???? I have worked for huge multinationals employing 10 times what Ajax employs, where the office of the CEO operate on much less than that.
You could always pay council less. The job is a choice. Don't like the pay don't run in October.
Reduce CAO office expenses of \$1.5m and HR 1.1m. Ridiculously high. [comment removed] Increase staff to enforce leash laws on dogs.
Look at overall numbers to find efficiencies. IT, 1.9M??? Change processes / systems, reduce unreasonable demands in the procurement processes. Current RFP rules and setup makes projects like for instance your new website 10 times more expensive.
Reduce the council and mayors salaries.
Town of Ajax employees are over-paid, a sleeping community should not spend \$7.9 million on corporate
Private businesses need to do more with less, time governments applied this as well. Can't just assume a 3-5% increase is acceptable - lets reduce taxes by
Let's hire more by-law enforcement officers and enforce our by-laws like parking on boulevards and blocking sidewalks.
Wow, that is a huge budget! I am sure we could lower this area and see the money used on the 'front lines'.
If need be cut back on staff.
By law needs more officers. there is no deterrence of bad behaviour. People park anywhere and no one to hive out tickets and reign them in. If I parked illegally in Toronto I'm ticketed.
Ajax has the most employees on the sunshine list than any like sized municipality in Canada. Stop treating taxpayers as bottomless piggy banks just to overpay the senior Town staff obscenely high salaries and pay hikes.
Get out there and enforce parking bylaws, parking pads on private residences, etc.... more!....
Fine as is.
Observe the Law of Diminishing Returns to Scale. Corporate has become so big that it is becoming unmanageable and unaffordable.
Cut back on services----need to get lean.
Quality leadership is important for Ajax Mayor/Council.
Hire more workers. Contract-in services.
Exponentially lower CAO's office and HR budgets. 1.5M and 1.1M are ludicrously high. Stop living on champagne and caviar on the tax payers dime.
HR. 1.1 M??
I think that if we look hard enough we can find some savings here.
Residents should see visible beneficial use of tax dollars. Corporate Ajax does need to be maintained but not at the expense of other systems that directly impact the tax payer.
Why is this the only option that specifies a further breakdown of each individual component? Why is it provided if we can only suggest a total decrease rather an individual decrease?
Budget does not necessarily need to be high. Need to find inefficiencies with the system.
Same - population growth means you should have a need to increase spending here either for staffing increases or to align existing staff's pay with increase
If private companies have to do more with less, than so should municipalities and government in order to put more funds into the community.



## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

### Recreation

I am sure the pencils can be sharpened here. For a Town of 125k people We have 3 community centers! A very high ratio of community centers to population
Perhaps here is where I can request more money for the arts.
More weekend classes.
Anything the town can do to create a healthy population that is feasible for the public to use is always welcome.
Recreation is crucial in a family town.
Start charging more for services at the community centers and for programs to help fund them. Those using these services and being subsidized a bit too much by those who don't.
Charge more for community center services and [comment removed]
Implement/increase some usage fees. Look at overall numbers to find efficiencies.
Too many community centers already. Raise fees to use them rather than raise taxes for the same.
Town needs new arena complex. We have recently spend money on pools and fitness centers.
These areas are more than covered. Its time to tighten the belt. too much spending for a small town.
Essential for the community.
Reduce Leisure programs.
This all goes to the people and the fact we have to pay for public skating or public swimming is crazy. I believe my tax dollars should cover public swimming c
Adequate.
Cut back on leisure programs, fitness and [comment removed]
Unnecessary repairs were made to the walkway in front of McLean, replace the carpet inside the front area instead, its filthy.
Town of Ajax programs are great and cost makes it affordable for all.
Some money should come from membership fees and not from the budget.
Hire more workers. Expand programs.
Kids and seniors need access to these programs lets ensure they get it regardless of their income.
Unless more programs can be free, subsidizing community centers is a theft from taxpayers. Why are we paying for infrastructure to be charged again? We have higher taxes than norm as it is.
It should be lower than \$7.4. After all more and more of the facilities we have to pay to use anyway. So we pay over and over for the same facilities.
Too many under utilized resources right now.

## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

### Roads & Related Maintenance

Drop the crossing guards, it seems excessive to me. If parents are worried then walk their kids to school.
Why is this not broken down by category? I am sure that efficiencies can be found.
What is "Winter Control"? I don't see any control in the winter, I'm lucky if my court gets plowed within 48 hours and no salt or sand is put down when we get weather that warrants it.
The town's snow removal has been going down hill rapidly. A better program for the seniors in this town to have snow removal provided by the town, quicker than the program that is in place currently.
We spend \$8,100,000 / year on what?
We already have 15M budgeted for roads, do we really need 8 more?!
Widen Westney and Rossland immediately to 4 lanes.
Roads in Ajax are in need of repair and maintenance big time. Divert more resources to that.
Roads need maintenance. Try roads north of Rossland. i.e.. church.
As mentioned previously, our playgrounds need to be cleaned/maintained more regularly (trash all over the place all the time at Horne Park, for example).
Ajax roads are the worst in Durham. Increase spending on this to fix them so that they are at least as good as the roads in Pickering, Whitby and Oshawa.
Spend whatever is necessary to repair/repave roads in Ajax. They are currently a blight on the Durham Region.
More intersections with traffic lights controlled with tripwires. Stopping for a red light when there is no traffic in the other direction is senseless.
Maintain budget here.
Haha. Who picks up litter, replaces lights, fixes sidewalks. [comment removed] My lights have birds living in them. We barely get Plowed out in winter.
Essential for the community.
Litter pick up is ridiculous, through recycling we should be getting more of those funds. Eliminate crossing guards. Late at night reduce lights to only 1 out 2 or 1 on out 3 between the hours of 11:00pm--6:00 am.
Adequate no change necessary.
1. All streetlights must have brighter lights not dim. 2. Roads and sidewalks must be cleared of snow and ice.
Roads need to be repaired and should be maintained so they do not need to be repaired as often.
Too many traffic lights on Taunton. Most streets that open to Taunton can work with just a stop sign. Way too many lights on Kingston Rd. Makes it impossible.
Brighter street lights especially in tree-lined streets.
Give crossing guards a raise. Hire more workers. Contract-in services.
Expand the 401 for Pete's sakes.
Westney Rd, north of Delany remains a single lane road while Harwood and Salem are two lane roads. The traffic is crazy!
Fine with this, except for any money spent on bicycle (paths, signage, painting of roads). User fees should be used for that.
Ajax streets are horrible, trash and litter all over the place.
Road maintenance and signal control is key to traffic gridlock.
There is way more wear and tear compared to previous years.

## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

### Parks Maintenance

Definitely can be reduced while Maintaining the same or a higher standard.
I can't believe how much money these places seem to require for maintenance. Common sense is required.
Maintenance around the paths and parks, too much nauseous weeds.
Focus on growing sports like soccer which need lower maintenance and divert funds away from high maintenance sports like hockey which, at the grass-root level is losing ground to soccer, big time.
Continue to upgrade with a plan i.e. Pan Am games.
Invest more in high growth/low maintenance games like soccer and reduce investment on low growth/high maintenance games like hockey.
Look at overall numbers to find efficiencies. [comment removed].
Last couple of years we have spent lots of money on new baseball diamonds and soccer fields.
Let's use pesticide and clean up our green spaces.
Like I said earlier, no money or care is given to our green space. U can't just mow. Someone needs to walk around and assess the needs. Dead trees, garbage in water, worn away paths. Half our town is green space. Such a shame.
[Comment removed]. Boost staff that enforce dog leash by laws. My kids avoid Lakeside Park because of off-leash dogs. No action taken when violations are reported, if you do not give personal info.
Essential for the community.
Let the grass grow a little longer.
Increase user fees to cover these costs.
Increased hours at the waterfront snack bars - Carruthers Creek is hardly ever open.
Hire more workers. Contract in services.
Let's get some corporate sponsorship here.
Waterfront usage needs to be limited and controlled, day and night, it is too busy now and stretching the ability to maintain it.
Kids sports should not have user fees for use of Town facilities. After all, bicycle riders get off without paying any user fees. So why should families have to pay user fees for their kids to play sports.
Not seeing much "maintenance to soccer fields other than cutting of the grass.
Grass cutting of the boulevards should be increased.

## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

### Library

Libraries should be shrinking over time as more of their use is replaced by the internet or digital books.

Unfortunately libraries have become antiquated with the era of information technology.

Who needs a library these days?

How much use does the Library get?

How can this number be more than \$1,500,000 tops?

The Ajax Library is one of the few things in Ajax that is well run [comment removed]

Currently great system in place.

Ultimately close it and get a central library for Durham. Increase user fees.

Libraries are becoming obsolete - don't spend money here. Good area to save some money.

Decrease spending due to still slow economy and residents not typically receiving pay increases, especially pay increases of 10%.

Libraries are in good shape! I believe we could lower it given that a lot of books can be gotten via ebooks etc now.

More and more people are obtaining these electronically.

Why do I keep seeing the library? Over funded, and I use the library regularly. [comment removed], too many DVDs. We should not be driving books between libraries, if someone wants a book at another library, go get it. Waste of driver & truck.

Decrease # of dvd's..... increase # of ebooks (market that more), look at more emagazines.... Library services are very important..... but our library staff governance is very expensive at present....

Fine as is.

More focus on online content and less emphasis on actual printed material.

Increase user fees to cover these costs.

Library services are exceptional. A lower budget should be OK.

More of people use the Internet for this content.

Libraries cannot be that popular these days.

We all pay for DVD's, books and internet access.

Our family uses library frequently. Great programs and material is always in good shape.

Improved more user-friendly e-reader web site. Current sites are very confusing to use and lack clear instructions for first-time users.

Expand library collection. Hire more workers. More computers. More programming.

[Comment removed]. Get more music from the 60s and 70s on music CDs. That free download option is terrible. Highly compressed music files and limited downloads each time make it frustrating.

Definitely help the library maintain its high standards, or help it develop even higher standards. Mclean Branch could do with wider selection.

Provisions need to made within federal government to provide affording residential internet access

Utilization is low - I'd like to say the opposite, but the reality is - every time I've been at the library I haven't seen it really being used. I may be wrong, if my perception is incorrect compared to reality, then this should be higher.

## ATT 2 - Suggestions/Comments - Operating Budget

### Planning & Development

Suggestion to purchase railcars owned by Sarah's Tea and Coffee and convert them and the building (Seamus) on MacKenzie into museums to show off the history of Ajax (artifacts, publications etc.).

Give up on the "Tourism" aspect of this area of the budget. Selling Ajax to the general population is not going to happen.

Stop allowing the builders to build all these town houses. It probably is too late but you build larger homes draws higher income families, higher taxes for you. Higher income less crime. Better stores.

All other budgets should be lowered as needed to achieve the goal of widening Westney and Rossland immediately.

Tourism? Let's drop that and add to Economic Development.

Ajax has huge tourism potential which remains unexploited. Divert more funds to exploit the potential here. Hire experts that have a proven record of promoting countries and regions to help you get this done.

Work with current allocations.

Improve planning to boost tourism on Ajax's beautiful waterfront. Hire consultant to formulate effective plan to achieve this. [comment removed]

Look at overall numbers to find efficiencies. Aging population is getting killed by the current property tax. Move cost over to where it's being used and paid by the users. Fix this forms calculation, difference was 5.6 million not 560,000 \*lol\*

Spend more time and money estimating capital projects to a greater level of detail. Too many projects go way over budget.

Can save money here by working smarter. Economic Development and tourism can be effectively advertised on social media and that is free.

Tourism? What tourism?

Seems sufficient if we are going to draw people to the area and put dollars into our economy.

Tourism? Haven't seen anything to do with tourism.

Fine as is.

Okay to devote slightly more to Economic Development as long the ROI can be demonstrated which is other than "construction of buildings"

Building Inspections and Engineering cost should be reduce and charge to individuals who require these services.

It is important to invest in planning & development. Ajax is growing at full speed so the \$'s should be put in place to balance the needs.

Attract more business in Ajax commercial and industrial.

timeframe.

Economic development: increase funding and plan for industrial development and restrict retail and low-wage development.

Won't be huge cut we need to make budget.

We need to bring big business to Ajax and create jobs in our own backyards. Far too many people commute to work elsewhere putting stress on individuals, families and the community.

Let infrastructure catch up to expansion.

### ATT 3 - Suggestions/Comments - General

I would like to see our tax rate reduced over time. I believe it is currently too high for the value I get.
I'd like to see property taxes stay flat. I have been out of work for 2 years and would like to find a job close to home but there just isn't anything. Need to attract more business and not just fast food places in strip malls.
I would like to see one of the DIL buildings made into a museum. It could house all the Bomb factory material and everything relating to Ajax. It would be good if students in Ajax could go there and learn about the origins of their town.
Utilize existing resources more efficiently.
Having been involved with the Ajax Community Theatre, I have seen first hand how underfunded the St Francis Centre is. I really feel an increase in general to the arts in Ajax would be a big benefit.
We should invest more on the well being of the people in our community especially children, youth and seniors being safe and fit.
I think the town does a fantastic job in providing and maintaining recreation facilities and programs. I love living in Ajax!
Why do you say will not share ONLY my email address???!!!! You are not supposed to share ANY of this information.
Tax increases in Ajax over the last 20 years have been unconscionable .Taxes have increased about 45% and services have diminished. this has to stop!
The people controlling their individual budgets should be made more accountable.
Transit system needs improvement! More buses, more routes.
Change the municipal voting law, it's not good that a permanent resident of 15 years cannot vote or take office just because they chose not to become a Canadian. Permanent address over 6 months = right to vote, as several European countries do.
I've lived in Ajax for over 30 years and I feel taxes are ridiculously high and spending needs to be brought under control. I'd like to finally see a year where my taxes go down.
Police spending is out of control. I don't want to pay the sky-high (literally) price per hour to have the police helicopter chasing teenagers drinking beer down by the lake when what we really need is more bicycle officer patrols down there.
Just on these forms. I finished commenting on one page, but decided to go back to a previous page, and when I returned to the page I left, I had to start over.
Thanks for the opportunity to offer my input.
Time governments stopped patting itself on the back for only a 3-5% increase in taxes, and worked towards a 3-5% decrease to taxes. Private business do more with less every year, it can be done.
This town embarrasses me as an artist and small business owner. There's no art and no jobs. I will ONLY vote for those candidates that support the arts.
I have filled out comment cards and spoken to two people with the Town and expressed my concerns about our parks, and specifically McLean center park and nothing has been cleaned up. The weeds and thistles have taken over and the park is not useful.
Ajax is a safe and clean place but we would like to see more Corporate/Business/IT oriented jobs in Ajax like Markham. Lots of new IT jobs are found in Markham. Also, fix our EQOA ratings on the Ajax schools.
I have an issue with taxes increasing every year, especially in an economic environment that is still fragile and where residents are happy to retain their job, let alone be expecting pay raises that can match tax % increases. Max 250 char?
Money needs to be invested in our bus system for the area! To have high school students paying high fees for the bus pass is crazy. My daughter is not there yet -but hearing from a number of parents with multiple children in this age group

### ATT 3 - Suggestions/Comments - General

Please widen Westney Road to 4 lanes to Taunton. Rossland should also be 4 lanes throughout Ajax. From my home I can see the constant traffic on Westney between Delaney & Rossland - seriously deficient for a major road with a highway interchange.
Ajax need to define itself, the town needs to find something unique that separates Ajax from other towns.
I do not want to be told that I should be happy with my tax hike next year (most disrespectful comment ever to Ajax residents). when you arrive at the same increase every year I know you don't deserve your job. No effort shown at all.
Limiting to 250 characters did not allow for proper explanations.
I'm 100% in favour of public transit but people still drive cars to get to it. Road expansions have fallen behind drastically here and in the GTA. HOV lanes & bus lanes are great but CANNOT be put in if vehicle lanes are reduced.
I feel we need to invest in things that will support our community as a whole especially the essential services (Police, Firefighter, Upkeep of the community, etc).
Taxes in Ajax and especially Durham region are getting outrageous to the point its time to sell and move elsewhere ..... all i ask is please use restraint in what you ask from the taxpayers its not a bottomless pot of money.
This survey is a fantastic idea, great work!
I think all in all a good budget that keeps what is important at the forefront.
I do not want to see a tax increase. I just want to see more bang for my buck.
We see the busses going empty after/and between peak hours. The bus service should be run more efficiently , in order to cut the waste. Over all, lot of people now moved to Ajax. It is time to review to reduce the property taxes.
Why are our property taxes almost twice as much as similar homes in many other jurisdictions?
The budget seems very balanced.
Best thing to happen will be the Liberal's passing legislation enabling the ombudsman to audit municipalities to make them accountable.
The town is well managed, but there are instances of waste that we need to watch.
Parking restrictions on Lake Driveway to limit over-use of the lakefront parks.
Stop contracting-out, and start contracting back in.

## **TOWN OF AJAX REPORT**



**REPORT TO:** Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Rob Ford, CPA, CMA, AMCT  
Director of Finance/Treasurer

**SUBJECT:** 2015 - 2018 General Levy Forecast

**WARD(S):** All

**DATE OF MEETING:** December 5, 2014

**REFERENCE:** June 19, 2014 GGC Report - 2015 Budget & Forecast Timetable  
2011 - 2014 Community Action Plan  
Dec. 4, 2014 GGC Report – Funding of TO2015 Pan Am Games  
Operating Costs/Revenue Losses

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the report on the 2015-2018 General Levy Forecast (“GLF”) be received for information.
2. That Council establish the 2015 target tax rate increase.

### **BACKGROUND:**

During the previous term, Council established the target tax rate increases for the 2012, 2013 and 2014 budgets in October of 2011. This one time change in approach was implemented to manage the tax rate pressures resulting from the opening of the Audley Recreation Centre. For this Council term, the GLF will revert back to the usual process, where Council sets the target tax rate increase for each upcoming budget year.

The 2015-2018 GLF has been prepared in accordance with the various policies approved by Council in the Financial Sustainability Plan. Consistent with any type of long range outlook, there is much greater certainty in the early years of the forecast period. Further out in the forecast period, the level of uncertainty increases exponentially.



**DISCUSSION:****A) Base Operating Budget Forecast - Calculation Methodology*****1) FT & PT Salaries, Statutory Payroll Costs & Paid Benefits***

- based on current and anticipated collective agreement settlements, arbitration awards and cost increases for statutory payroll costs and paid benefits

***2) Revenues & Expenditures******a) 2015***

- based on a detailed, but very preliminary draft Operating Budget

***b) 2016-2018***

- Expenditures
  - Applied a standard corporate wide inflation rate of 2%; rate was adjusted upwards or downwards by departments where applicable
  - Hydro, Water & Sewer Charges and Insurance inflation ranges from 5% to 10% over the four year period
- Revenues
  - 1% increase applied to most departmental revenues; also adjusted by departments where applicable
  - future years were adjusted to capture significant changes in volumes/activity

**B) New Full and Part Time Staff**

The budget impacts resulting from 2015-2018 staffing requests have not been included in this report. They are being discussed as part of the Community Action Plan session.

**C) TO2015 Pan Am Games**

As detailed in the December 4, 2014 GGC report Funding - TO2015 Pan Am Games Operating Costs/Revenue Losses, the budget impact of the games will not result in an increase in the 2015 tax rate.

**D) 2015 Significant "Inflation" Pressures**

Cost increases that are well above previous tax rate increases as well as the Consumer Price Index (CPI), present a significant challenge in each and every budget, with the 2015-2018 forecast period being no exception. While the 2015 budget inflation rates are shown below, it is expected that while future increases may not be as high, they will still be well above future tax rate increases and CPI.

Budget Item	2015 Inflation
Natural Gas	34.6%
Workplace Safety & Insurance Board Premiums	28.5%
Hydro Electricity Rates	7.1% - 15.4%
Insurance Premiums	10.0%

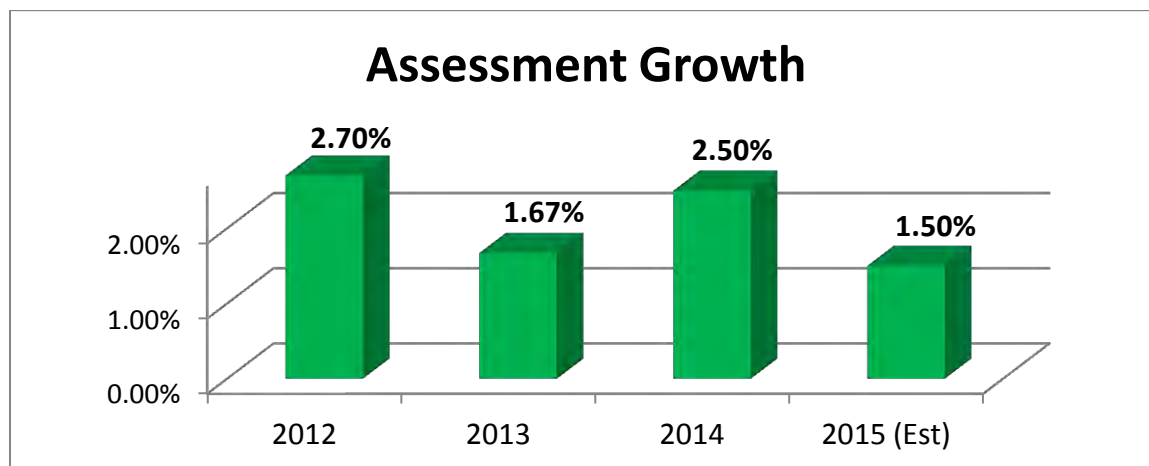
### E) Infrastructure Maintenance

As the Town continues to grow, new infrastructure (e.g. roads, sidewalks, curb & gutters, parks & parkettes, etc.) are both constructed by the Town as well as assumed from developers. At the same time, existing infrastructure is aging and requires additional maintenance. The budget impact varies from year to year based on a number of factors, including the size/number of subdivisions assumed, current/prior year capital projects, weather patterns, contract prices, etc. The significant 2015 budget increases are summarized below:

Infrastructure Item	2015 Budget Increase
Sidewalks, Curbs, Sweeping, Catch Basins, Storm Sewers	\$112,500
Winter Control (salting, plowing, winter patrols)	101,500
Sportfields (ball diamonds, soccer pitches, hard court surfaces)	55,800
Forestry (tree purchase, planting, pruning, stumping)	17,300
Boulevard and Parks/Parkettes	15,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$302,800</b>

### F) Assessment Growth

As indicated to Council in the past, forecasting assessment growth with any degree of accuracy, even in the short term, is an exceedingly difficult task. As detailed below, growth over the last four years has been both inconsistent and unpredictable.



The shift between lower and higher growth in alternating years is considered a statistical anomaly, not a definable trend. One definite trend is that future growth will be much lower, with increases in excess of 2.50% very unlikely.

The 1.50% growth rate estimated for the forecast is the number used to calculate the General Levy Funded Reserve Allocations for the 2015 Capital Budget/2016-2019 Long Range Capital Forecast.

The final 2015 assessment growth, which will be used for the 2015 Operating Budget, cannot be calculated until late November. As of November 11, 2014, the actual 2015 assessment is 1.26% (2014 - 2.23%).

G) New/Expanded Programs/Initiatives

The ability to fund new or expanded programs/initiatives will be assessed during the preparation of the operating budget. As identified throughout this report, there are significant pressures in all areas of the operating budget. As a result, staff anticipate that few, if any, items can be funded in the 2015 budget.

H) 2015 General Levy Forecast (Partial Only)**Exclusions:**

- a) Additional Full & Part Time Staff
- b) New/Expanded Programs & Initiatives.

The following chart summarizes the 2015 tax impact based on the preliminary operating budget and the reserve allocations that form the basis for the GLF. The two items excluded above will form part of the final budget, with the amount able to be added to the budget determined as the budget is developed.

Operating Budget Item	Budget Increase
Existing Full and Part Time Staff Costs	\$1,114,300
Utilities (Natural Gas, Water & Sewer, Hydro)	460,000
Infrastructure Maintenance (Section E)	302,800
Insurance Premiums	96,400
Other Operating Budget Expenditures	95,200
Other Operating Budget Revenues	(118,300)
Total Operating Budget	\$1,950,400
General Levy Funded Reserve Allocations	198,000
Total General Levy	\$2,148,400
Tax Rate Impact	4.05%

I) 2016 - 2018 Outlook

As shown below, the annual increases in base operating budget are forecast to be relatively stable for the 2016, 2017 and 2018 operating budgets. The fluctuations from year to year are primarily due to increases and decreases in the operating budget revenues generated from development activity (e.g. subdivision agreement fees, planning applications, etc.)

Under the Financial Sustainability Plan, allocations to discretionary reserves increase each year by a minimum of 25% of the additional taxation revenue generated from assessment growth. If assessment growth drops on a year over year basis, the reserve allocations are also reduced.

Year	Budget Increase		
	Operating Budget	Reserve Allocations	Total
2016	\$1,640,300	\$165,000	\$1,805,300
2017	\$1,598,600	\$165,000	\$1,763,600
2018*	\$1,966,200	\$132,000	\$2,098,200

\* Includes ½ year of operating costs for Pat Bayly Square

However, it is important to recognize that the above numbers are not all inclusive. The following items, which also increase future budgets, are not included:

- a) Impact of the “ripple or carryover” effect. Expenditures that cannot be funded in 2015 do not simply disappear, but are deferred and carried forward to future budget years
- b) Additional full and part time staff resources. The budget impact includes both the year of hire and annualization of the costs in future budget years
- c) New or expanded programs and initiatives
- d) As identified in the Background section, there is less certainty in forecasting future years. A change to any of the assumptions used to prepare the forecast can drastically alter the budget requirements

The only significant new item affecting the 2016-2018 operating budgets is the staffing and other costs associated with Pay Bayly Square in 2018. The total annual costs for the operating and maintenance of the square are estimated at:

Budget Item	Annual Costs
Part Time Staff (Rec. & Opn's)	\$113,900
Utilities, Maintenance & Operating	78,200
Total Annual Cost	\$192,100

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The following amounts are estimated for the 2015 budget:

- \$550,000 - Amount of general levy funding required to increase or decrease the Town's tax rate by 1%
- \$13.00 - Impact of a 1% Town tax rate increase on the average residential taxpayer (excludes Region and Education)

## CONCLUSION:

The setting of the target tax rate increase for the Town's share of the property tax bill by Council is an essential element of the budget process. It provides staff with the direction required to complete the 2015 operating budget for presentation at the February 2, 2015 GGC public meeting.

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Rob Ford, CPA, CMA, AMCT  
Director of Finance/Treasurer