

Report to Planning and Environment Committee

To: Chair and Members
Planning & Environment Committee
From: Gregg Barrett, Director City Planning
Subject: City of London
Draft Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan
Date: Meeting on: June 21, 2021

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Director, Planning and Development, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the draft Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan (CIP):

- (a) the attached draft Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan **BE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED** for public review and comment to the Argyle Business Improvement Area, Argyle Community Association, the London Small Business Centre, the Urban League of London, all City advisory committees and stakeholders who have participated in the process to date, posted on the City's Get Involved website; and,
- (b) based on the feedback received through the circulation process, the final Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan and any associated Community Improvement Plan By-law(s) and Official Plan amendment(s) **BE PRESENTED** at a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee for consideration and approval.

Executive Summary

The purpose of the recommended actions is to present a Draft Community Improvement Plan (CIP) with an overall direction and implementation approach that will achieve the improvement vision, goals, and objectives set for the Argyle Core Area, and to receive feedback to inform refinements resulting in the final Argyle Core Area CIP to be adopted pursuant to the *Planning Act*.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The Argyle Community Improvement Plan addresses three strategic areas of focus, as presented in Council's Strategic Plan 2019-2023. These are:

- Strengthening our Community
- Building a Sustainable City
- Growing our Economy

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

June 2012	Designation of an Improvement Area under Section 204 of the Municipal Act, 2001 – Argyle BIA
August 10, 2020	Argyle Regeneration Study Update
December 14, 2020	Argyle Regeneration Study Recommendations

1.2 What is a Community Improvement Plan (CIP)?

A Community Improvement Plan is a tool that allows a municipality to take actions to support improvements and redevelopment within a specifically defined Community Improvement Project Area.

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* defines community improvement as "...the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary." CIP actions can include:

- identifying changes needed to land use planning policies, zoning, and/or other by-laws, policies, and practices;
- directing funds for improvements to public infrastructure and public space;
- acquiring, rehabilitating, and disposing of land;
- providing grants and loans to owners and tenants for specific actions (which would normally be unavailable);
- in consultation with stakeholders, establishing a long-term vision, goals, objectives and an implementation strategy to provide focus and direction for continuous community improvement;
- building community capacity; and,
- supporting and strengthening economic resilience.

1.3 Policy Framework

1989 Official Plan

Chapter 14 of the *1989 Official Plan* establishes that the City can prepare a Community Improvement Plan to address community needs and improvement goals as identified by stakeholders. Some of the improvement goals that can be addressed by a CIP include: stimulating private property maintenance and reinvestment activity; encouraging the coordination of municipal expenditures and planning and development activity; promoting the long term stability and viability of the designated Community Improvement Project Area; enhancing the visual quality of the designated area through the recognition and protection of heritage buildings; promoting the improvement of energy efficiency standards for residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses within the designated Project Area; supporting the creation of Affordable Housing by considering any municipally-owned, undeclared surplus land for Affordable housing before any other use is considered (subject to policy 12.12.2.2. ix) of the Official Plan); supporting the implementation of measures that will assist in achieving sustainable development and sustainable living; supporting the retention of heritage properties or areas; reducing the detrimental effects of incompatible land uses; and, upgrading physical services and social and recreational facilities in the Project Area.

In addition, the *1989 Official Plan* sets out criteria for designating community improvement project areas and initiatives which may be undertaken by Council to deal with existing deficiencies and to encourage private investment activity within the designated Project Area.

The London Plan, 2016

Consistent with the *1989 Official Plan*, *The London Plan* outlines that community improvement project areas can be designated anywhere in the municipal boundary, and that Council may adopt a Community Improvement Plan for the project area to support community improvement goals and regeneration. Goals for community improvement are consistent with the *1989 Official Plan* and include:

1. maintain and improve the public realm, including such things as streets, sidewalks, street lights, street trees, pathways, parks, open spaces, and public buildings;
2. maintain and improve municipal services including such things as the water distribution system, the sanitary and storm sewer systems, mobility network, transit services, and neighbourhood services;
3. encourage the coordination of municipal servicing expenditures with planning and

- development activity;
4. stimulate private sector property maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment and other forms of private sector investment and reinvestment activity;
 5. maintain and improve the physical and aesthetic amenities of streetscapes in both the public and private realms;
 6. encourage the conservation, restoration, adaptive re-use and improvement of cultural heritage resources;
 7. encourage the eventual elimination and/or relocation of incompatible and conflicting land uses and where this is not possible, encourage physical improvements to minimize the incompatibility/conflict;
 8. promote the improvement of energy efficiency standards for residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses;
 9. foster the revitalization and continued improvement of the Downtown and other existing commercial districts including but not limited to the Old East Village, the SoHo Area, and other established business districts;
 10. upgrade social and recreational facilities and support the creation of affordable housing;
 11. support the implementation of measures that will assist in achieving sustainable development and sustainable living;
 12. improve environmental and social conditions;
 13. promote cultural and tourism development;
 14. facilitate and promote community economic development; and,
 15. promote and improve long-term community stability, safety and quality.

As outlined in the previous *Argyle Regeneration Study Recommendations*, community improvement in the Argyle Area is desirable because of age, dilapidation, unsuitability of buildings, deficiencies in infrastructure, as well as other environmental, social and community economic development reasons consistent with the *Planning Act*. A CIP is warranted, given that:

- an Argyle CIP can provide tools to encourage (re)investment and collaboration which will assist with successfully implementing the CIP;
- the preparation of a long-term vision for the area would provide significant benefits such as a more positive neighbourhood image, enhancing the sense of place and further promotion of one of London's unique neighbourhoods;
- there is potential for appropriate infill and intensification which could assist in revitalization and community economic development for the Dundas Street Corridor and surrounding area;
- during the engagement-process, concerns were raised about social challenges residents and businessowners are experiencing such as crime, people experiencing homelessness and drug addiction; and,
- the CIP can reveal local concerns and community needs regarding safety, mobility, quality streetscapes and a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

CIPs in London

At present, the City Council has adopted eleven (11) CIPs. The CIPs are intended to stimulate reinvestment and redevelopment, inspire appropriate infill and intensification, coordinate planning efforts, improve the physical infrastructure, support community economic development, preserve neighbourhood and cultural heritage value, and lead to the establishment of an improved neighbourhood. This may include incentives and targeted private and/or public investment and the ability to acquire, clear and dispose of land to support community improvement and economic development. The approved criteria-based CIPs include Affordable Housing, Airport, Brownfield, Heritage and Industrial. The approved neighbourhood CIPs are the Core Area, Downtown, Hamilton Road, Lambeth, Old East Village and SoHo.

1.4 Purpose of the Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan

The City of London has developed the attached draft Argyle Core Area CIP which will assist in achieving revitalization and redevelopment by:

- designating a draft Community Improvement Plan Project Area;
- identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the Argyle Area as perceived by the community;
- establishing a vision and objectives for the Argyle CIP Project Area
- researching and prioritizing action-items for community improvement in the Argyle Project Area; and
- developing incentive programs that can stimulate private sector investment in the area.

1.5 Process Used in Developing the Argyle Community Improvement Plan

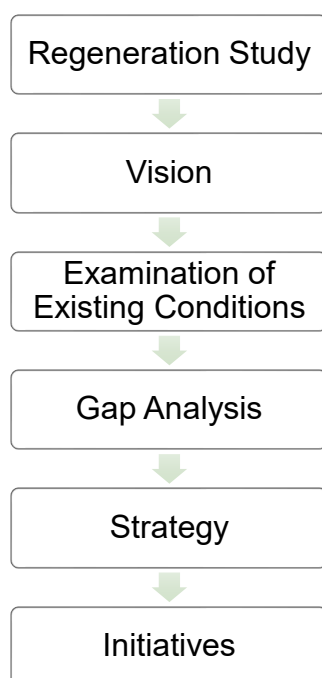
In November 2019, Civic Administration was directed to undertake a comprehensive regeneration study of the Argyle Business Improvement Area (BIA) and surrounding areas. During 2020, City Planning Staff conducted the study including research, data collection, analysis, and consultation with stakeholders, other service areas and the public. Based on the research, consultation findings and applicable legislation, Staff found that a CIP is warranted for the Argyle Area. Municipal Council, at its meeting held on January 12, 2021 directed Civic Administration to undertake the development of a Community Improvement Plan for the Argyle Area.

Typically, a Terms of Reference is established at the beginning of the CIP-process to provide structure and help to guide the following key phases of the project:

- develop a vision for the CIP with the community;
- examine and evaluate the existing conditions;
- identify the gaps between existing conditions and the ideal situation (the vision); and,
- develop initiatives and a course of action to guide community improvement in the Argyle Area.

Since the Argyle Regeneration Study (presented at PEC on Dec. 14, 2020) included a detailed Community Profile, summary of consultation findings and a review of public and private investment over time, it was decided that a Terms of Reference was not necessary for the Argyle CIP project. Therefore, in the graphic underneath the first step of creating a Terms of Reference has been replaced by the *Argyle Regeneration Study*.

Figure 1: Community Improvement Plan Process



1.6 Consultation & Communication

Community consultation has remained a significant part of this project, and many people were involved in a number of ways. The section below provides a summary of the communication and consultation conducted for this project:

- **City Website Project Webpage:** Staff established an Argyle Area CIP webpage on the City's website to provide the project background, study area, regular updates, opportunities for feedback, project-timeline and contact information. The website can be found at: <https://getinvolved.london.ca/Argyle>
- **Project Updates:** City Planning created a Contact List and emailed project updates which included information about upcoming Community Meetings, Meeting Summaries, Committee Report, and a link to the Project Webpage.
- **Argyle Business Improvement Area Meeting:** On February 11, 2021 Staff provided an update on the Argyle CIP process to the Argyle BIA board.
- **Virtual Community Information Meeting #1:** On February 17, 2021 Staff launched the Argyle CIP process, Ward-Councilor Lewis provided an update on approved infrastructure-projects in Argyle, and Staff received input from stakeholders on community needs, desired improvements, and a vision for the Argyle Area.
- **Argyle Community Association Survey:** A survey was included as part of the ACA email-list for April 2021 so members could provide feedback on their vision for the neighbourhood and regeneration efforts.
- **Virtual Planning Hours:** Between May 10 and May 14, 2021, Staff hosted eight (8) opportunities for a 1 on 1 conversation to talk about the project, ask questions and provide suggestions for the CIP project
- **Virtual Community Information Meeting #2:** On June 2nd, 2021 Staff hosted a virtual meeting to define the draft vision, objectives and goals, and confirm what stakeholders identify as requiring improvement.

Throughout the CIP process to date, staff have received five written correspondences (emails and letters) and two phone calls.

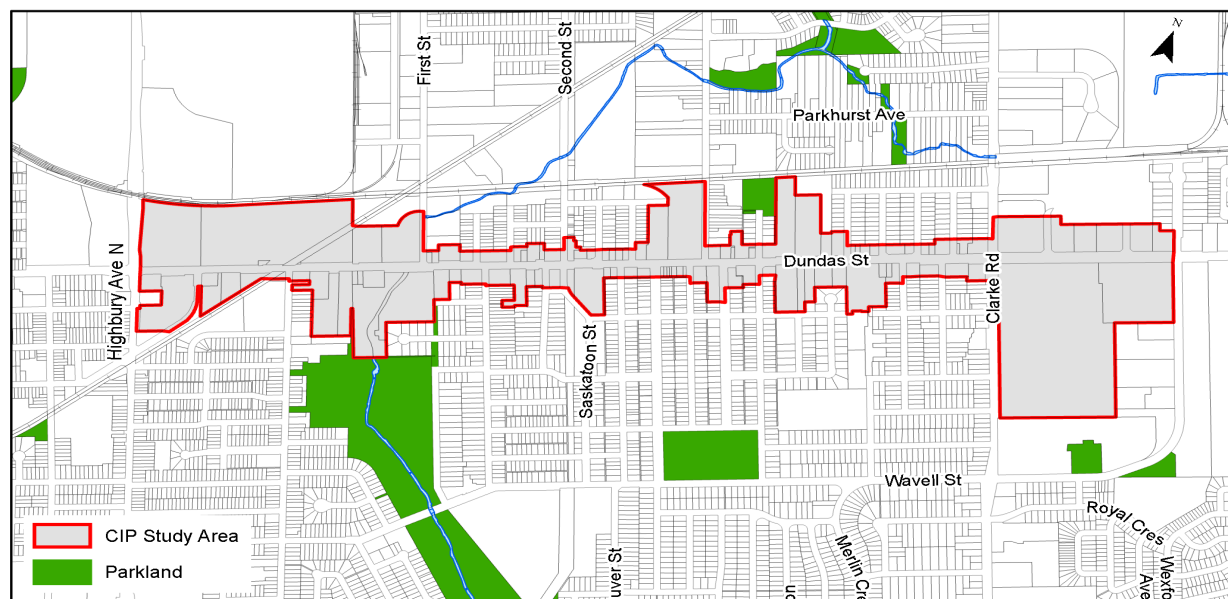
2.0 Argyle Area CIP Study Area

2.1 Study Area

When a CIP is being prepared, a Study Area is established early in the process to maintain a geographical focus and to help avoid “scope creep” as the project moves forward. *The Argyle Regeneration Study* applied to the whole Argyle Planning District, but for the Argyle CIP a smaller Study Area was established based on the existing Argyle BIA boundaries. This Study Area was chosen because stakeholders identified the Dundas Street Corridor as the location where the need for community improvement was the greatest. As Dundas Street is the main artery through the community where most businesses are located, regeneration and revitalization initiatives in this area will provide the most benefits for the overall community.

The Project Area for the Argyle Area CIP includes the properties fronting Dundas Street, and is bounded by Highbury Avenue to the west, Canadian Pacific Railway to the north, Wavell Street to the east and Whitney Street to the south. Important community amenities such as the Argyle Mall on Clarke Road are located within the Study Area.

Figure 2: Argyle Community Improvement Plan Study Area



From the Study Area, a Community Improvement Project Area (“Project Area”) is established. Ontario’s *Planning Act* defines a community improvement project area as “a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.”

2.2 Sub Project Area

The Project Area has been further divided into two Project Sub-Areas which as based on the existing conditions and characteristics during the preparation of this plan. The Sub-Areas include:

1. The Dundas Street Corridor
2. The Argyle Mall

Dundas Street Corridor

The recommended Project Sub-Area is located along Dundas Street, the corridor is the spine that runs through the Argyle community. Dundas Street is a main gateway to Downtown and provides access to the Veterans Memorial Parkway and from there to Highway 401. The large volumes of traffic that pass through have contributed to a decline in the quality of the urban corridor environment. Dundas Street and its many stores, restaurants and other businesses are conveniently located and provide residents with most of their day-to-day shopping needs.

The Argyle Mall

The Argyle Mall is located on the intersection of Dundas Street and Clarke Road, and comprises the Shopping Area adjacent to the Dundas Street Corridor. SmartCentres Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) has full ownership of the 355,000 square feet shopping centre and leases to approximately 34 commercial tenants. The Argyle Mall provides for most day-to-day shopping needs and includes stores like Walmart, Winners, No Frills, Staples, Mark’s, CIBC, Burger King, LCBO and others. The Argyle Shopping Centre bus terminal is located in front of the mall, and includes LTC-routes 2, 3, 5, 7, 17, 35, 37 and 94.

3.0 Key Findings

3.1 Community-Identified Needs and Weaknesses in the Argyle Area

As part of the (virtual) community meetings, stakeholders were asked to identify issues that require action and/or improvement. These needs are perceived by the community as barriers to successful regeneration of the neighbourhood. A brief summary of issues people identified is provided below; more detail is provided in Appendix D of the Draft Argyle Core Area CIP.

Social

- Issues with crime and safety;
- Argyle doesn't have unique characteristics/theme or 'Argyle Village feel';
- Better crime prevention and more police presence;
- More assistance for people dealing with addictions and homelessness;
- Perception of unsafe neighbourhood;
- Sidewalks along Dundas Street are narrow and close to traffic;
- Concerns about drug use and drug paraphernalia;
- Concern that the East Lions Community Centre is not finished;
- Need for affordable housing and retirement homes for seniors;
- Lack of lighting;
- More community events and outreach;
- Neighbourhood is poorly supported by services when things go wrong (Police, EMS);
- Argyle Mall is underused for events, e.g., children's amusement park or spring/fall festival;
- Need a short-term night watch;
- More events for families at Kiwanis Park;
- Neighbourhood feels unsafe at night.

Economic

- Vacant and dated looking building facades;
- Lack of fresh food (food desert);
- Leverage visitors to Argyle Mall for whole neighbourhood;
- Area is stagnating due to disinterest, crime and homelessness;
- Businesses are dated but familiar;
- Opportunity for more mixed-use spaces;
- Incentives to reduce large lots to smaller lots and different functions;
- Perceived as low-income area;
- Lack of housing-options;
- Less big box-stores, more small businesses;
- Lack of support from the City for local businesses;
- Under resourced/ missing amenities such as movie-theatre and more grocery-store options;
- Need an anchor that draws people into Argyle from other parts of the City;
- Focus on successful narratives of small businesses;
- Lack of outdoor eating areas (especially during Covid-19).

Environmental

- Car-centric, Argyle is not perceived as a bike or pedestrian friendly area;
- Missing curbs and sidewalks on local streets;
- Older building stock has significant energy conservation/efficiency issues;
- Dundas Street is in poor condition, improve road quality and safety;
- High amount of environmental contamination, including Kiwanis Park and Pottersburg Creek;
- Too much traffic and congestion;
- Too many entrances onto Dundas Street;
- Better transit-amenities, currently no shelter, benches and too close to the road;
- No places to sit in the shade;
- Lack of trees and green spaces;
- Lack of bike lanes in the area;
- Poor heritage designations and protection;
- Need for pleasant and safe active transportation routes;

- Need better integration between commerce and greenscapes;
- Smaller blocks along Dundas Street and more pedestrian crossings: Dundas Street is a barrier between north and south;
- Entrance to Kiwanis Park is hard to find (no directional signs).

Other

- Loss of historic identity;
- Traffic lights are not convenient for cyclists (road sensor issue on Third Street);
- London Transit Commission routes are perceived as inconvenient;
- Build a narrative how Argyle serves London more broadly (businesses, industry, agriculture);
- Walkability should be a priority, e.g., wider sidewalks away from the street;
- Better marketing from the City for East London.

3.2 Issues Identified by Staff

In addition to the needs and issues addressed by stakeholders, City Planning staff identified items requiring attention. Staff's findings are summarized below; more detail is provided in Appendix C of the Draft Argyle Core Area CIP.

- **Pedestrian-oriented commercial corridor:** The design of Dundas Street is currently auto-oriented, with many entryways towards businesses and narrow sidewalks. These design elements, coupled with large amounts of traffic, make the corridor unpleasant and unsafe for active mobility users such as pedestrians and cyclists. One of the CIP objectives is to improve the pedestrian environment along Dundas Street so the Dundas Corridor becomes a more pedestrian focused Main Street.
- **Investment & Growth:** The Argyle community has been largely stable in the last decades but is experiencing a population increase since 2016. The increasing population, coupled with low vacancy rates and rising housing prices indicate a clear need for more housing development. The private sector is making significant investments in the Argyle area; over \$32 million has been invested in Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Institutional development since 2015. In that same timeframe, a total of 536 building permits were issued in Argyle, 80 of these permits occurred in the CIP Study Area (Argyle BIA). This indicated that the area is seen as a viable area for investment, however investment remains at a lower rate compared to the rest of the urban area of London.
- **Length of Corridor:** The Dundas Street Corridor spans approximately 3km from Highbury Avenue North to Wavell Street. The length of the CIP Study Area is long, with businesses spread out along the corridor. The exception is the concentration of businesses at the Argyle Mall, which is located near the eastern end of the corridor. The Argyle Mall can be considered an anchor and focal point for future growth. However, other amenities such as Kiwanis Park, the East London Library and the East Lions Community Centre are outside of the Dundas Street corridor, resulting in a long and somewhat disjointed corridor.
- **Transitional Urban Corridor:** The Dundas Street Corridor is primarily an Urban Corridor Place Type, intended to implement the Auto-Oriented Commercial Corridor designation in the 1989 Official Plan. This provides for a broad range of commercial uses, and it is intended that the Dundas Corridor is recognized as a unique commercial district accommodating this range of commercial uses on lot sizes which are generally smaller than normally required. The London Plan acknowledges the current development pattern and applies the Transitional Urban Corridor policies to the segment of Dundas Street from First Street to Crumlin Sideroad (located to the west of VMP). The purpose is to maintain, at a minimum, the existing intensity, while supporting the movement toward more intense forms and uses as permitted under the Urban Corridor Place Type.

- **Infrastructure renewal:** Dundas Street is a major corridor and truck route connecting Veterans Memorial Parkway with Old East Village and Downtown London. Dundas Street has a daily average of 22,500 to 28,000 vehicles, and 36,000 vehicles on Highbury Avenue North at the intersection with Dundas Street. Congestion and the poor state of some roads and sidewalks in Argyle are a concern and contribute to the perceived poor condition of the corridor. The City is working on replacing aging infrastructure in Argyle. As part of the 2019 Arterial Road Rehabilitation, two road segments near the intersection were resurfaced: Dundas Street East; from McCormick Boulevard to Pottersburg Creek and Highbury Avenue North; South of Brydges Street to Dundas Street East. The upcoming Pottersburg Creek Sanitary Trunk Sewer (STS) project is an opportunity for road reconstruction including new curbs on another segment of Dundas Street; starting with the first phase between Pottersburg Creek to Burdick Place. Later phases that will also be renewed are between Burdick Place to Beatrice Street and between Merlin Street and Ronald Street.

4.0 Format and Content of the Community Improvement Plan

4.1. Vision

The Argyle Area Community Improvement Plan starts with a vision developed with the community during virtual community meetings. The vision for the Argyle area is:

By 2030, the Dundas Street Corridor will be a welcoming and safe destination with unique small businesses and shops, as well as a growing residential neighbourhood with modern appeal.

4.2. Community Objectives

Stakeholders were asked to rank objectives for community improvement in the Dundas Street corridor. The objective with the highest priority is listed first, the objective with the least perceived priority is last:

1. Support local businesses to create a vibrant and mixed-use main street.
2. Develop a high-quality public realm that is clean and accessible.
3. Provide opportunities for recreation and relaxation that encourages residents and visitors to leave their car and explore the neighbourhood.
4. Stimulate private sector investment in revitalizing the Argyle Area.
5. Improve the pedestrian environment along Dundas Street.
6. Improve the mobility and connections to other parts of the city.

The vision and objectives are followed by the areas for improvement. Through the consultation with the community, 12 areas for improvement were developed from the list of items identified as needing improvement in the Argyle Project Area. The 12 areas for improvement as prioritized by the community are:

1. Crime & homelessness prevention;
2. Safety;
3. Improvement of the public realm;
4. Supporting small businesses;
5. Improving the older and/or vacant building stock;
6. Enhancing Argyle identity and public perception;
7. Opportunities for infill development and redevelopment;
8. Cleanliness of Dundas Street corridor;
9. More stable and affordable housing options (aimed at seniors and below average market rent affordable);
10. Foster broader range of uses;
11. Improve active mobility;
12. Conserving natural heritage.

The 12 areas for improvement were summarized into 6 categories that form the basis for the Argyle Community Improvement Plan:

1. **Developing a High-Quality Public Realm:** The Dundas Street corridor will have a pedestrian-oriented streetscape and public spaces that are safe, clean, accessible and pleasant.
2. **A Safer Neighbourhood for All:** Argyle will be a safe, accessible and healthy place to live, visit and work by improving safety and accessibility related issues.
3. **Supporting Businesses:** Argyle will have strong, diverse and connected businesses and a business environment that attract visitors, serves the local community, and support business retention, expansion & investment.
4. **Enhancing Parks and Recreational Opportunities:** Natural features and neighbourhood parks will be enhanced, conserved and celebrated, and Argyle will have a range of recreational amenities and programs.
5. **Improved Mobility:** Argyle will have an interconnected community-wide transportation network that is safe, convenient, and prioritizes active mobility.
6. **Strengthening the Community:** The Argyle community will continue to develop and maintain strong connections within the community and the City, and build capacity to work strategically with stakeholders to achieve community goals.

The recommended community improvement actions fall under one of the above six categories.

4.3. Community Improvement Plan Action Items

All recommended CIP actions are identified in an Actions Item table in the Draft Argyle Area CIP, attached to this report as Appendix A. Action Items align with the Draft Vision, Goals and Objectives defined through the Argyle CIP process. The table identifies proposed lead(s) and partners, suggests a priority for implementation, and relative funding requirements (high, medium, low, no cost) for each Action Item.

There is not one organization or person solely responsible of managing and implementing CIP action items in the Argyle Area. Successful implementation of the Argyle Area Community Improvement Plan depends on many stakeholders working together, and ideally champions will emerge to lead different actions. Implementation depends on a number of factors such as priorities, costs, availability of funding and the willingness of the stakeholders and the community to lead projects.

The Action Items table is divided into the following two categories:

1. **Municipal Actions:** Leading these Action Items is the responsibility of Municipal Service Areas. Many of these Action Items are part of existing projects or programs.
2. **Community Opportunities:** Leading these Action Items is the responsibility of community stakeholders.

In terms of general implementation priorities for the Municipal Actions, Action Items identified as 1st priorities can be implemented with existing resources. Action Items identified as 2nd and 3rd priorities have higher costs and may require future budget considerations, longer-term implementation plans and/or coordination with stakeholders.

Additional feedback is anticipated as part of the draft CIP circulation process.

5.0 Monitoring & Evaluation

The Draft Argyle Area CIP features a Monitoring and Evaluation section which provides a framework for regularly tracking the progress of the CIP, and ensuring that priorities and assumptions remain relevant to achieving the Vision, Goals, and Objectives.

A number of baseline conditions were determined during the preparation of the Draft Argyle Area CIP against which future information can be compared. This provides a consistent framework for evaluating the ongoing change in the Argyle Area CIP Project Area. Variables/measures may be added to the baseline conditions. Any financial

incentive programs made available through the Argyle Area CIP will also be monitored and the information will be stored in a database.

Staff are recommending that a Monitoring Report is prepared every five years to evaluate the Community Improvement Plan and its individual programs. This report and evaluation will be based on the changes to the baseline conditions, feedback from stakeholders, and any new issues, conditions, or opportunities that have emerged.

6.0 Next Steps

Project participant comments will be received and addressed in the coming months to provide opportunity for stakeholder and community feedback. Based on comments and feedback received, Staff will modify the Draft Argyle Area CIP as required.

A public participation meeting is planned at a Planning & Environment Committee meeting in fall 2021 when the final Argyle Area CIP and applicable By-laws, Official Plan amendment(s) and Financial Incentive Program Guidelines will be brought forward for approval and adoption.

Conclusion

The attached Draft Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan combines the community's vision for improvement with issues identified by staff into one comprehensive plan. Staff recommends that the Draft Argyle Area CIP is circulated to stakeholders and the public for comments and feedback.

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Recommended by:	Gregg Barrett, AICP Director, Planning & Development
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City of London

Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan



Acknowledgements

The Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan was prepared by City of London Planning and Development Services staff with assistance from representatives from other City Divisions and community.

The following people and organizations played an instrumental role in preparing this CIP.

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Argyle Community Association (ACA)

East London Public Library

Family Centre Argyle

All those who participated in the community meetings and contributed throughout the preparation of this Plan.

Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan

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Section 1

Introduction



Community Improvement Plan Overview

What is a Community Improvement Plan?

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool that allows a municipality to take actions to support improvements and redevelopment within a specifically defined project area. Section 28 of the Planning Act gives municipalities the ability to prepare CIPs. Through a CIP, municipalities are permitted to:

- identify changes needed to land use planning policies, zoning, and/or other by-laws, policies, and practices;
- direct funds for improvements to public infrastructure and public space;
- acquire, rehabilitate, and dispose of land; and,
- provide grants and loans to owners and tenants for specific actions.

Purpose of this Community Improvement Plan

In October 2019, the Argyle BIA submitted a request through the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC) for staff to undertake a comprehensive study of the Argyle BIA and surrounding area. Based on the Argyle Regeneration Study completed in December 2020, it was recommended that an Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan be undertaken during 2021. The purpose of this CIP is to:

- establish a vision, goals, and objectives for the Argyle Core Area;
- identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the Argyle Core Area;
- record and prioritize actions for how the Argyle Core Area will be improved; and,
- propose incentive programs to encourage and stimulate private property maintenance and reinvestment activity.

How this Plan was Prepared

The following key tasks were completed to build a comprehensive foundation for preparing the Argyle Area CIP:

- review of relevant Provincial legislation and City policy documents;
- review of existing City of London Community Improvement Plans and incentive programs;
- review of best practices used in CIPs provided by other Ontario municipalities;
- analysis of the Argyle Area based on:
 - secondary information (such as Statistics Canada data);
 - site visits and first-hand data collection;
 - input received from the Argyle Community Association (ACA), the Argyle Business Improvement Association and City of London staff.
- information collected during (virtual) community meetings and project drop-in office hours.

Argyle Study Area

Argyle Study Area

Based on a request from the Argyle BIA, Staff have completed a regeneration study of the Argyle Business Improvement Area and surrounding area during 2020. This study included research, data collection and analysis, and consultation with stakeholders, other service areas and the public for the whole Argyle Planning District. As a result, the area the regeneration study focused on, will be referred to as the Argyle Study Area in this Report.

Argyle Study Area Description

The Argyle Study Area [Figure 2] identified in the Argyle regeneration study applies to lands in the east of London, generally bounded by Highbury Avenue, Oxford Street East, Clarke Road, Veterans Memorial Parkway, Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian National Railway.

The following section presents a summary of characteristics and statistics of the Argyle Study Area to provide context for the Argyle Project Area. Where possible, City-wide data has also been provided.

Existing zoning

Within the Argyle Study Area, the majority of land is zoned for residential uses (54%), followed by industrial (14%), institutional (13%), commercial (12%) and open space (7%).

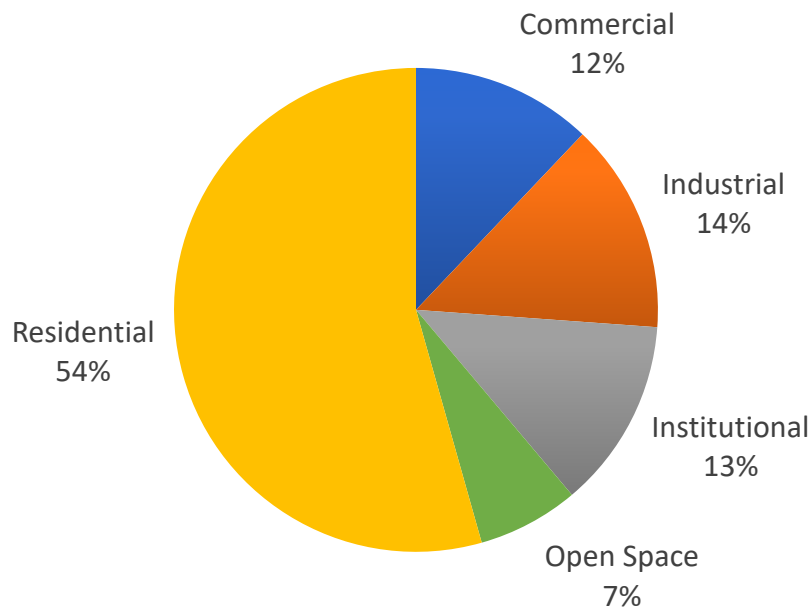


Figure 1: Percentage of Land in Generalized Zones in Argyle Study Area

Hectares of Parkland per 1000 people: As mentioned, 7% of the total Argyle Study Area is zoned as open space. The Argyle Study Area has a variety of parks and outdoor public spaces including Kiwanis Park, East Lions Park, Nelson Park, Admiral Park, Mildred Barons Park, Bonaventure Meadows Park and Vimy Ridge park. In total, 75.3 total hectares of green space or 2.1 hectares of parkland per 1000 people exists in the Argyle Study Area. This compares to 7.2 hectares of parkland per 1000 people City-Wide.

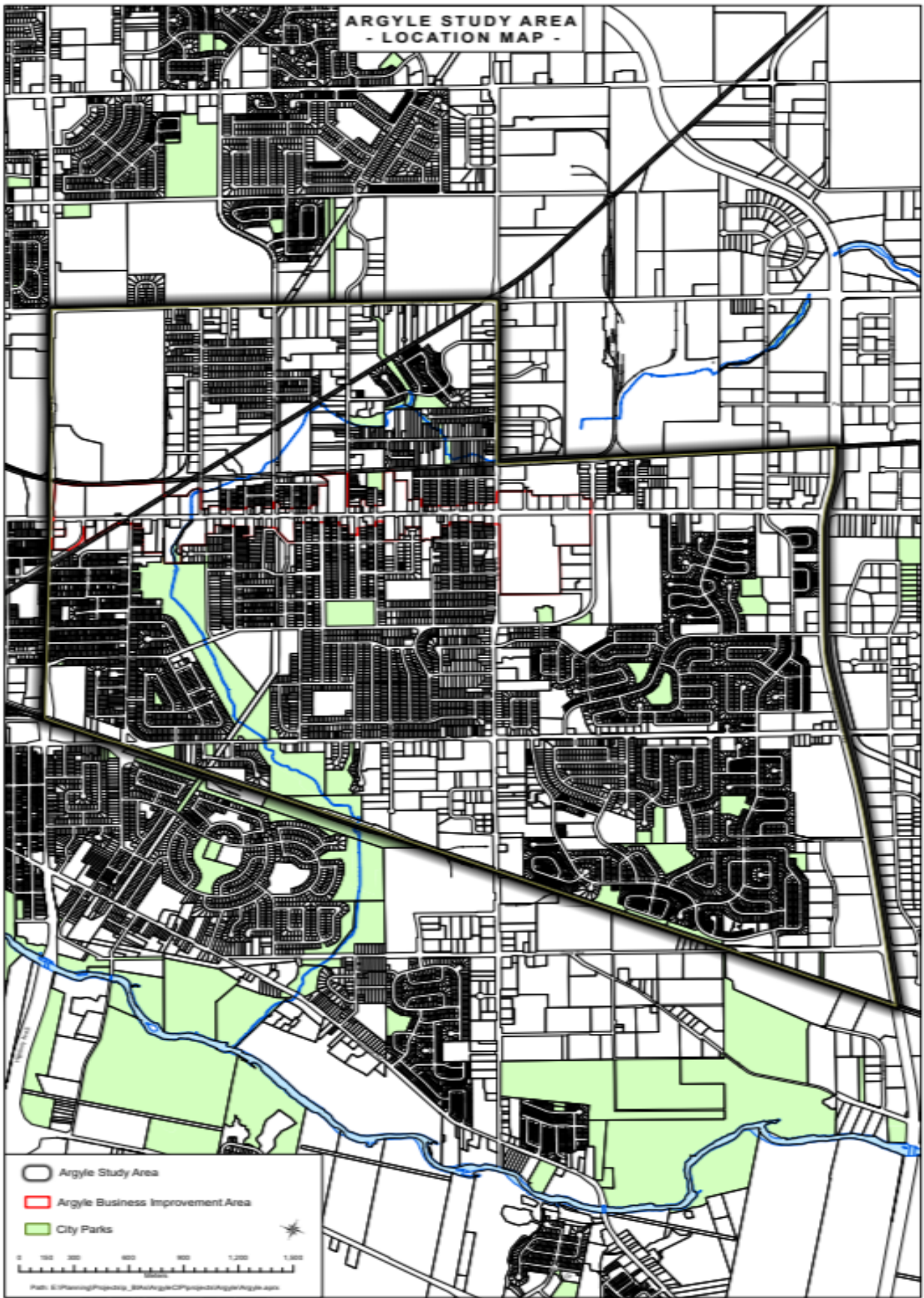


Figure 2: Argyle Study Area

Population

The current resident population in the Argyle Study Area is approximately 22,500 people within a total of 9,652 households. The largest population segment in the Argyle Study Area is the 25–29-year age range, comprising 8% of the total. The next largest population segments are the 55-59, 30-34, 20-24, 50-54 and 60-64 age ranges, each comprising approximately 8 or 7% of the total.

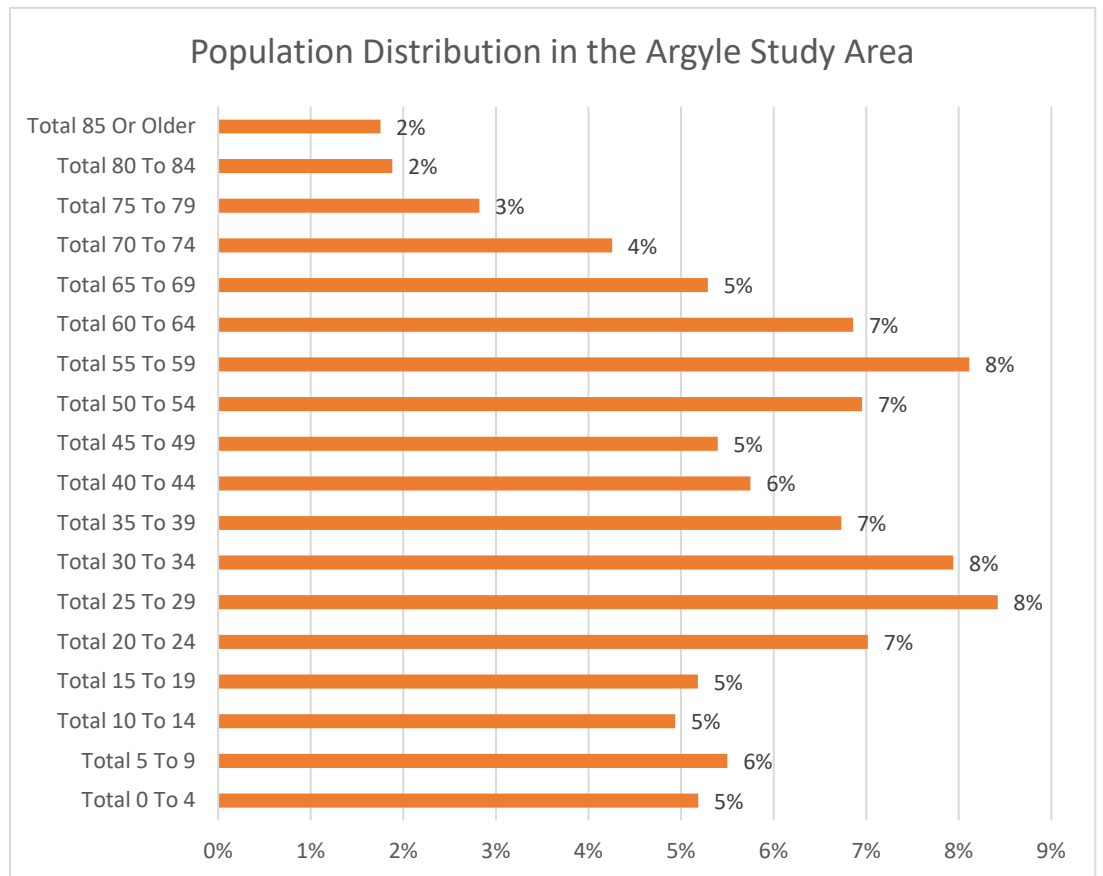


Figure 3: Population Distribution in percentages in the Argyle Study Area

Average Household Income

Based on the 2015 National Census data, the Argyle Study Area has a lower average household income compared to the city-wide average. The average household income in the Argyle CIP Study Area is 21.8% lower than the city-wide average household income.

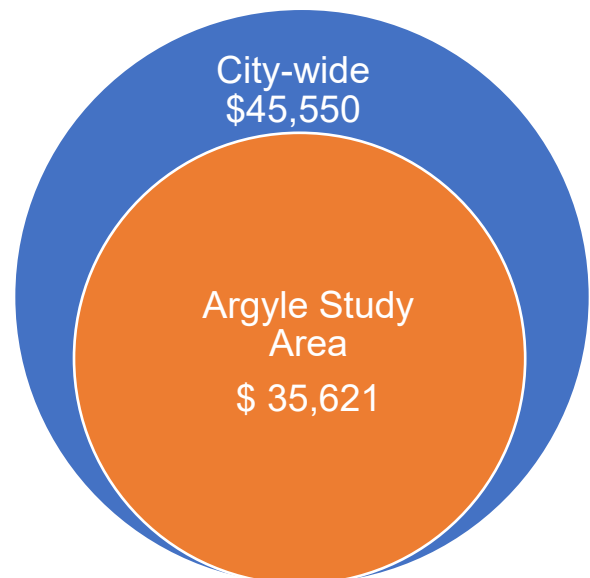


Figure 4: Circle size diagram of the average household income for the Argyle Study Area and City of London

Education

The Educational Attainment profile for the Argyle Study Area is lower than the City-wide statistics. 43% of the Argyle Study Area residents have some form of post-secondary education, compared to 67% of residents City-wide. The most frequent credential earned is High School education (and Equivalency Diploma) for just over 35% of the population compared with just over 24% City-wide. Almost 22% of the residents have no certificate, compared to just 9% of the City-wide population. Additionally, 25% of the population has a College level education compared to 28% City-wide.

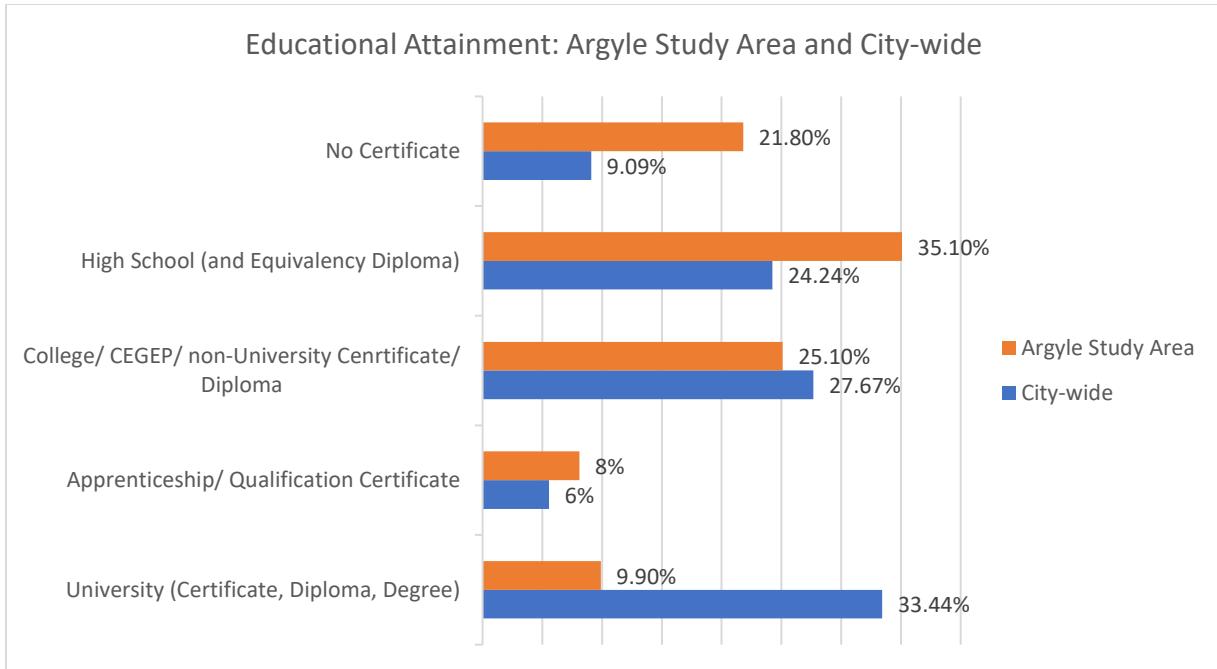


Figure 5: Educational Attainment for the Argyle Study Area and City of London

Housing Tenure

The main form of housing tenure in the Argyle Study Area is homeownership which totals 65%, compared to 59.7% City-wide. Conversely, the number of rent-occupied dwellings (35%) is lower than the rest of the City (40.3%).

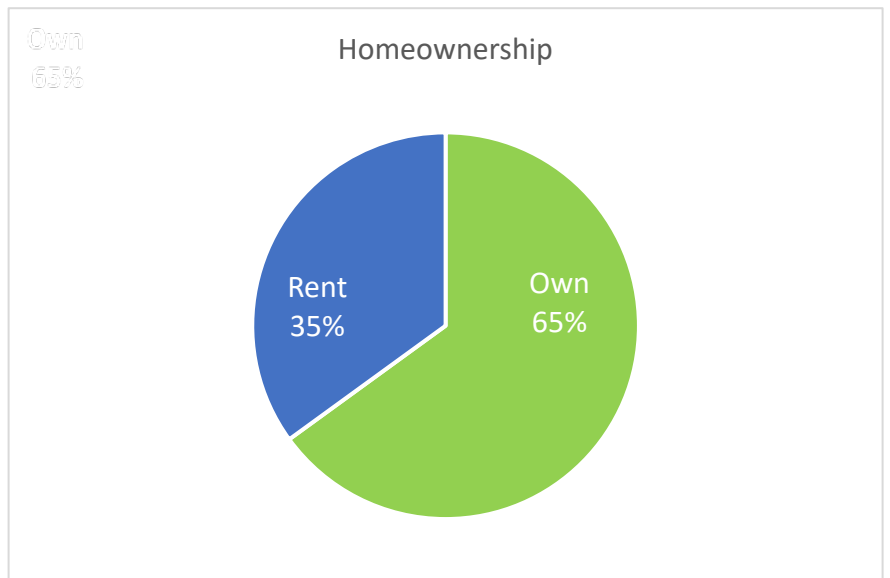


Figure 6: Housing Tenure of the Argyle Study Area

Dwelling Types

Forty-six percent (56%) of dwellings in the Argyle Study Area are single detached residential units, compared to 49% City-wide. The second most frequent dwelling type are rowhouses, with 20% of dwellings compared to 13% City-wide. The remaining 24% of dwelling types in the Argyle Study Area is comprised of apartments in buildings less than 5 storeys (11%), apartments in a building with 5 or more storeys (5%), semi-detached dwellings (5%) and detached duplexes dwellings (3%).

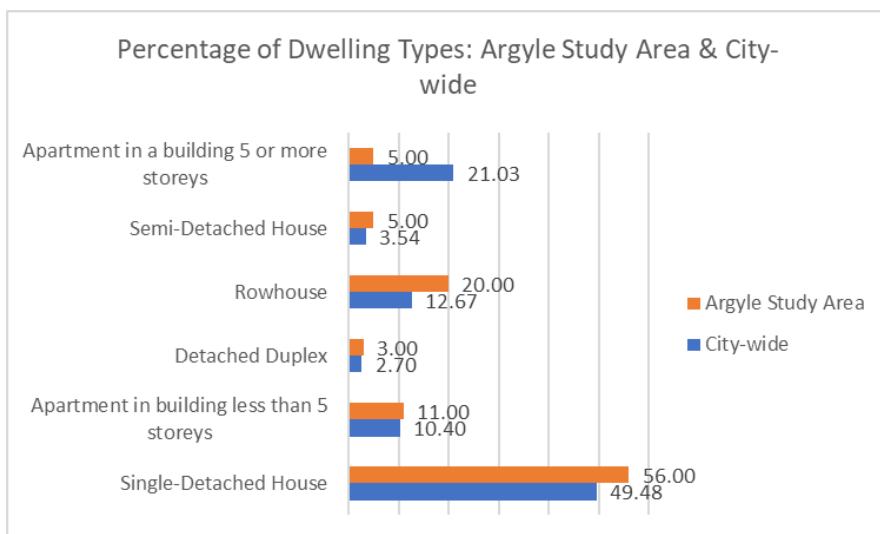


Figure 7: Percentage of dwelling types in the Argyle Study Area compared to City-wide

Argyle Project Area

When a Community Improvement Plan is being prepared, a (proposed) Project Area is established early in the process to maintain focus and to help avoid scope creep as the project moves forward. From the proposed Project Area, a Community Improvement Plan Area is then identified as the specific area requiring improvement. The Community Improvement Plan Area is included in the final CIP document which is then adopted by Municipal Council. The Planning Act states that the Community Improvement Plan Area is to be based on an area that in the opinion of Municipal Council, improvement is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social, or community economic development reason.

Because the Argyle Study Area is very large, approximately 1,362 hectares, the proposed Project Area (Figure 2) that will lead to an Argyle Core Area Community Improvement Plan is smaller to maintain focus on the area most in need of regeneration and improvement.

The Argyle Project Area is situated in the east end of the city within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). It encompasses properties with frontages abutting the main corridor of Dundas Street, and the Argyle Mall at the most eastern portion of the study area. Parts of the north boundary are adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway line and the westerly boundary is Highbury Avenue North.

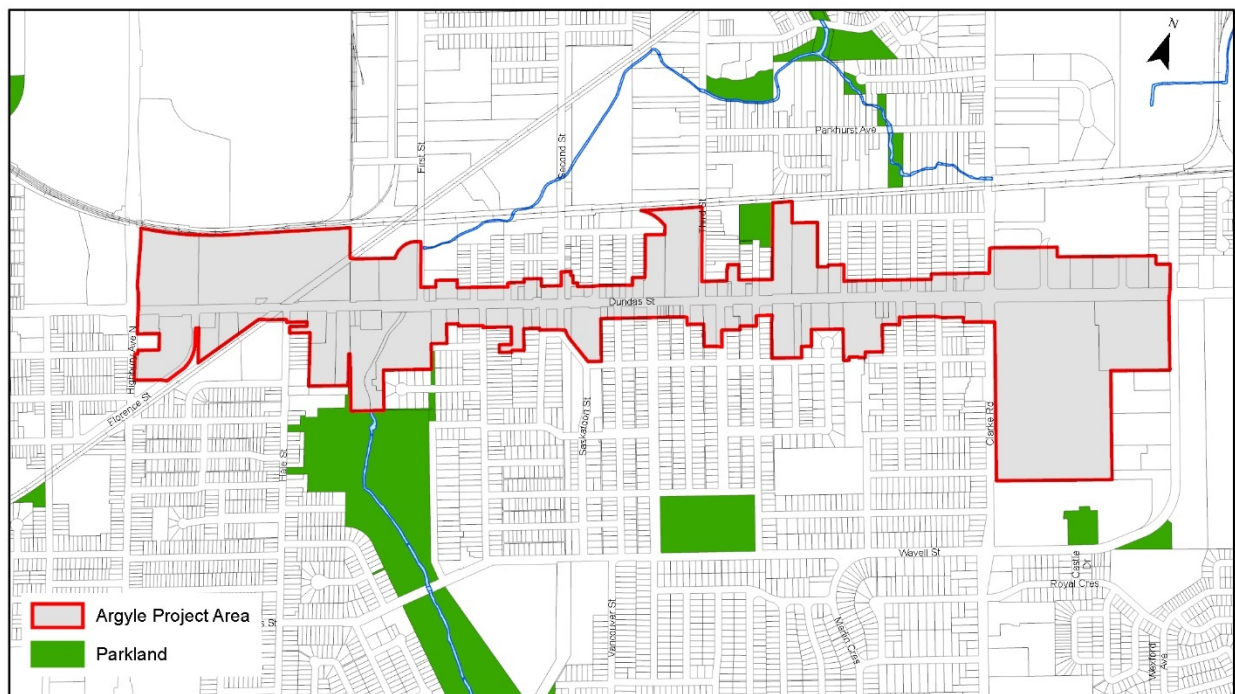


Figure 8: Argyle Project Area

Argyle Project Area Profile

This section presents a summary of characteristics and statistics of the Argyle Project Area to provide context for the CIP. Where possible, City-wide data has also been provided. Every effort has been made to align the data with consistent boundaries, however, data may be associated with variable boundaries.

Population

The current resident population in the Argyle Project Area is approximately 175 people within a total of 57 households; The largest population segment in the Argyle Project Area is the 30-34 year age range, comprising 12% of the total. The next largest population segments are the 20-24, 25-29 and 55-59 age ranges, each comprising approximately 11% of the total.

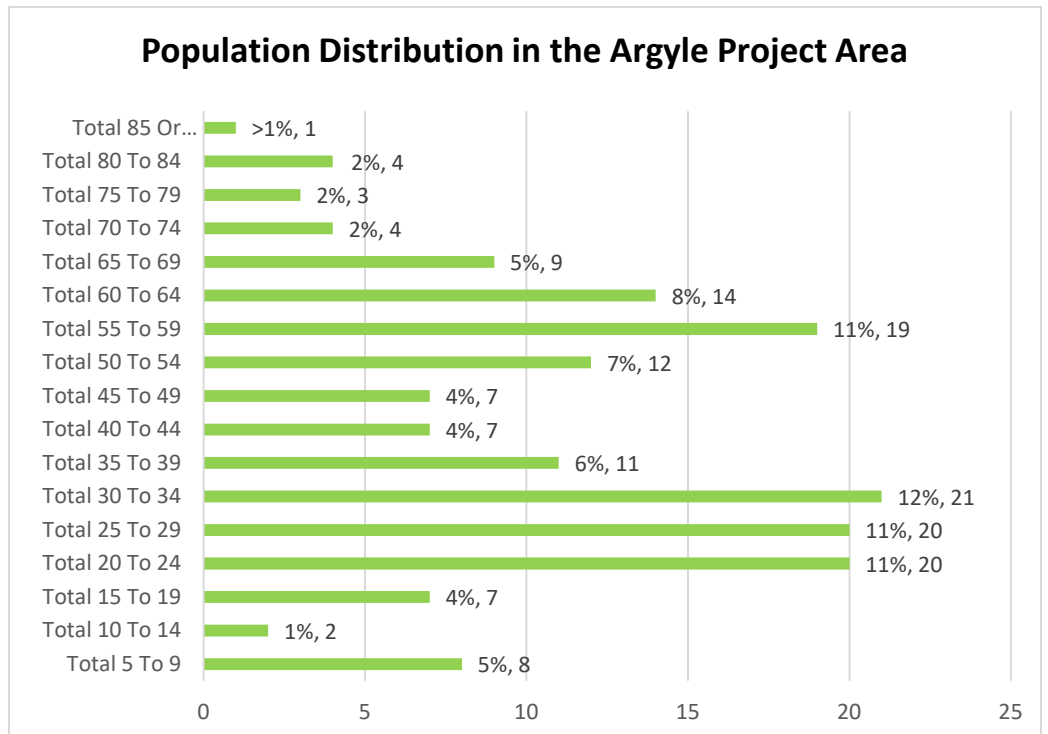


Figure 9: Population distribution of the Argyle Project Area

Average Household Income

Based on the 2015 National Census data, the Argyle Project Area has a lower average household income compared to the city-wide average. The average household income in the Argyle Project Area is 33% lower than the city-wide average household income.

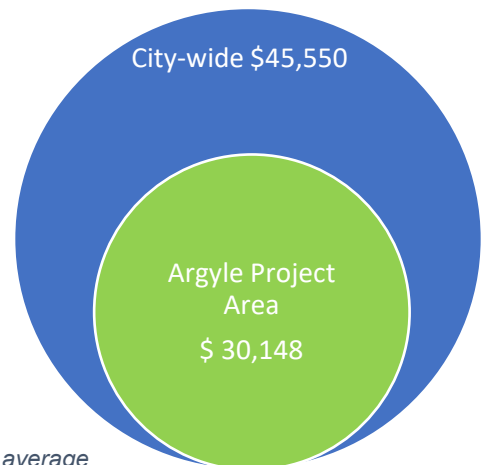


Figure 10: Circle size diagram of the average household income for the Argyle Project Area and City of London

Education

The Educational Attainment profile for the Argyle Project Area is lower than the City-wide statistics. 41% of the Argyle Project Area residents have some form of post-secondary education, compared to 67% of residents City-wide. The most frequent credential earned is High School education (and Equivalency Diploma) for just over 36% of the population compared with just over 24% City-wide. Almost 23% of the residents have no certificate, compared to just 9% of the City-wide population. Additionally, 23% of the population has a College level education compared to 28% City-wide.

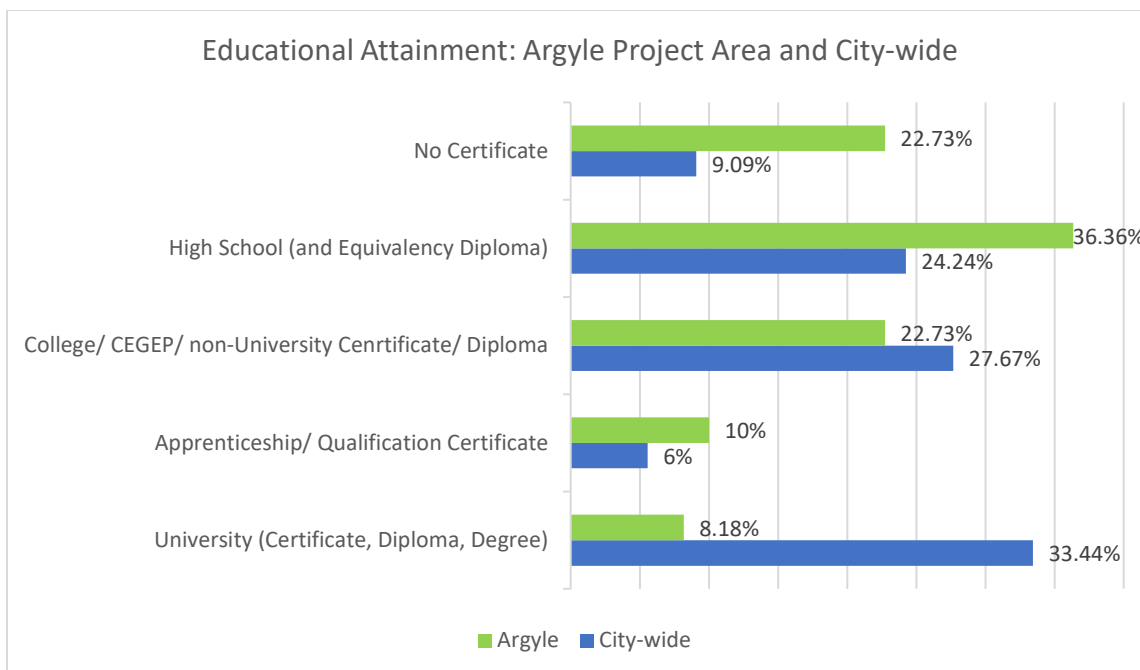


Figure 11: Educational Attainment in the Argyle Project Area compared to City-wide

Housing Tenure

The main form of housing tenure in the Argyle Project Area is renting which totals 56.1%, compared to 40.3% City-wide. Conversely, the number of owner-occupied dwellings (44%) is lower than the rest of the City (59.7%).

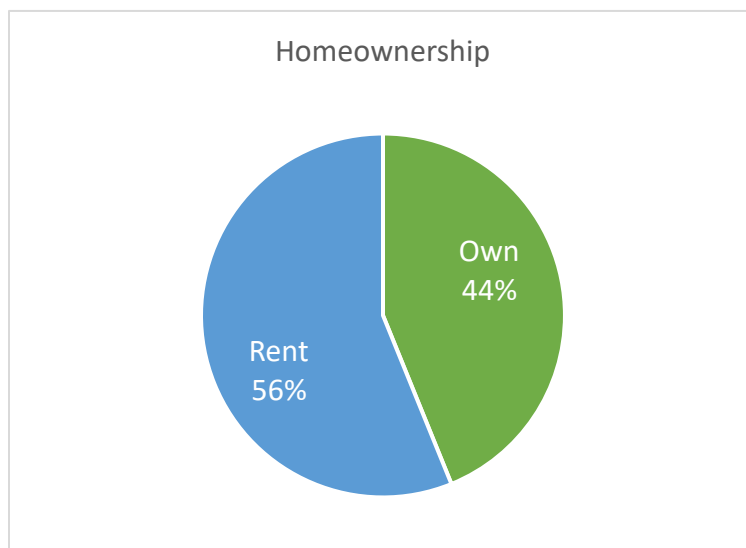


Figure 12: Housing Tenure of the Argyle Project Area

Dwelling Types

Forty-six percent (46%) of dwellings in the Argyle Project Area are single detached residential units, compared to 49% City-wide. The second most frequent dwelling type are apartments in a building with fewer than 5 storeys, with 42% of dwellings compared to 10% City-wide. The remaining 12% of dwelling types in the Project Area is comprised of detached duplex (7%), row housing (3.5%) and semi-detached dwellings (2%). The Argyle Project Area does not have apartment buildings of 5 or more storeys.

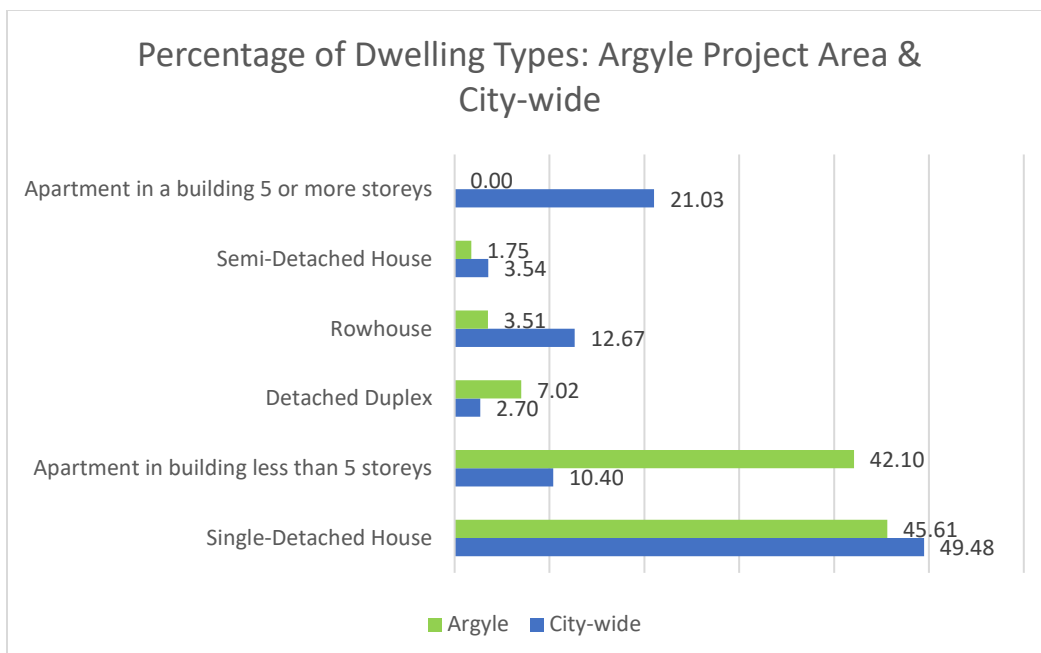


Figure 13: Percentage of dwelling types in the Argyle Study Area compared to City-wide

Parkland

Although there is a variety of parks and outdoor public spaces in the Argyle neighbourhood, only a small portion of Kiwanis Park North is within the Argyle CIP Study Area. This equals 0.6 hectare of parkland, which equates to less than one percent (0,71%) of the total CIP Study Area. Based on a population of 175 people from the Census data, the Argyle CIP Study Area has 3.42 hectare per 1000 people, compared with 7 hectares of parkland per 1000 people City-wide in London.

Section 2

Vision, Goals & Objectives

Vision

A **vision** for a CIP is a long-term strategic statement that identifies how the community wants to look, feel and function. Establishing a vision is an important component of the CIP process as it provides the overarching foundation for the Action Items contained in the CIP. A vision also helps to focus and direct the improvements and incentive programs outlined in the CIP.

Through Community consultation, the following Vision Statement for the Argyle Project Area was created:

By 2035, the Argyle Core Area will be a welcoming and safe destination with unique small businesses and shops, as well as a growing residential neighbourhood with modern appeal.

Objectives

During the engagement-process, stakeholders provided feedback on their main objectives for regeneration and improvement in the Argyle Project Area. A summary of the comments received include the following:

- Crime & homelessness prevention;
- Improve long-term community safety to create a safe environment for all at all times of day;
- Foster great streetscapes with a visually interesting, accessible, and clean public realm.
- Build upon the success of the diverse business-community to create a vibrant and mixed-use main street;
- Encourage the restoration and redevelopment of the older and/or vacant building stock;
- Enhance Argyle's identity and public perception;
- Create more opportunities for infill development and redevelopment along the Dundas Corridor;
- Create more stable and affordable housing options (aimed at seniors and below average market rent affordable);
- Foster a broader range of uses, such as access to fresh food and more entertainment-amenities within Argyle;
- Improve active mobility and coordinate municipal servicing infrastructure improvements with planning and development activity to help reduce disruptions in the neighbourhood;
- Conserve natural heritage and support remediation of contaminated areas.

Areas for Improvement

Through consultation with the community, twelve areas for improvement in the Argyle Core Area were developed from the list of items identified as needing improvement in the Argyle Project Area:

- Support small businesses
- Improve Public Realm Dundas Street
- Crime prevention/ safety
- Deficiencies infrastructure
- More (residential) growth
- Enhancing Argyle's identity
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of trees and greenery
- Create places to sit and linger
- General cleanliness
- Congestion
- Recreational programs & community gathering spaces

The 12 areas for improvement were summarized into six improvement categories:

1. **Developing a High-Quality Public Realm:** The Argyle Core Area will have a pedestrian-oriented streetscape and public spaces that are safe, clean, accessible, and pleasant.
2. **A Safer Neighbourhood for All:** The Argyle Core Area will be a safe, accessible, and healthy place to live, visit and work by improving safety and accessibility related issues.
3. **Supporting Businesses:** The Argyle Core Area will have strong, diverse, and connected businesses and a business environment that attract visitors, serves the local community, and support business retention, expansion & investment.
4. **Enhancing Parks and Recreational Opportunities:** Natural features and neighbourhood parks will be enhanced, conserved, and celebrated, and the Argyle Core Area will have a range of recreational amenities and programs.
5. **Improved Mobility:** The Argyle Core Area will have an interconnected community-wide transportation network that is safe, convenient, and prioritizes active mobility.
6. **Strengthening the Community:** The Argyle Core Area community will continue to develop and maintain strong connections within the community and the City, and build capacity to work strategically with stakeholders to achieve community goals.

The recommended actions for improvement found in Section 6 will fall under one of the above six categories.

Section 3

Argyle Community Improvement Plan Project Area & Sub- Areas

The Argyle Project Area

Project Area Description

When a CIP is being prepared, a Project Area is established early in the process to maintain a geographical focus and to help avoid “scope creep” as the project moves forward. *The Argyle Regeneration Study* applied to the whole Argyle Planning District, but for the Argyle CIP a smaller Project Area was established based on the existing Argyle BIA boundaries. This Project Area was chosen because stakeholders identified the Dundas Street Corridor as the location where the need for community improvement was the greatest. As Dundas Street is the main artery through the community where most businesses are located, regeneration and revitalization initiatives in this area will provide the most benefits for the overall Argyle Core Area community.

Figure 14

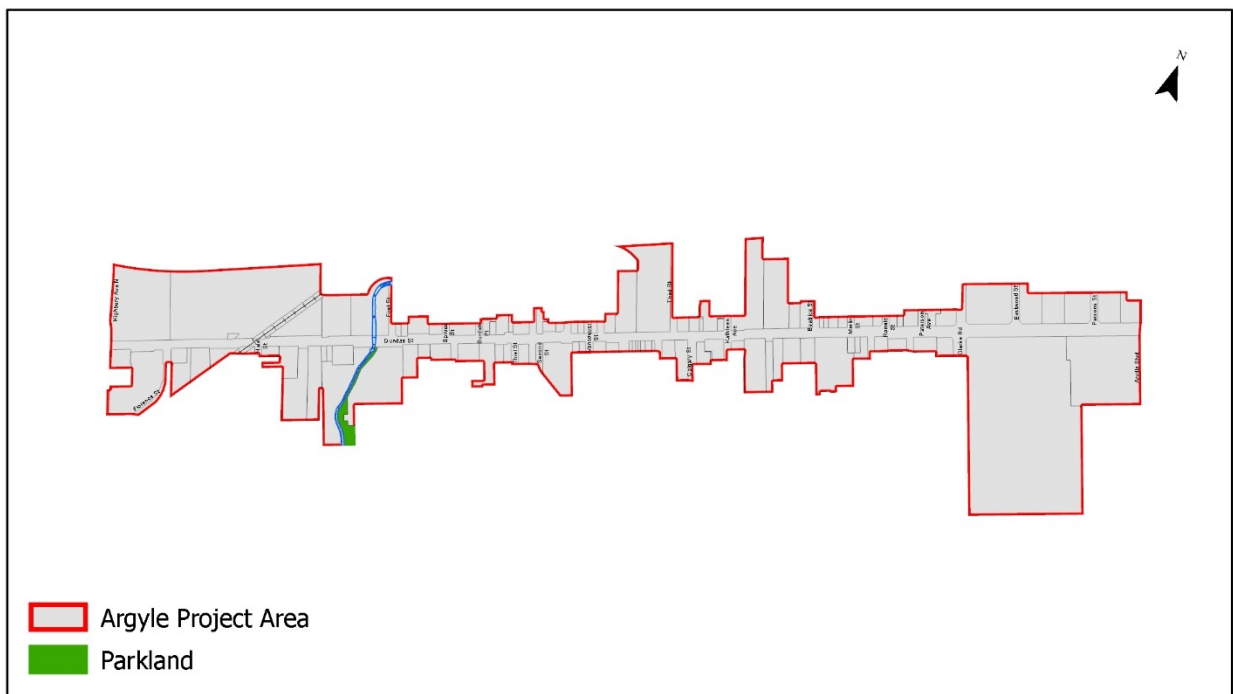


Figure 15: Argyle Project Area

The Argyle CIP Project Area is generally defined as Highbury Avenue to the west, Canadian Pacific Railway to the north, Wavell Street to the east and Whitney Street to the south. The Project Area includes all properties fronting Dundas Street, as well as the Argyle Mall located at Clarke Road.

Project Sub-Areas

The Project Area has been further divided into two Project Sub-Areas which are based on the existing conditions and characteristics during the preparation of this Plan. The Sub-Areas include:

1. Dundas Street Corridor
2. Argyle Mall

Dundas Street Corridor

The Dundas Street Corridor contains lands fronting onto Dundas Street from Highbury Avenue north to Clarke Road. Dundas Street is the main commercial and transit corridor within the project area, connecting Veterans Memorial Parkway with the Argyle Mall and Highbury Avenue. The large volumes of traffic including trucks that pass through the neighbourhood on Dundas Street have contributed to a decline in the quality of the public realm and detract from the street environment policy objectives specified in the London Plan. Dundas Street and its many stores, restaurants and other businesses are conveniently located and provide residents with most of their day-to-day shopping needs. An effort to move away from the auto-dominated corridor to a more pedestrian friendly environment is a priority. A desire for more safety, cleanliness, additional public

spaces to rest and more greenery and street-trees were identified in the first community meeting.

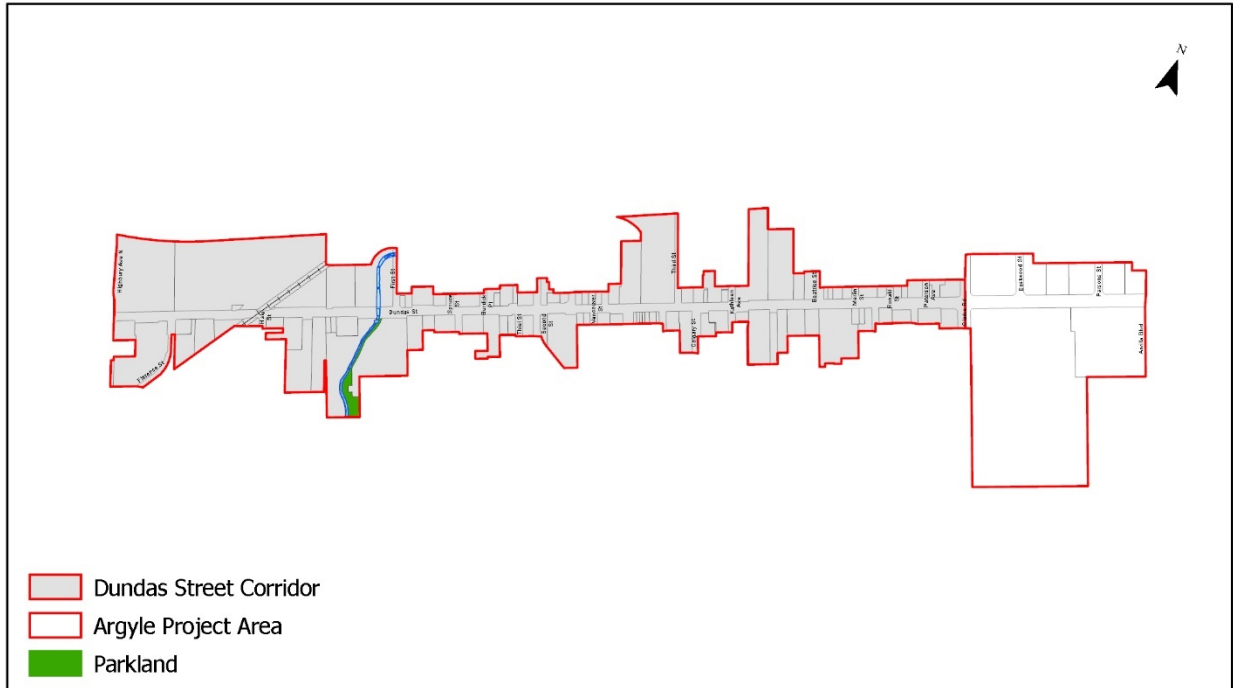


Figure 16: Argyle Project Sub-Area Dundas Street Corridor

The London Plan identifies the Dundas Street Corridor as an Urban Corridor Place Type. Urban Corridors permit a wide range of uses, encourage intensification and mixed-use buildings and support a high-quality pedestrian environment that is pleasant, accessible and safe. As the Dundas Street Corridor is the centre of the Argyle Core Area, it will be the focal point for improvement.

Argyle Mall

The Argyle Mall is comprised of the Shopping Area adjacent to the Dundas Street Corridor in the Project Area. The Argyle Mall is located on the intersection of Dundas Street and Clarke Road, on the eastern portion of the Project Area. SmartCentres Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) has full ownership of the 355,000 square foot shopping centre and leases to approximately 34 commercial tenants. The Argyle Mall provides for most day-to-day shopping needs and includes stores like Walmart, Winners, No Frills, Staples, Mark's, CIBC, Burger King, LCBO and others.

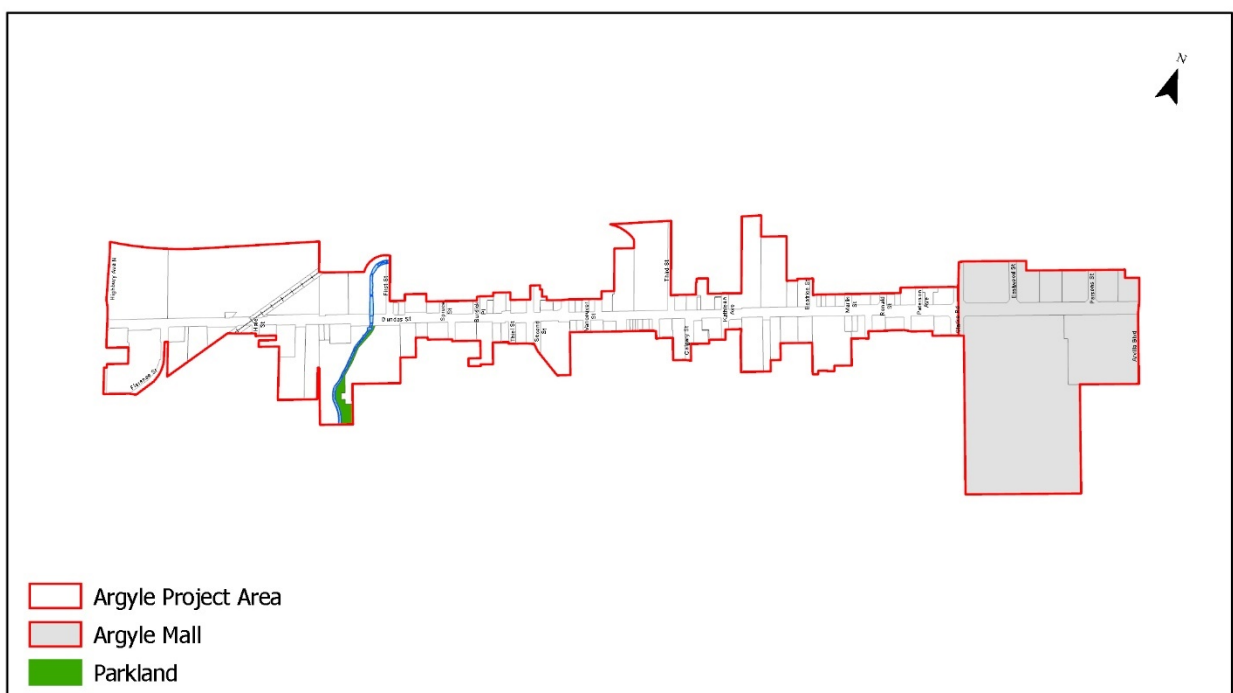


Figure 17: Argyle Project Sub-Area Argyle Mall

Within the London Plan, the Argyle Mall is designated as Shopping Area. This is the primary Place Type for commercial uses, and also allows for a broad range of retail, service, office, entertainment, recreational, educational, institutional and residential uses. Shopping Areas are to service their immediate neighbourhood and provide a walkable focal point that creates a neighbourhood identity.



Figure 18: Overview of the Argyle Mall looking east.

Section 4

Community Improvement Needs

Community Improvement Needs

To gain an understanding of key issues that should be addressed by this CIP, community improvement needs in the Argyle Project Area have been determined using the following methods:

- First-hand observations made during site-visits;
- Consultation with community members, organizations and other stakeholders;
- Research and analysis of applicable legislation, policies, regulations and census data; and,
- Consultation across City of London service areas.

Identified Strengths, Weaknesses, opportunities & Threats (SWOT)

Items seen as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in the Argyle Study Area that require action and/or improvement were identified through consultation with stakeholders throughout this project (community members, groups, organizations). These items are summarized below.

Strengths:

- Diverse collection of land uses.
- Rich history of independent businesses.
- Access to main shopping centre.
- Excellent parks.
- Industrial development close by (employment opportunities).
- Residential neighbourhood is stable.
- Gateway into the City, access to VMP.
- Argyle Mall has a large parking lot.
- Neighbourhood has full municipal services.
- Sense of community, lots of positive people.
- Presence of Argyle BIA.

Weaknesses

- Dated appearance.
- Poor image and perception that East London comes last.
- Social issues (crime, homelessness, arsons, vandalism).
- Urban blight.
- Concern that the East Lions Community Centre is not finished
- Poorly serviced by emergency services (especially Police).
- Lack of city-wide destination.
- Low amount of heritage designations.
- Many businesses have their own lane-entrance, makes it hard to get in & out
- Lack of fresh food.
- LMHC units are in poor condition.
- Poor sidewalks & streetlighting.
- Need pedestrian amenities (benches, bike racks, bus shelter)
- On-site parking is inconsistent, some businesses have issues providing parking

Opportunities

- More infill and intensification along Dundas Street.
- More affordable housing
- Development of Urban Design Guidelines to guide development
- Promote greater mix of uses, including mixed-use development
- Encourage property owners to improve their buildings (bring up to code) and attract tenants.
- LPH lands can be designed as urban village while conserving cultural heritage.
- Promote built heritage in Argyle through signage and educational outreach.
- Promote cycling and walking
- Better balancing of vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- Great need for roadwork, sewer and infrastructure improvements.
- East Lions Community Center when it opens

- Crime prevention through better design (CPTED)
- Enhance by-law and police enforcement in Argyle
- Bring back Neighbourhood watch program
- Promote and expand the Active and Safe Routes to School Program.

Threats

- First impression when entering from VMP.
- Vacant buildings along corridor.
- Dilapidated buildings in visible locations threaten ability to attract new businesses.
- Lack of consideration for heritage features.
- Drug use is at all-time high.
- Lack of foot traffic.
- Accessibility issues (especially
- Loss of historic identity, no longer industry and agriculture in Argyle.
- Stagnation due to disinterest.
- Underused laneways contribute to crime.
- Many construction projects are disruptive for residents.
- High speed on Dundas Street.
- Feeling that Argyle is overlooked.
- Lack of lighting contributes to perceived unsafety.

Categories of Identified Community Improvement Needs

The following list groups identified needs for the Argyle Project Area that require community improvement consistent with the six categories shown in Section 2. The list is not in an order of priority, and is based on received feedback and engagement in community meetings.

Developing a High-Quality Public Realm:

- Lack of lighting
- Sidewalks along Dundas Street are narrow and close to traffic
- Car-centric, Argyle is not perceived as a bike or pedestrian friendly area
- Missing curbs and sidewalks on local streets
- Dundas Street is in poor condition, improve road quality and safety
- Too many entrances onto Dundas Street;
- No places to sit in the shade
- Lack of trees and green spaces
- Lack of bike lanes in the area
- Congestion
- Walkability should be a priority, wider sidewalks away from the street

A Safer Neighbourhood for All:

- Issues with crime and safety
- Better crime prevention and more police presence
- More assistance for people dealing with addictions and homelessness
- Neighbourhood feels unsafe at night
- Need a short-term night watch
- Neighbourhood is poorly supported by services when things go wrong (Police, EMS)
- Concerns about drug use and drug paraphernalia
- Perception of unsafe neighbourhood

Supporting Businesses:

- Vacant and dated looking building facades
- Leverage visitors to Argyle Mall for whole neighbourhood
- Businesses are dated but familiar
- Opportunity for more mixed-use spaces
- Need an anchor that draws people into Argyle from other parts of the City

- Focus on successful narratives of small businesses
- Less big box-stores, more small businesses
- Incentives to reduce large lots to smaller lots and different functions
- Lack of outdoor eating areas (especially during Covid-19)
- Older building stock has significant energy conservation/efficiency issues
- Build a narrative how Argyle serves London more broadly (businesses, industry, agriculture)

Enhancing Parks and Recreational Opportunities:

- More events for families at Kiwanis Park
- Argyle Mall is underused for events, e.g., children's amusement park or spring/fall festival
- High amount of environmental contamination, including Kiwanis Park and Pottersburg Creek;
- Entrance to Kiwanis Park is hard to find (no directional signs)

Improved Mobility:

- Better transit-amenities, currently no shelter, benches and too close to the road
- Traffic lights are not convenient for cyclists (road sensor issue on Third Street)
- London Transit Commission routes are perceived as inconvenient
- Need for pleasant and safe active transportation routes;
- Smaller blocks along Dundas Street and more pedestrian crossings: Dundas Street is a barrier between north and south;

Strengthening the Community:

- Argyle doesn't have unique characteristics/theme or 'Argyle Village feel'
- More community events and outreach
- Lack of fresh food (food desert)
- Under resourced/ missing amenities such as movie-theatre and more grocery-store options;
- Need for affordable housing and retirement homes for seniors
- Area is stagnating due to disinterest, crime and homelessness
- Lack of housing-options
- Perceived as low-income area
- Loss of historic identity, limited heritage designation & protection
- Lack of support from the City for local businesses;
- Better marketing from the City for East London

Section 5

Incentive Programs



Incentive Programs

Together with proposed initiatives that can be undertaken by the public sector on municipal property, the private sector needs to be engaged in community improvement to achieve this CIP's objectives. One method of achieving this is by providing Financial Incentive Programs to help stimulate private investment in buildings and properties. Community Improvement Plans enable municipalities to establish financial incentive programs to target different community needs. In accordance with the *Planning Act* and the City's Official Plan, the City may offer grants or loans to property owners to help cover eligible costs and advance community improvement goals. Financial incentives and programs are subject to availability of funding, and Municipal Council can choose to implement, suspend or discontinue an incentive program at any time. The Argyle Area CIP is an enabling document, meaning that Municipal Council is under no obligation to activate and implement any part of a CIP including financial incentive programs. Finally, as mentioned in the *Argyle Regeneration Study Recommendations* (Dec. 14, 2020), a comprehensive review of existing CIP incentive programs was conducted, and Council directed updates and revisions to many of the existing programs and funding levels in 2016 and 2017. Included within that Council resolution, it is noted that funding for the existing programs will expire no later than December 31, 2023, pending a Municipal Council review of the program results to be provided prior to the adoption of the 2024- 2027 Multi-Year Budget. Therefore, Staff is recommending that funding for any potential incentive programs or other financial requirements in the Argyle CIP be considered through the comprehensive review of funding levels for all CIPs prior to the next (2024-2027) Multiyear Budget.

Argyle Community Improvement Plan Project Area Incentive Programs

The Argyle Area CIP financial incentive programs represent a comprehensive 'toolkit' of programs designed to help improve a number of the key weaknesses and threats identified and to achieve the vision and objectives of the CIP. The financial incentive programs will encourage private sector investment, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use, redevelopment and construction along the Dundas Street Corridor and Argyle Mall Sub-Project Areas. The programs represent a 'toolkit' because once activated, these programs can be used individually or together by an applicant. In addition to the specific incentive programs in this CIP, the City of London also provides incentive programs in the Brownfield and Heritage CIPs, which may also be applicable to property-owners within the Project Area. Each CIP provides specific program requirements for each financial incentive program.

The following table summarizes basic program details for each of the incentive programs. The maximum grant/loan available for each program will be determined by City Council when it implements an incentive program and will be based on budget considerations at that time. Eligibility criteria will be available in the detailed program requirements in the Argyle Area CIP financial incentive implementation information package that will be included in the final Argyle Core Area CIP.

Program	Description	Program Duration
Upgrade to Building Code Loan	A program designed to assist property owners with the financing of building improvements to ensure older buildings comply with contemporary Building Code requirements. The costs associated with these improvements often pose an issue for building owners wanting to upgrade their properties. City may provide no-interest loans that are paid back over a 10-year period.	As directed by Municipal Council
Façade Improvement Loan	A program designed to assist property owners with street façade improvements and bring participating properties into conformity with Property Standards By-law and applicable Urban Design Guidelines.	As directed by Municipal Council

	City may provide no-interest loans that are paid back over a 10-year period.	
Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Tax Grant	<p>A program designed to provide economic incentive for the rehabilitation of mixed-use and commercial properties in areas where the building stock is older.</p> <p>City may provide an annual grant to property owners over a 10-year period of declining scale. The effect of this program is to phase in the property tax increase, which results from a rehabilitation project, over a period of 10 years. The annual grant amount is calculated based on the property tax increase that results from the increase in assessment relating to an improvement project.</p>	As directed by Municipal Council

Figure 19: Draft incentive loan programs for the Argyle Core Area CIP.

Brownfield and Heritage Incentive Programs

In addition to the incentive programs contained in this CIP, the City of London also provides incentive programs in both Brownfield and Heritage CIPs. As a result, depending on the specific project, a property owner may be eligible for a number of financial incentive programs. The following table provides a summary of these incentive programs. Specific program information is included in the relevant CIPs.

Program	Description	Program Duration
Brownfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contamination Assessment Study Grant Program Property Tax Assistance Program Development Charge Rebate Tax Increment Equivalent Grant 	As directed by Municipal Council
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax Increment Grant Development Charge Equivalent Grant 	As directed by Municipal Council

Figure 20: Overview program details Brownfield and Heritage Incentive Programs

Section 6

Implementing the Argyle Area Community Improvement Plan

How to Read the Argyle CIP Actions Items Table

The Argyle Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Action Items Table is organized into six improvement categories; Developing a High Quality Public Realm; A Safer Neighbourhood for All; Supporting Businesses; Enhancing Parks and Recreational Opportunities; Improved Mobility; and Strengthening the Community.

Within each improvement category, there are community- and City-identified actions that arose during community and stakeholder consultation and have been developed through City Staff input. Action Items are aligned with the Objectives, Goals and Vision defined through the Argyle CIP process as presented in Section 4 of this CIP. Each action item identifies the lead (who is expected to coordinate implementing the action), the suggested partners (who can assist the lead), the priority (Do First, Do Second, and Do Third) and the relative cost associated with the action item.

Actions Table

Developing a High-Quality Public Realm				
	Action	Priority	Lead & Suggested Partners	Cost
Municipal Actions				
1.1	Develop a Streetscape Masterplan for the Dundas Street Corridor to support the London Plan vision for Urban Corridors as high-quality spaces with neighbourhood amenities including parks, civic spaces and attractive outdoor seating areas, accessible to the public.	Do 1 st	Environment & Infrastructure – Transportation and Mobility Suggested Partners: Planning & Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage	Low/Medium (future budget)
1.2	Seek opportunities to widen sidewalks as part of planned Infrastructure Renewal along Dundas Street	Do 1 st	Environment & Infrastructure – Construction and Infrastructure Services Suggested Partners: Planning & Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage	Medium (future budget)
1.3	Seek opportunities to include pedestrian scale lighting as part of existing and planned Infrastructure Renewal along Dundas Street.	Do 2 nd	Environment & Infrastructure – Construction and Infrastructure Services Suggested Partners: Planning & Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage Argyle BIA	Medium (future budget)
1.4	Make available the Upgrade to Building Code Loan, Façade Improvement Loan, and Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Tax Grant Incentive Programs	Do 2 nd	Planning & Economic Development – Urban Regeneration Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA	High (future budget)
1.5	Ensure (where feasible) the immediate area around bus stops on Dundas Street are equipped with pedestrian friendly amenities including benches, bus shelters and waste receptacles.	Do 1 st	London Transit Commission Suggested Partners: Planning & Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage Environment & Infrastructure – Construction and Infrastructure Services	Medium (other budget)
1.6	Clean Dundas Street sidewalks on a more frequent schedule, and work in	Do 1 st	Argyle BIA Suggested Partners: Environment & Infrastructure	Medium (future budget)

	conjunction with the BIA Clean Streets program			
1.7	Develop a way-finding system with pedestrian-scale signs to allow visitors to explore the neighbourhood.	Do 3 rd	Argyle BIA Suggested Partners: Argyle Community Association (ACA) Environment & Infrastructure – Transportation and Mobility	Medium (future budget)
1.8	Seek opportunities to include street trees and greenery in the Dundas Corridor as part of existing and planned Infrastructure Renewal along Dundas Street.	Do 2 nd	Argyle BIA Suggested Partners: Environment & Infrastructure – Parks and Forestry/ Climate Change, Environment and Waste management	Medium (future budget)
Community Opportunities				
1.9	Improve and support the streetscape and beautification projects that the Argyle BIA is implementing	Do 1 st	Lead: Argyle BIA Suggested Partners: London Hydro & Community Sponsors	Low

Figure 21: Actions Table improvement category 1 – Developing a High-Quality Public Realm

A Safer Neighbourhood for All				
	Action	Priority	Lead & Suggested Partners	Cost
Municipal Actions				
2.1	Implement an annual 'crime prevention through environmental design' (CPTED) review of targeted areas along the Dundas Corridor.	Do 1 st	Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services (Neighbourhood Safety Audits) Suggested Partners: London Police Services Planning & Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage Argyle BIA Argyle Community Association	Low (other budget)
2.2	Increase the frequency of proactive By-law Enforcement blitzes in the Dundas Street area.	Do 2 nd	Planning & Economic Development – Municipal Compliance Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA Planning and Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage	Low (future budget)
2.3	Continue to work with the Coordinated Informed Response initiative to identify neighbourhood issues and develop appropriate responses including proactive foot/bike patrols and targeted enforcement	Do 1 st	Social and Health Development – Housing Stability Services Suggested Partners: London Police Services Argyle BIA London Cares Argyle Community Association	No cost
2.4	Continue to work with the Argyle BIA to install needle disposal bins along the Dundas Street Corridor.	Do 2 nd	Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA London Cares Planning & Economic Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage	Low (existing budget)

Community Opportunities				
2.5	Undertake a Safety Audit to identify and document specific safety concerns in the Argyle CIP Project Area.	Do 2 nd	Lead: Argyle Community Association Suggested Partners: Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services	No cost
2.6	Engage Neighbourhood Watch London about expanding the Neighbourhood Watch Program to the Dundas Street Corridor.	Do 1 st	Argyle BIA Suggested Partners: Neighbourhood Watch London Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services (Neighbourhood Safety Audits) Argyle Community Association	Low (other budget)

Figure 22: Actions Table improvement category 2 – A Safer Neighbourhood for All

Supporting Businesses				
	Action	Priority	Lead & Suggested Partners	Cost
Municipal Actions				
3.1	Provide and promote financial incentives including the Façade Improvement Loan, Upgrade to Building Code Loan and Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Tax Grant Programs for the Dundas Street Corridor.	Do 1 st	Planning & Economic Development – Urban Regeneration Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA	High (future budget)
3.2	Create business support material to help businesses and entrepreneurs understand planning and development processes, and how to navigate City Hall.	Do 1 st	Planning & Economic Development – Economic Partnerships Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA Argyle Community Association Planning & Economic Development – Urban Regeneration	Low
3.3	Incorporate Information, Communications & Technology (ICT) infrastructure to “future ready” the Argyle CIP Project Area	Do 2 nd	City of London Information Technology Services Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA Internet Service Providers Planning & Economic Development – Urban Regeneration	Low (future budget)
3.4	Establish a relationship between the Argyle BIA and the London Small Business Centre (SBC)	Do 1 st	Planning & Economic Development – Economic Partnerships Suggested Partners: London SBC Argyle BIA Participants	No cost
Community Opportunities				
3.6	Strengthen the Argyle brand and work together with the Argyle BIA to improve the sense of place, stimulate investment and attract customers and visitors.	Do 1 st	Argyle BIA Suggested Partners: ACA	Medium
3.7	Undertake a Business Attraction, Retention & Expansion Strategy	Do 2 nd	TBD Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA	Low

Figure 23: Actions Table improvement category 3 – Supporting Businesses

Enhancing Parks and Recreational Opportunities				
	Action	Priority	Lead & Suggested Partners	Cost
Municipal Actions				
4.1	Promote and review the programs offered in the East Lions Community Centre (once finished) to ensure adequate programming is available to the neighbourhood.	Do 1 st	Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services Suggested Partners: Argyle ACA, Family Centre Argyle	Medium
4.2	Continue to support improvements in Kiwanis Park consider expanding the north entrance behind the Rexall pharmacy to improve accessibility by including landscaping, traffic movement, parking and lighting.	Do 2 nd	Parks and Forestry – Parks Planning	Medium
4.3	Plant trees (where feasible) as per the Parks & Recreation Masterplan to connect people and nature and build a sustainable city.	Do 1 st	Parks & Forestry Suggested Partners: ReForest London Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services Environment & Infrastructure	Medium
4.4	Install places to fill up water bottles along the Dundas Corridor.	Do 2 nd	Water, Wastewater and Storm Water Suggested Partners: Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services	Low
4.5	Continue to pursue additional sources for funding to support the UTRCA project of improving the habitat and water quality of the Pottersburg Creek	Do 3 rd	Environment and Infrastructure – Climate Change, Environment & Waste management Suggested Partners UTRCA Planning & Economic Development Parks & Forestry	No cost
Community Opportunities				
4.6	Explore opportunities to organize ‘pop-up’ recreational programs and events on the parking lot of the Argyle Mall.	Do 1 st	Argyle Community Association Suggested Partners: SmartCentres REIT Argyle BIA	No cost
4.7	Apply for the TreeME Tree Matching Fund program to secure funds for trees on private property	Do 1 st	Individual Property-owners Suggested Partners: ReForest London Argyle Community Association	Low
4.8	Promote the annual Argyle specific Green and Clean Plan to encourage community clean-ups of the Dundas Corridor and parks.	Do 2 nd	Argyle Community Association Suggested Partners: Parks & Forestry Argyle BIA	No cost
4.9	Improve and expand recycling initiatives, e.g. identification of ‘Street Ambassadors’ who are interested in promoting cleanliness issues and help promote clean-ups, recycling and maintenance	Do 2 nd	TBD Suggested Partners: Argyle Community Association Argyle BIA	No cost

Figure 24: Actions Table improvement category 4 – Enhancing Parks and Recreational Opportunities

Improve Mobility				
	Action	Priority	Lead & Suggested Partners	Cost
Municipal Actions				
5.1	Seek opportunities to include a new pedestrian crossing (PXO) on Dundas Street near Beatrice St to create a safe pedestrian connection between Ontario Works Office, transit-stops and Service Ontario.	Do 1 st	Environment & Infrastructure – Transportation and Mobility Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA Argyle Community Association	Medium
5.2	Continue to build and improve physical connections between the Dundas Corridor and the rest of London using roads, trails and pathways in accordance with the Parks & Recreation Masterplan and Cycling Master Plan	Do 1 st	Environment and infrastructure – Transportation and Mobility	High
5.3	Review and consider increasing the walking signal time for pedestrians at intersections on Dundas Street	Do 2 nd	Environment and Infrastructure – Transportation and Mobility Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA – Randy Sidhu Argyle Community Association	Low
5.4	As part of the LTC service plans, a) identify opportunities to increase the frequency and convenience of bus service (in particular with Downtown and Fanshawe College) b) ensure that bus stops have the required infrastructure and amenities.	Do 2 nd	London Transit Commission Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA Argyle Community Association	High
5.5	Undertake an Infrastructure Renewal Project Needs Assessment for Dundas Street within the Argyle CIP Project Area.	Do 2 nd	Environment and Infrastructure –Construction and Infrastructure Services	High

Figure 25: Actions Table improvement category 5 – Improve Mobility

Strengthening the Community				
	Action	Priority	Lead & Suggested Partners	Cost
Municipal Actions				
6.1	Explore opportunities to construct purpose-built quality affordable housing that will contribute to the revitalization of the Argyle Core Area	Do 1 st	Housing Development Corporation Suggested Partners: Planning and Development – Community Planning, Urban Design & Heritage Real Estate Developers and home builders Argyle BIA	High
6.2	Create information for services, projects and programs that foster support for cultural and natural heritage	Do 1 st	Argyle Community Association Suggested Partners: London Community Foundation Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services Planning and Economic Development – Tourism London	Low

Community Opportunities				
6.3	Implement and update the Argyle Neighbourhood Action Plan	Do 1 st	Argyle Community Association Suggested Partners: Argyle BIA	No cost
6.4	Host a street festival in Kiwanis Park or the Argyle Mall by using the Block Party in a Box available through Neighbourhood and Community Services	Do 2 nd	Argyle Community Association Suggested Partners: Neighbourhood and Community Wide Services Argyle BIA	Low cost

Figure 26: Actions Table improvement category 6 – Strengthening the Community

Section 7

Monitoring & Evaluation

CIP Target Success Measures

The Argyle CIP was created to help achieve the Objectives as outlined in Section 2 of this report. The success of this CIP will be based on the Action Items being undertaken, achievement of the Objectives, alignment of results with areas of improvement and consistency with the London Plan. The table below provides target success measures that help to evaluate the success of the Argyle Core Area CIP.

Targets	Indicator of Success
Quality Public Realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dundas Corridor is clean and well-maintained - Increased pedestrian traffic - Increased number of public spaces to sit and rest - Improvements in the ongoing beautification and streetscape project, including flower baskets, crosswalks, street banners, slogan signs and pole wraps. - Uptake of the Upgrade to Building Code Loan - Inclusion of missing amenities such as benches, waste receptacles
Crime Prevention & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved pedestrian-oriented lighting - Increased awareness among Businesses about the Coordinated Informed Response initiative offering support to Londoners living unsheltered - Improvements to ensure compliance with property standards by-law including fencing issues - Petty crime (theft, trespassing) and drug-use occur less frequently in the Argyle CIP Project Area.
Support for businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up-take of the Façade Improvement Loan Program - Argyle BIA will continue to expand its membership - Maximum of 5% vacancy on ground level commercial spaces incl. the Argyle Mall - Improved marketing material for potential new businesses - Targeted uses in key storefronts
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As part of the Pottersburg Trunk Sewer Project, sidewalks are rehabilitated and where possible widened - Number of bicycle routes, connections and trails increases over time - Increased connectivity for pedestrians across the Dundas Corridor with a potential PXO or increased walking signal time
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Argyle's distinct brand reflects its unique history and natural heritage - Increased number of businesses invest and participate in storefront Holiday Decorations - Implement a way-finding system with pedestrian-scale signs
Recreation & Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events are held to celebrate Argyle and foster social interaction - Increased number of public events in Kiwanis Park and the Argyle Mall

More (Residential) Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in building permit activity - Uptake of the Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Tax Grant - Number of residential units constructed within a consecutive four-year period exceeds the previous four-year period
Conserve Natural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased tree planting and greenery within the Argyle CIP Project Area - Entrance from Dundas Street to Kiwanis Park is more visible, accessible and landscaped

Figure 27: Table with draft targets and indicators of success for the Argyle Core Area CIP

Baseline Conditions

For the indicators above, a number of Baseline Conditions were determined during the preparation of the CIP against which future information can be compared. These Baseline Conditions provide for a consistent and measurable framework for evaluating the ongoing regeneration in the Argyle Project Area. Variables and measures may be added to the Baseline Conditions.

Measure	Status
Photo inventory of the condition of existing streetscapes	Streetscapes baseline appearance to be documented during 2021
Estimated vacancy rates at street level along the Dundas Corridor and Argyle Mall	5-6 vacancies in Mall, 10-15 in rest of BIA. During Covid vacancy rate was between 7.5%-10%, prior to Covid more between 5%-7.5%
Estimated vacancy rates at upper levels along the Dundas Corridor	Information to come
Building Rating: Poor Condition	Information to come
Building Rating: Fair Condition	Information to come
Building Rating: Good Condition	Information to come
Number of new businesses within the Argyle Project Area	14 openings in 2020
Number of members in the Argyle BIA	2020: 200 business members + 100 non-commercial properties 2021: 218 business members + 100 non-commercial properties
Incentive Activity	No incentive activity as no incentives were available
Total Building Permit Activity	2015: 11, 2016: 15, 2017: 10, 2018: 9, 2019: 20, 2020: 13, 2021 (until May 20 th): 2. Total of 80 permits in last 6y and 4 months
Residential Permit Activity	2 in last 6 years
Commercial Permit Activity	75 in last 6 years
Industrial Permit Activity	1 in last 6 years
Average Property Value	Information to come
Number of Activity generators in Dundas Corridor Sub-Area	Due to Covid 3 events, for 2021 at least 4

Number of Activity generators in Argyle Mall Sub-Area	0
Estimated number of public parking spaces in Argyle CIP Project Area	Information to come
Number of listed Heritage Properties	1
Number of Designated Heritage Properties	1
Hectares of Parkland	0.6 hectares

Figure 28: Baseline Conditions Argyle Core Area CIP

Argyle CIP Evaluation and Monitoring Report

A monitoring report will be prepared every five years to evaluate the status of the Argyle CIP and associated programs. The report and evaluation will be based on the changes to the Baseline Conditions as identified above, feedback from stakeholders, and any new issues or opportunities that have emerged. The report will recommend adjustments to the CIP if required and recommendations regarding the financial incentive programs based on the performance of the programs. Based on the experiences with administrating other CIPs in London, the Monitoring Report will cover a four-year period. This four-year time span is sufficient to:

- Accumulate information on the uptake and monitoring of CIP incentive programs;
- Implement and assess impacts of capital projects and community actions;
- Incorporate projects into staff work plans; and,
- Implement the four-year budgeting cycle.

As part of the evaluation of the impact of the CIP, City staff has developed a database to monitor the implementation of the financial incentive programs. Information obtained through the Monitoring Database can be used to inform periodic adjustments to the incentive programs and used to provide regular reports to Municipal Council on the amount of private sector investment being leveraged by the municipal incentive programs and the economic benefits associated with these private sector projects.

Façade Improvement Loan Program Monitoring

- Number of Applications (approved and denied);
- Approved value of the loan and the total construction cost (total public investment versus private investment);
- Pre-Assessment Property Value;
- Total Value of Building Permit (if required)
- Post-Assessment Property Value
- Increase in property taxes of participating property;
- Total Loan Amount
- Location of the façade being improved;
- Number of loan defaults; and,
- Cost/Value of loan defaults.

Upgrade to Building Code Loan Program

- Number of Applications (approved and denied);
- Approved value of the loan and the total construction cost (total public investment versus private investment);
- Pre-Assessment Property Value;
- Total Value of Building Permit (if required);
- Post-Assessment Property Value;
- Increase in property taxes of participating property;
- Total Loan Amount;
- Location of the façade being improved;
- Number of loan defaults; and,
- Cost/Value of loan defaults.

Tax Increment Grant

- Number of Applications (approved and denied);
- Pre-Assessment Property Value;
- Total Value of Building Permit
- Level of Grant (Type 1, Type 2 or Type 3);
- Post-Assessment Property Value;
- Number of residential units created;
- Increase in assessed property value of participating property;
- Total Grant Amount;
- Number of grant defaults; and,
- Cost/Value of grant defaults.

Data Collection

In addition to the quantitative, economic-based measures, monitoring of the Argyle CIP will include qualitative measures that characterize social and community benefits of implementing the CIP Action Items. Qualitative information illustrating the individual and cumulative impact of both public- and private-sector CIP projects should be collected on a regular basis. This could include the impact of public realm improvement projects on existing businesses and on community identity. Data can take many forms, including comments received by Staff from business owners, property owners and residents. The qualitative information and quantitative information from the Monitoring Database, will be reported to Council to provide a full, holistic picture of the impact of the CIP. The report will recommend any adjustments that might be needed to the CIP, and adjustments to incentive programs and/or eligibility criteria. The report will also provide budget-recommendations based on the performance of the programs.

Evaluation Outcomes

The summary report and evaluation will result in at least three types of outcomes:

1. **Amendments to the Argyle CIP**

Changes to any of the content of this CIP, including the Vision and Objectives, boundaries of the Project Area or Sub-Project Areas, additions, deletions, or clarifications to the Actions Table or to the financial incentive programs.

Amendments must follow the process described in the *Planning Act*.

Consequential amendments may also be required to the *London Plan* and/or Zoning By-law.

2. **Adjustments to the Financial Incentive Programs**

Changes to the terms, conditions and processes described in the financial incentive programs may be made without amending this CIP.

3. **Adjustments to Funding**

Municipal Council has the authority to approve funding for financial incentive programs specified in London's CIPs, and may approve budgets necessary to carry out other CIP actions. Budgets supporting the implementation of the Argyle Area CIP will be based on a comprehensive review undertaken by City Staff with the assistance of the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy described in this section. Funding will be timed and reviewed as part of the multi-year budget requests, or any requested amendments made in consultation with the City Treasurer to approve four-year budgets.

Appendix A: Legislative Framework

This section provides an overview of the legislative authority for preparing and adopting the Argyle Area Community Improvement Plan.

Municipal Act, 2001

The Municipal Act, 2001 prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses (Section 106 (1)). This prohibition is generally known as the “bonusing rule”. Prohibited actions include (Section 106 (2)):

- giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money;
- guaranteeing borrowing;
- leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value; and,
- giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee.

However, Section 106 (3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides an exception to this “bonusing rule” for municipalities exercising powers under Subsection 28(6), (7) or (7.2) of the *Planning Act* or under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. This legislation states that Municipalities are allowed to prepare and adopt Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) if they have the appropriate provisions in their Official Plan.

Further, Sections 204-215 of the Ontario Municipal Act provide for the establishment of Business Improvement Areas, including their:

- purpose “to oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality generally; and to promote the area as a business or shopping area”
- governance through a board of management consisting of the number of directors established by the municipality and functioning as a local board of the municipality for all purposes.
- membership consisting of persons who are assessed, on the last returned assessment roll, with respect to rateable property in the area that is in a prescribed business property class and tenants of such property

Planning Act

The *Planning Act* sets out the framework and ground rules for land use planning in Ontario, and describes how land uses may be controlled and who may control them. Section 28 of the *Planning Act* provides for the establishment of Community Improvement Project Areas where the municipality’s Official Plan contains provisions relating to community improvement and the Community Improvement Project Area is designated by a By-law pursuant to Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Community Improvement in Section 28 of the *Planning Act* is defined as “the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary.”

In addition, Section 28 of the *Planning Act* defines a Community Improvement Project Area to mean “a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason”.

Once a Community Improvement Plan has come into effect, the municipality may:

- acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement (Section 28(3) of the *Planning Act*);

- construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28 (6));
- sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28 (6)); and,
- make grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings within the Community Improvement Project Area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the Community Improvement Plan (Section 28 (7)).

Section 28(7.1) of the *Planning Act* provides for grants and loans for eligible costs established in an approved CIP. This may include costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements, or facilities.

Section 28(7.3) of the *Planning Act* restricts the maximum amounts for grants and loans made under the *Planning Act* from exceeding the eligible costs defined in the CIP. Further, the total of all grants, loans and property tax assistance provided through financial incentive programs available in a CIP can't exceed the cost of rehabilitating the lands and buildings.

Official Plan

The Official Plan includes policies to guide the development of CIPs for lands within the City as set out in Chapter 14. Consistent with these policies, the City may use CIPs as a planning tool to address deficiencies within designated areas in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. CIPs can also encourage private investment activity in these areas. Several community improvement objectives in the Official Plan relate to the Dundas Core Area including:

- Provide for the designation of "Community Improvement Project Areas" in areas of the City that exhibit problems of instability, building deterioration, inadequate municipal services and facilities, or inappropriate arrangement of land uses.
- Promote the long term stability and viability of designed "Community Improvement Project Areas".
- Encourage the co-ordination of municipal expenditures and planning and development activity within designated "Community Improvement Project Areas".
- Stimulate private property maintenance and reinvestment activity.
- Upgrade physical services and social and recreational facilities in designated "Community Project Areas".
- Promote the improvement of energy efficiency standards for residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses within the designated community improvement project area.
- Support the implementation of measures that will assist in achieving sustainable development and sustainable living.
- Support the retention of heritage properties or areas.

London Plan

Approved by Municipal Council in June 2016 and by the Province in December 2016, The London Plan sets new goals and priorities to shape the growth, preservation and evolution of London over the next 20 years. As of June 2021, the majority of The London Plan is in full force and effect, with some policies and maps still under appeal to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

Land Use & Urban Design Policies

In The London Plan, all lands within the City are assigned a Place Type that establishes policies that regulate the permitted development.

The properties fronting Dundas Street between Florence Street and Wavell Street are assigned the Urban Corridor Place Type. Urban Corridors will generally support mid-rise residential and mixed-use development. They will be places that encourage intensification over the life of The London Plan so that they can mature to support higher-order transit at some point in the future beyond 2035.

The most eastern section of Dundas Street is assigned the Shopping Area Place Type. Shopping Areas provide for a wide range of retail, service, business, recreational, social, education and government uses within easy walking distance from neighbourhoods. Shopping Areas will be well connected to public transit, local streets and other linkages allowing attractive options for walking and cycling to these destinations. These centres will be designed and developed to create a sense of place and identity and to establish an identifiable hub for commerce and neighbourhood services.

The most western section of Dundas Street is assigned the Rapid Transit Corridor. This Place Type support a similar form of development as the Urban Corridor, but at a slightly higher intensity. The Rapid Transit Corridors will be some of the most highly connected neighbourhoods in our City, linking to the Downtown and Transit Villages. Most of these corridors will be fundamentally walkable streetscapes, with abundant trees, widened sidewalks, and development that is pedestrian- and transit oriented.

East London Link- Bus Rapid Transit: This project is scheduled from 2022-2024 and has received funding support from the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario. The East London Link will improve transit in East London: connecting Fanshawe College's eastern and downtown campuses, support the revitalization of Old East Village and encourage development of the former London Psychiatric Hospital and McCormick's lands. There is potential for buses to run every 15 minutes in mixed traffic along Oxford Street to the airport and an opportunity for a stronger link with the eastern industrial employment areas. In the East London Link, buses would be removed from mixed traffic with the goal of improving capacity in general traffic lanes and increasing transit frequency and reliability. On King Street, buses would travel in curbside transit lanes. Along the rest of the corridor, they would travel in centre-running transit lanes beside a small, curb-height median on the left and general traffic lanes on the right. Large concrete barriers would only be included near transit stations to enhance passenger safety. The project would coordinate necessary underground work, including replacing aging sewers and watermains. It would add dedicated turn lanes at signalized intersections to enhance driver safety and increase capacity, and active transportation infrastructure to support cycling and walking. To take advantage of environmental benefits and potentially lower operating costs, purchasing electric buses is being explored. Work required to complete this project:

- Revitalize 6.3 kilometers of road, from Downtown to Fanshawe College, while completing necessary underground work on sewers and watermains.
- Install transit stations
- Widen Highbury Bridge, Highbury Avenue and Oxford Street to establish continuous transit lanes. Install transit lanes on King and Dundas Street.
- Install smarter traffic signals to reduce intersection delays and shorten travel times, including transit signal priority, sensors and video.

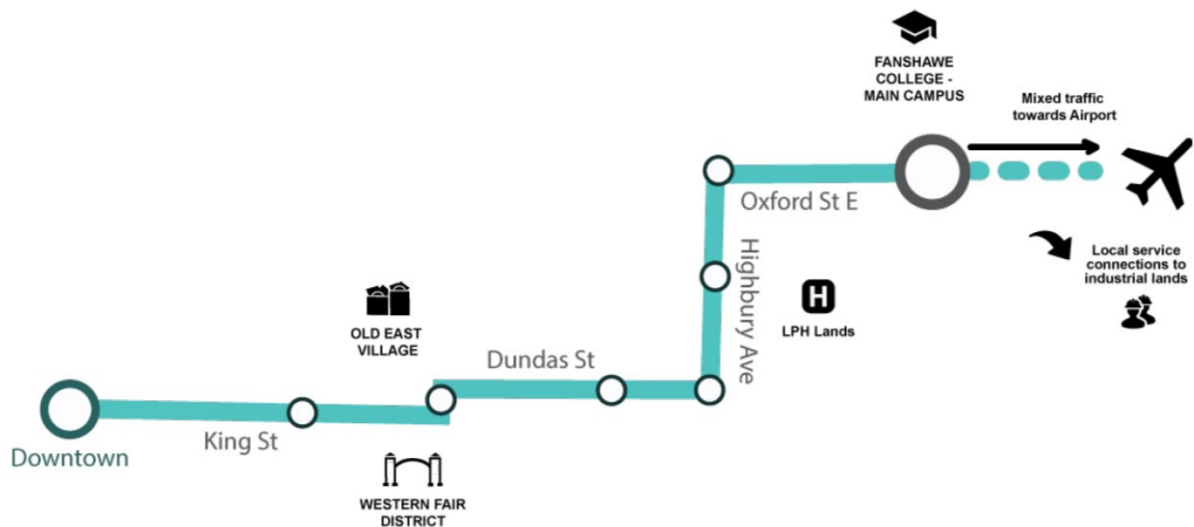


Figure 29: Overview Route East London Link Bus Rapid Transit

Community Improvement Plan Policies

Community Improvement Plans are intended to provide City Council with the necessary tools to stimulate reinvestment and redevelopment, inspire appropriate infill and intensification, coordinate planning efforts, improve physical infrastructure, support community economic development, preserve neighbourhood and cultural heritage value, and lead to the establishment of an improved neighbourhood. The tools to implement community improvement plans may include incentives and targeted private and/or public investment to achieve the vision, key directions and policies in the London Plan. Council also may acquire, clear, and dispose of land to support community improvement and economic development, or use any other methods to support community improvement or environmental, social or community economic development that is permitted by the legislation.

Policy 1727 outlines the objectives community improvement is intended to meet. Several of these objectives relate to the Argyle Core Area including:

- Maintain and improve the public realm, including such things as streets, sidewalks, street lights, street trees, pathways, parks, open spaces, and public buildings.
- Maintain and improve municipal services including such things as the water distribution system, the sanitary and storm sewer systems, mobility network, transit services, and neighbourhood services.
- Encourage the coordination of municipal servicing expenditures with planning and development activity.
- Stimulate private sector property maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment and other forms of private sector investment and reinvestment activity.
- Maintain and improve the physical and aesthetic amenities of streetscapes in both the public and private realms.
- Encourage the eventual elimination and/or relocation of incompatible and conflicting land uses and where this is not possible, encourage physical improvements to minimize the incompatibility/conflict.
- Promote the improvement of energy efficiency standards for residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses.
- Foster the revitalization and continued improvement of the Downtown and other existing commercial districts including but not limited to the Old East Village, the SoHo Area, and other established business districts.
- Upgrade social and recreational facilities and support the creation of affordable housing.
- Support the implementation of measures that will assist in achieving sustainable development and sustainable living.

- Improve environmental and social conditions.
- Promote cultural and tourism development.
- Facilitate and promote community economic development.
- Promote and improve long-term community stability, safety and quality.

Policy 1728 outlines the criteria used to identify an area for community improvement. Several of these criteria apply to the Argyle Core Area including:

- Deficiencies in physical infrastructure including but not limited to the sanitary sewer system, storm sewer system, and/or watermain system, streets, sidewalks, curbs, streetscapes and/or street lighting, and municipal parking facilities.
- Deficiencies in recreational, social or community facilities including public open space, municipal parks, neighbourhood parks, indoor/outdoor recreational facilities, and public social facilities.
- Commercial, residential, industrial and mixed-use areas with poor physical condition and/or poor visual quality of the built environment, including but not limited to building facades, building condition, streetscapes, public amenity areas and urban design.
- Vacant lots and/or underutilized properties and buildings which have potential for infill, redevelopment, expansion or development to better utilize the land base.
- Non-conforming, conflicting or incompatible land uses or activities that disrupt the predominant land use, function and/or viability of an area.
- A demonstrated interest in community improvement by the private firms within an area.
- Presence of potential or recognized cultural heritage resources.
- Known or suspected areas of environmental contamination.
- Lack or deficient affordable housing or mix of housing opportunities.
- Improvement to energy efficiency and/or renewable energy efficiency.
- Traffic and/or parking problems or deficiencies.
- Other significant barriers to the repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment or development of underutilized land and/or buildings.
- Other significant environmental, social or community economic development reasons for community improvement.

City of London By-law

The Argyle Core Area has a mix of zoning designations that reflects its range of existing and permitted uses including:

- Auto-oriented Commercial Corridor
- Multi-Family, High Density Residential
- Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential
- New Format Regional Commercial Node
- Open Space

Beyond the Argyle Core Area, the Argyle Study Area is primarily zoned for low density residential with General Industrial and Light Industrial zoning along the railway tracks and Veterans Memorial Parkway.

Existing Community Improvement Plans

The City of London has a variety of CIPs which are intended to stimulate targeted reinvestment, inspire infill and intensification opportunities, coordinate planning efforts, preserve neighbourhood and heritage character, enhance industrial, and other business opportunities, and aid in the cleanup of contaminated sites. Presently the City of London has 11 CIPs that have been adopted by Municipal Council, some of which are geographically based such as those for the Airport, Downtown, Hamilton Road, Lambeth Area, Old East Village and Soho, and some are based on site and/or building criteria including: Affordable Housing, Airport, Brownfield, Heritage and Industrial.

Appendix B: Land Use Maps

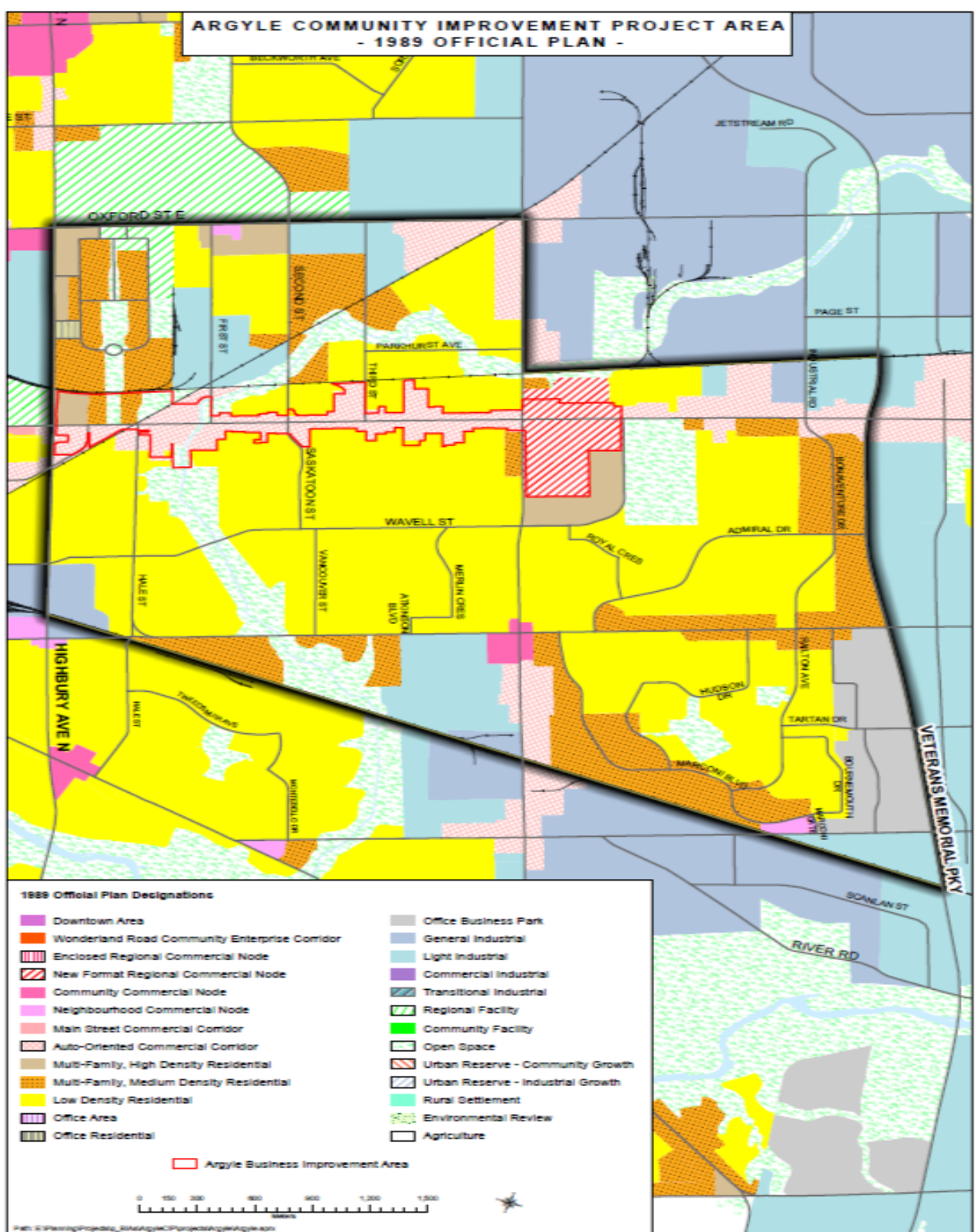


Figure 30: Land Use Argyle Study Area, 1989 Official Plan

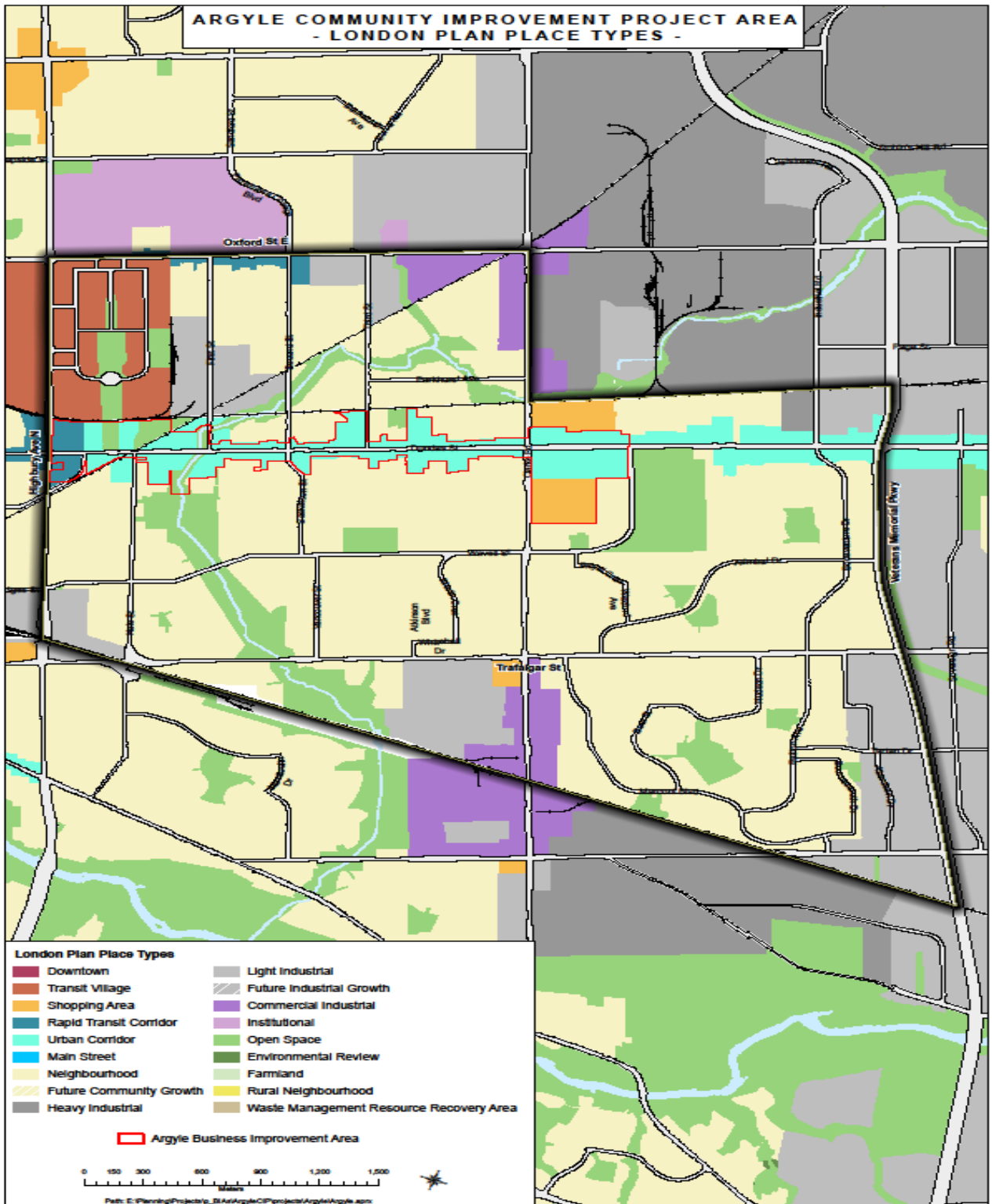


Figure 31: Argyle Study Area Place Types, The London Plan

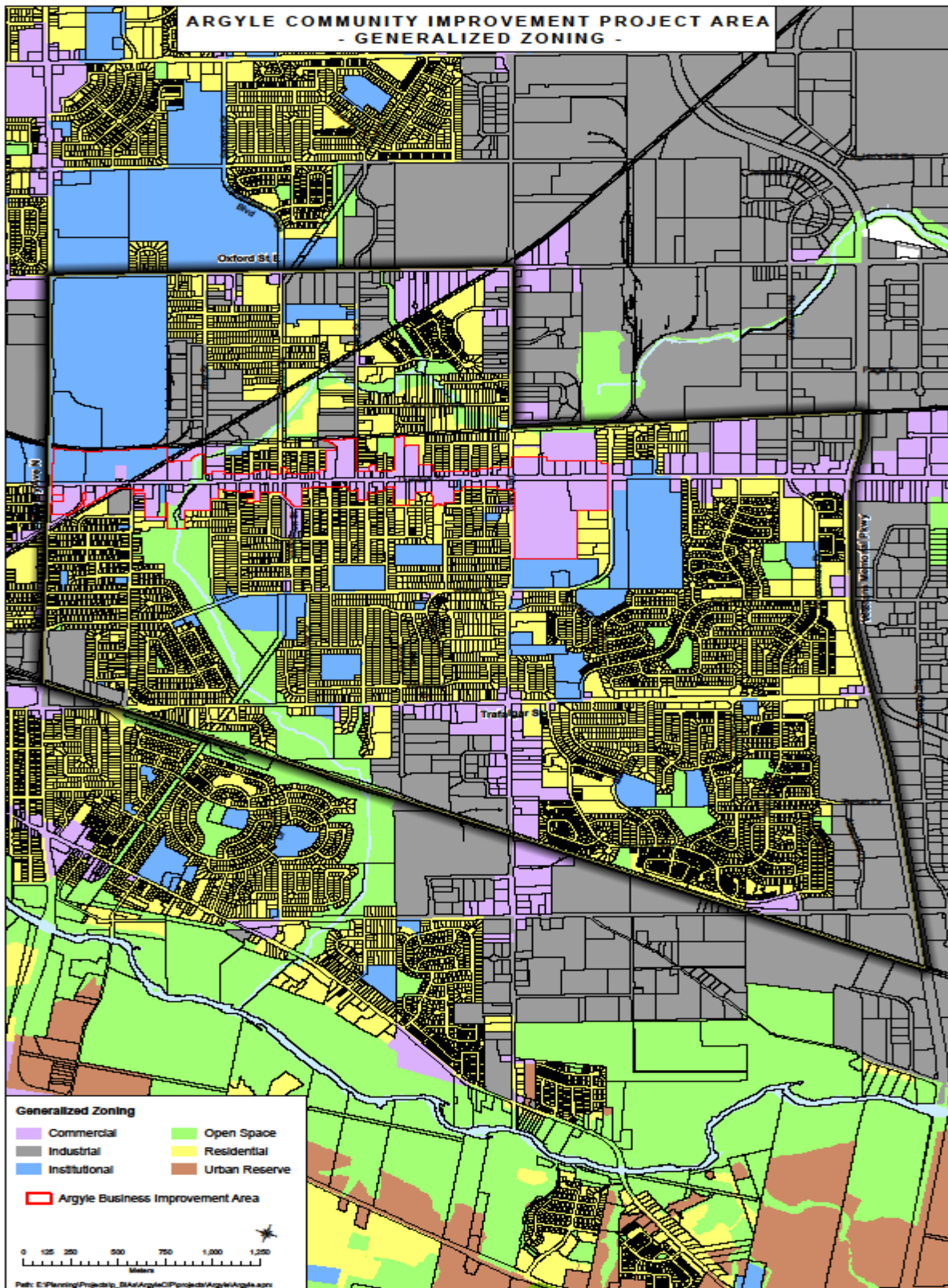


Figure 32: Land Use in Argyle, generalized zoning

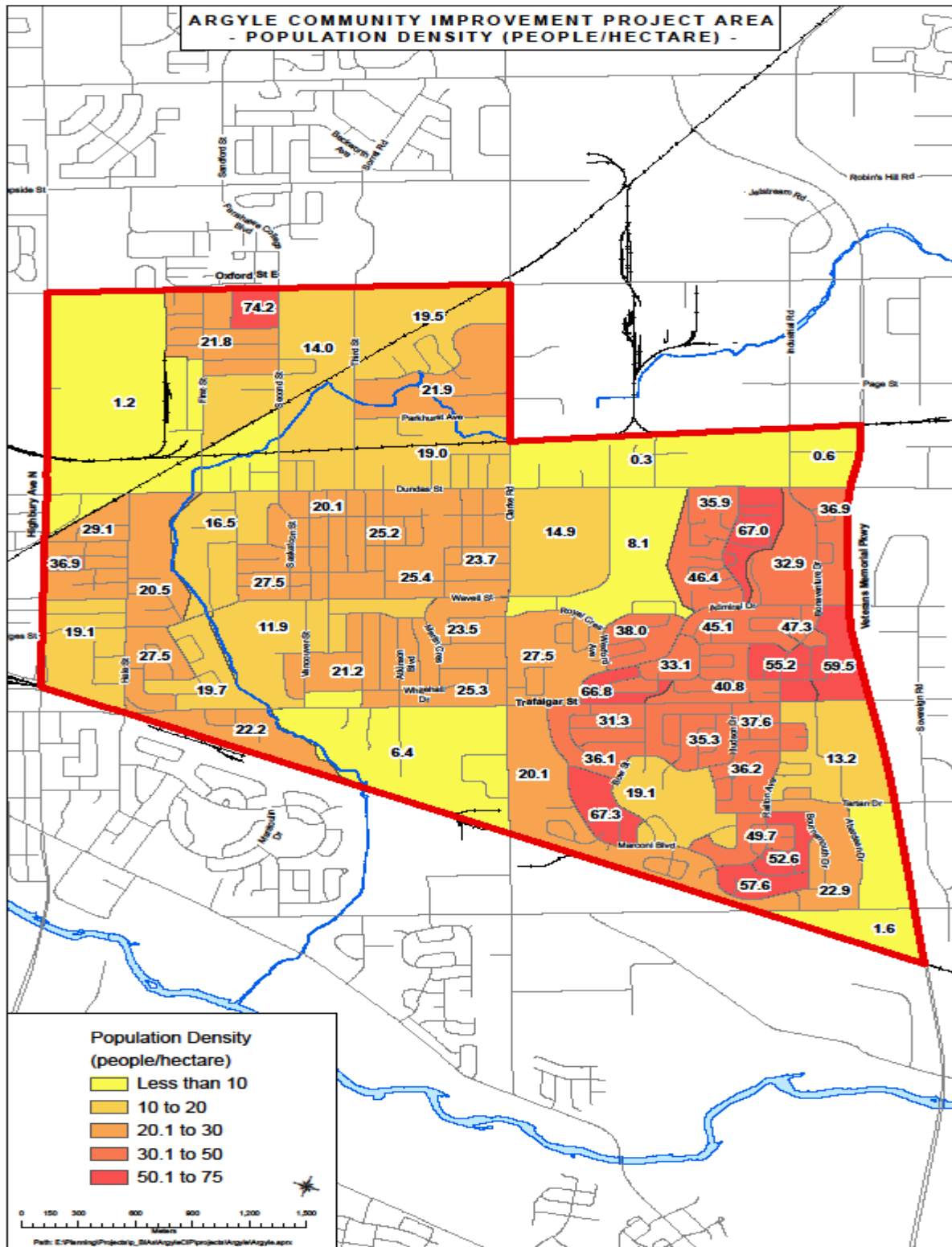


Figure 33: Population Density in Argyle Study Area

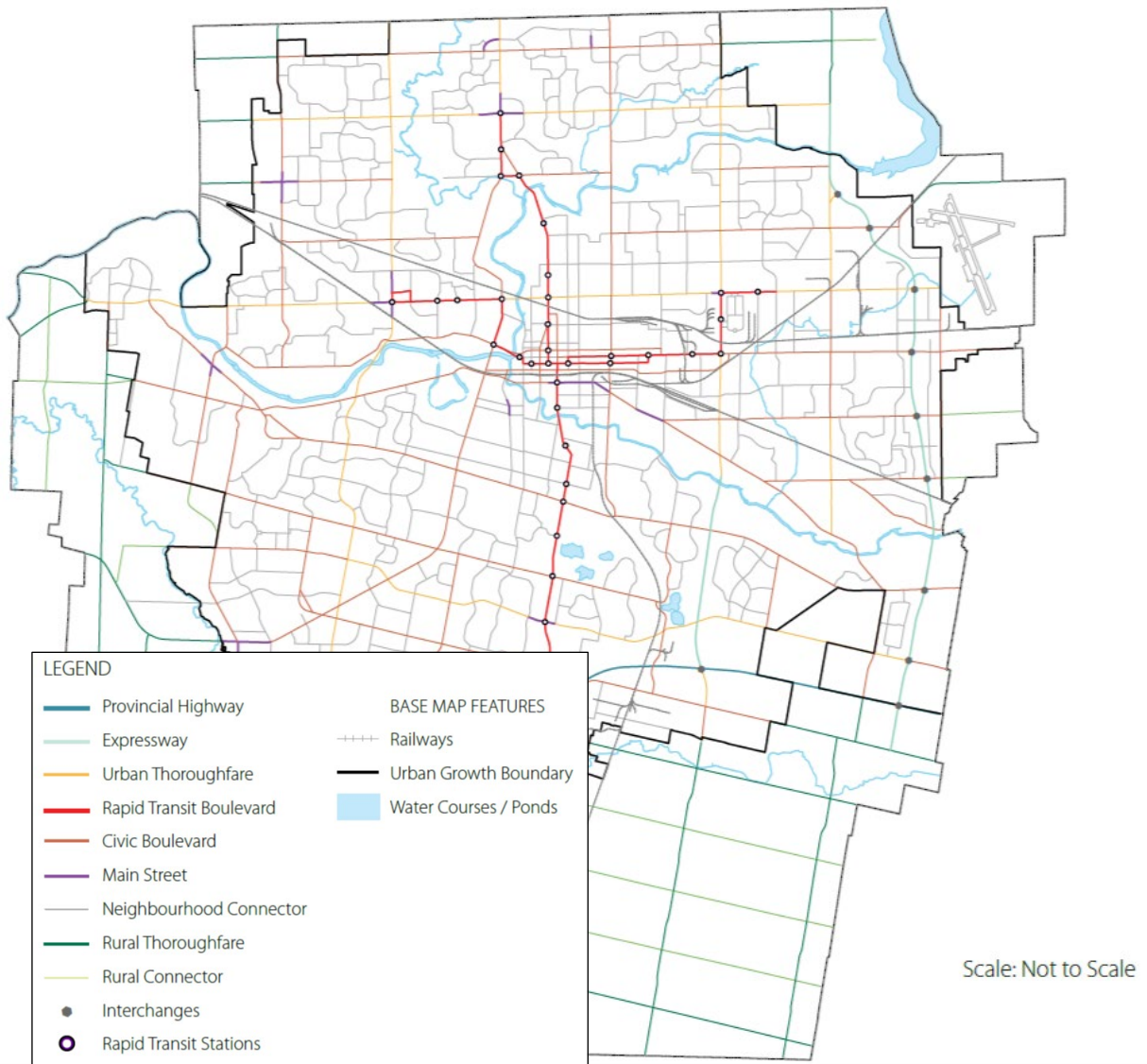


Figure 34: Street Classifications London Plan

Appendix C: Study Area

Figure 35 illustrates the general boundaries for the Argyle Regeneration Study (The Argyle Study Area) and the Argyle Planning District. This Study Area was chosen for the following reasons:

- The Argyle Planning District was kept intact as much as possible, so the boundaries for the study area generally coincide with the boundaries of the Planning District. This allows for better data-comparison with existing demographic Argyle Trade Area Reports and the 2016 Census.
- The Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian National Railway, Veterans Memorial Parkway, Oxford Street East and Highbury Avenue North were viewed as existing boundaries that separate Argyle from other Planning Districts. These districts are East London and Carling Districts to the west, Huron Heights and Airport District to the north, Crumlin to the east and Hamilton Road to the south of the Argyle Area.
- Dundas Street is the main commercial and transit corridor within the study area, connecting Veterans Memorial Parkway with the Argyle Mall and Highbury Avenue. The Argyle BIA is located along Dundas Street, between Wavell Street and Highbury Avenue. In order to incorporate the full BIA and Dundas Corridor, the study area has been extended towards the west to include the Hale Street district.
- Another benefit of expanding the boundaries to the west, is that the study area will encompass the full Kiwanis Park North & Central and Pottersburg Creek instead of only half of the Park. This is a better reflection of the importance of this natural feature on the surrounding neighbourhood.

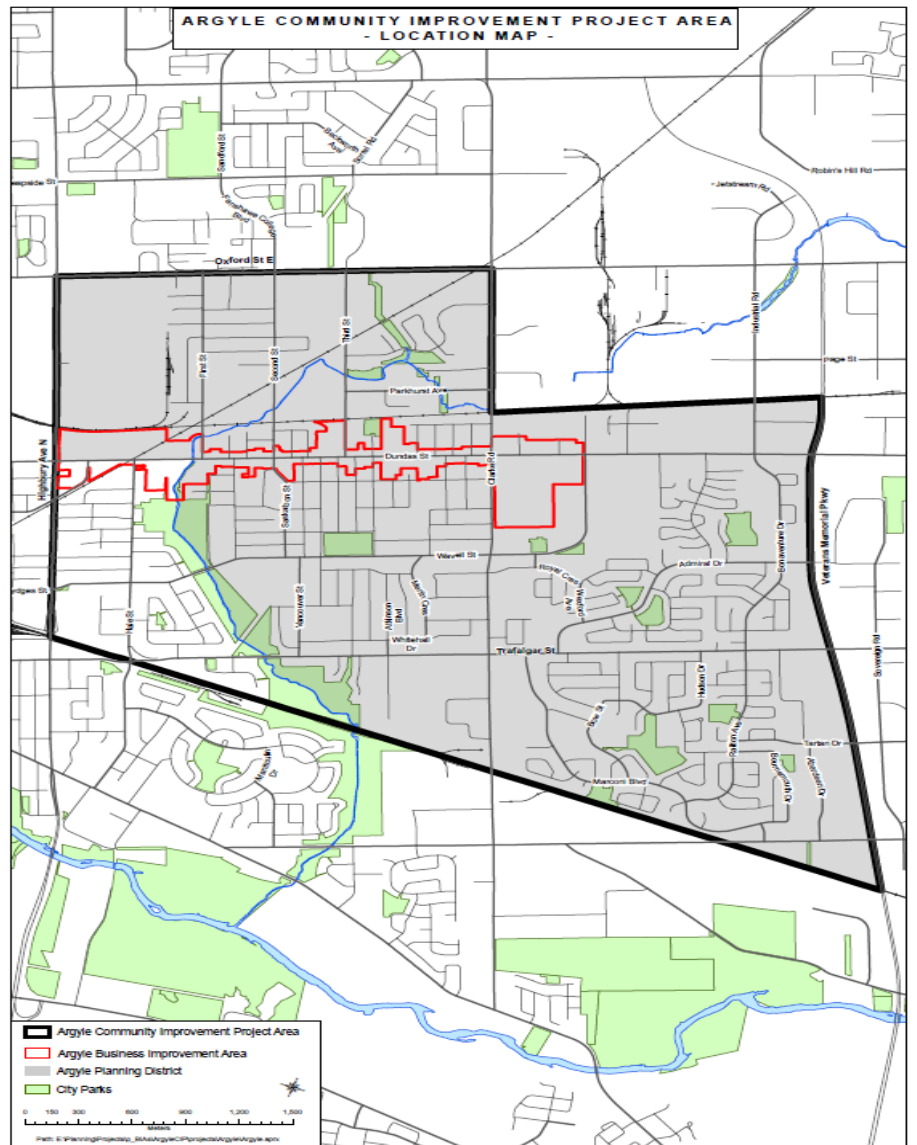


Figure 35: Argyle Study Area

Based on the Argyle Area Regeneration Study, it was recommended that a Community Improvement Plan for the Argyle Area be undertaken. The Study identified that the Dundas Corridor was the core area of Argyle with the most pressing regeneration needs. Some of these reasons for community improvement are outlined below:

- The Dundas Street corridor and surrounding area can be described as an area in relatively poor condition; with an older building stock that was predominantly built before 1980, lack of landscaping and street trees in the streetscape, and significant issues around upkeep, security, littering and vandalism (graffiti). In addition, business-owners and residents have identified Dundas Street as an unpleasant public realm, especially for pedestrians and public transit users.

There are few places to sit, limited pedestrian crossings, garbage bins and/or transit amenities, and the large amount of hydro poles and numerous private driveway entrances further detract from the public realm.

- Although within Argyle relatively more building activity is concentrated along the Dundas Corridor, it can be concluded that there is less building activity density in Argyle and the Argyle BIA-area compared to the rest of the urban area of the city. There is a clear opportunity to redevelop and expand commercial, residential and employment options in Argyle and provide appropriate infill along Dundas Street, Clarke Road and on the London Psychiatric Hospital Lands. Financial and planning tools should be considered to incentivize quicker redevelopment.
- Argyle is a unique mixed-use area with significant amounts of commercial and industrial land uses. Especially along Clarke Road, First Street and Second Street, industrial and commercial industrial activities could threaten the surrounding residential character and amenity. A detailed analysis of the existing zoning and land use context could help to increase the viability and sustainability of these residential neighbourhoods by preventing adverse impacts from noise, odor and congestion and identifying opportunities for sensitive intensification.
- There is a strong need for more and better quality affordable housing in the Argyle area. The neighbourhood used to be known as more affordable and an area where young families could enter the housing market. This is rapidly changing, resulting in increasing average sold prices, low housing inventory and vacancy rates, and unfortunately also an increasing population of people experiencing homelessness. The lack of rent-geared-to-income housing and opportunities to age-in-place for senior residents are another indication of a need for more stable, and affordable housing options in Argyle.
- The older building stock in the area, with 70% built before 1980, indicates an opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of residential, institutional, commercial and industrial properties. This is further highlighted by the average residential electricity use & gas usage (measured in 2014), with Argyle predominantly in the red zones, meaning the highest 20% use (far above City average). • The new East Lions Community Center is nearing completion and will provide a range of programs and services to the local neighbourhood and serve as a regional destination for indoor aquatics. However, during this study, Staff received a number of concerns and questions from residents about the availability, accessibility and affordability of future recreational programs, especially for teenagers and seniors.
- The Argyle study area is experiencing deficiencies in the physical infrastructure. The pavement quality index on some streets is in poor to very poor condition, some streets are missing sidewalks and/or streetlights, and upgrades to sanitary services are necessary and on-going. Existing City programs do deal with infrastructure upgrade and renewal and the CIP study will provide an opportunity for the public to outline their preferences and priorities in the Argyle area.
- Argyle has significant areas with known environmental contamination, and some have undergone remediation measures, such as the large removal contaminated soil, sediment and debris from the former General Electric facility. More recently, the UTRCA released a Watershed Report Card for the Pottersburg Creek. Both the surface water quality and forest conditions were graded with a D (poor), which shows the necessity for more conservation efforts on private and public lands.
- Due to the high traffic volumes on major corridors such as Dundas Street, Highbury Avenue, Oxford Street, Clarke Road, Trafalgar Street and Veterans Memorial Parkway, automobile traffic patterns and congestion are an issue in Argyle. Many stakeholders raised concerns with the adverse impacts of congestion, such as time delays, increases in different forms of pollution, and frustrating driving conditions. The planned East Link of the Bus Rapid Transit system, additional sidewalks and bike lanes will alleviate some of the traffic issues in Argyle and shift to more sustainable and clean transportation options as an alternative to car-use. However, active transportation can only be a real alternative if the public realm is more attractive, pleasant and safe for all residents

The proposed Argyle Project Area is the area that has been determined to be in need of community improvement and represents the area where public realm improvement efforts will be focused and where financial incentive programs may be offered. The proposed Argyle Project Area includes all properties fronting Dundas Street, as well as the Argyle Mall located at Clarke Road. The proposed Argyle Project Area is generally defined as Highbury Avenue to the west, Canadian Pacific Railway to the north, Wavell Street to the east and Whitney Street to the south.

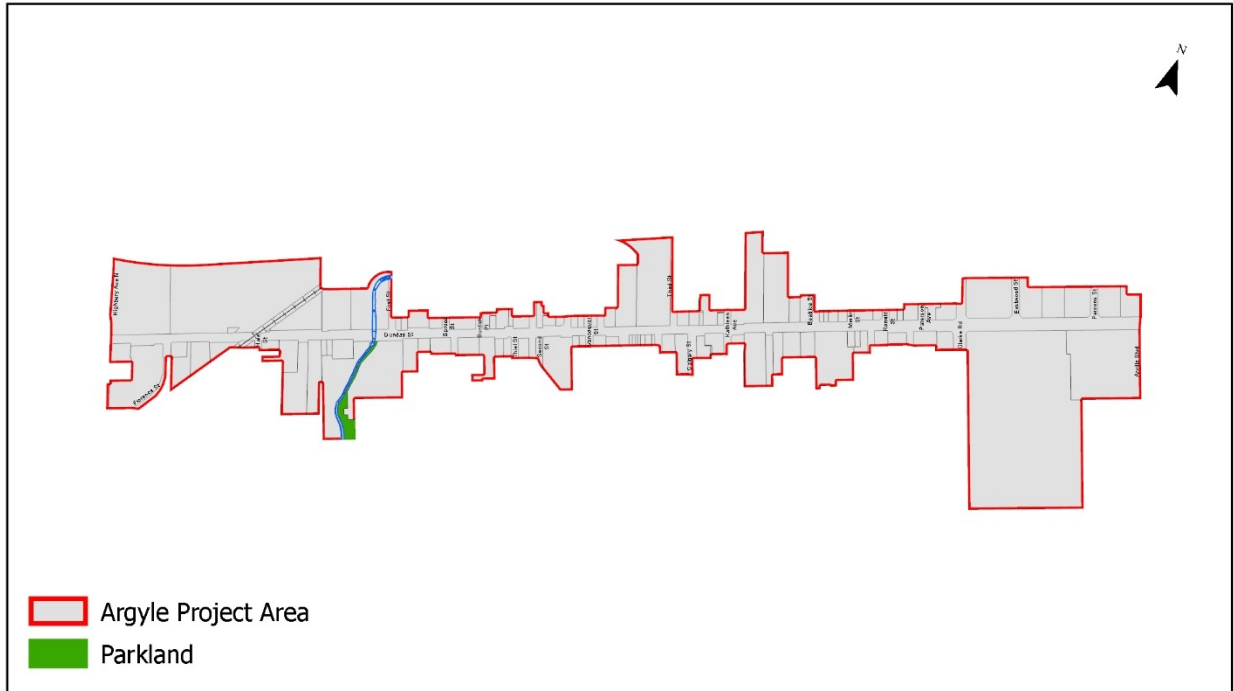


Figure 36: Argyle Project Area

Appendix D: Community Identified SWOT-analysis for the Argyle Study Area

Category	Strengths	Weakness	Opportunities	Threats
Land Use Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse Collection of land uses - Rich history of independent businesses - Main Street is good for business - Excellent Parks - Residential Neighbourhood is stable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of fresh food, Little residential growth - Lack of a city-wide destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for residential infill and intensification - Development of urban design guidelines to help guide development - Rezone the Dundas Corridor to promote a greater mix of uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vacant buildings along the corridor - Vacant/ dilapidated buildings in visible locations threaten ability to attract businesses
Building Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Majority of buildings are in fair condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No financial incentive programs available to improve buildings - LMHC are in poor condition/ vacant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage & incentivize property owners to improve their buildings and attract tenants - Opportunities for redevelopment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some buildings are in poor shape and contribute to negative atmosphere
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - London Psychiatric Hospital Area is one of the most significant sites in history of mental health in Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low amount of designated heritage properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPH-area can be designed as a more intensive urban village, while conserving cultural heritage - Opportunity to promote the neighbourhood's built heritage through signage and educational outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of consideration for heritage features
Public Realm & Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kiwanis Park is one of the largest City Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor (or non-existing) sidewalks - Bus stops are poor - Some local roads have no curbs - Poor streetlighting - Hydro poles further limit public realm - Limited pedestrian crossing - Lack of street trees - Lack of places to sit and linger - Lack of garbage bins (garbage on sidewalks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote walking and cycling in Argyle - Improvements to the corridor to address many of the weaknesses and attempt to better balance vehicular and pedestrian traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Underused laneways contribute to crime in area - Many different construction projects could be disruptive for residents and road users
Traffic & Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some on street parking is available, Argyle Mall has large parking-lots - Many different bus-routes - Lots of traffic, so good exposure for businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many businesses along Dundas have their own lane-entrance or egress point, hard to get in/ out - Heavy vehicle and truck traffic contribute to a reduction in pedestrian environment - On-site parking is inconsistent, some businesses have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide additional off-street parking - Analyze the requirements for on-site parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High vehicle-speeds on Dundas - Lack of enforcement and police-presence

		issues providing parking - Narrow sidewalks		
Servicing	- Neighbourhood has full municipal services	- Perception that snow-clearance of roads and sidewalks is lacking - No lighting on local streets - Roads in poor conditions	- Great need for roadwork, sewer and infrastructure improvements - Opening East Lions Community Centre	- Perceived feeling that Argyle is 'overlooked' - Need more garbage-emptying (Nov. & Dec.)
Crime & Safety	- Sense of community, lot of positive people - Loyal East-enders	-Issues with drugs and prostitution in the Neighbourhood - Crime is common, including burglary, (vehicle) theft, arsons and robberies - Residents feel unsafe in local parks and streets	- Crime prevention through better design (CPTED) - Enhance by-law and police enforcement and patrols in Argyle - Bring back Neighbourhood-watch program - Promote and expand the Active and Safe Routes to School Program	- Underused or abandoned alleyways contribute to crime in the area - Argyle Mall feels unsafe at night - Lack of Lighting contributes to perceived unsafety

Figure 37: Community identified SWOT-analysis for the Argyle Study Area