

# TAKE THE POLITICS OUT OF TRANSIT PLANNING AND GET THE PLANNERS BACK INTO THE GAME

LESSONS FROM THE TRANSPORTATION TOMORROW SURVEY

## OPPI Conference – October 6, 2015

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Andy Manahan, David Crowley and Dick Gordon

ORIGINS, FACTUAL BASIS, AND CONCLUSIONS

FOR EACH OF THE 4 RCCAO VIDEO EPISODES

# Objectives for this Session

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- 1) Review and discuss theme of each video
- 2) Present background information/data analysis
- 3) Present/discuss “lessons learned” and conclusions

**CITIES HAVE TO BE CONTINUALLY REBORN  
(OR THEY DECLINE)**

# Video 1: Understanding Transit History

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# Case Studies of Transportation Decision Making: Our Recent History

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- Scarborough RT/LRT/Subway
- Sheppard Subway
- Spadina Subway Extension

**A lesson learned: Political interference has thwarted our ability to deliver transportation projects in the Toronto area**

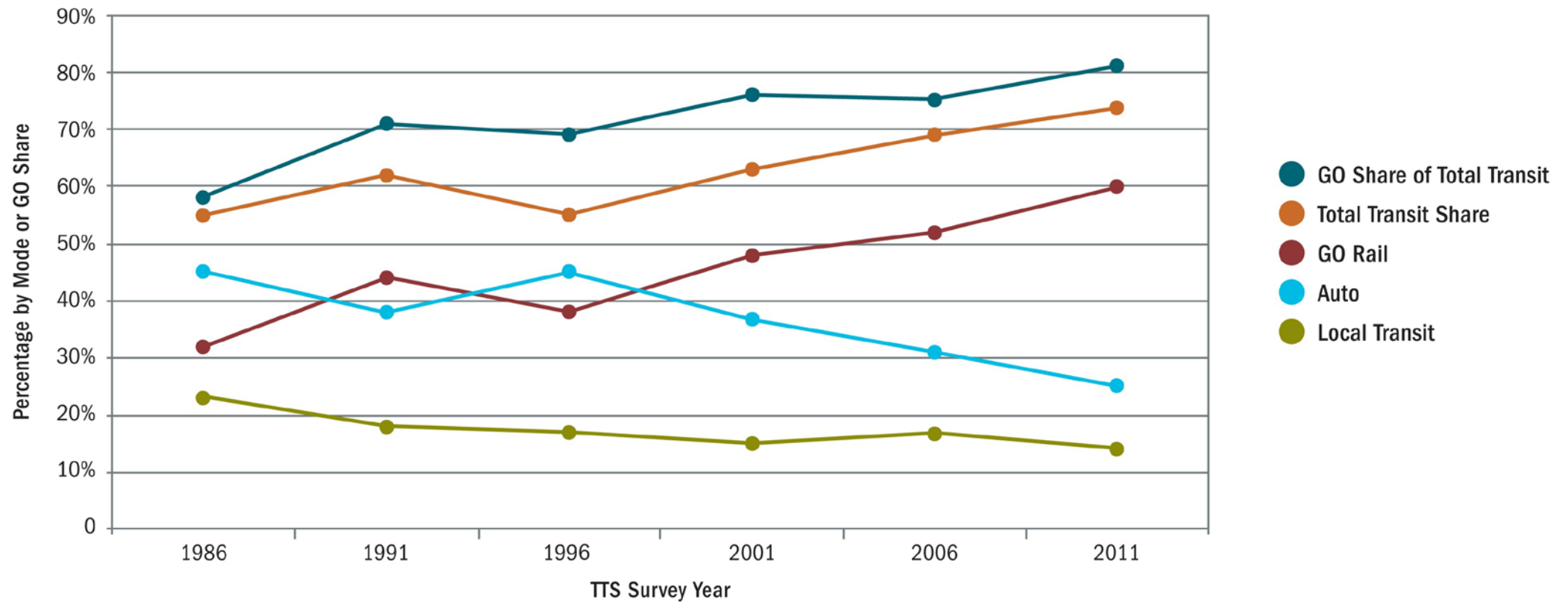
# Focus on Downtown Toronto (Planning District 1):

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- **PD 1 includes:** Downtown Core/Financial District, Central Waterfront, Bloor/Yonge, Mid-Town and the U of T
  - 200,000 residents and more than 450,000 jobs
  - 33% of Toronto jobs and 51% of Toronto's export-based GDP
- TD Economics observed in Jan. 2013: "Toronto's vibrant downtown core has seen a revival ... over the last five years ..."
- PD 1 accounts for 13% of GTHA AM peak trip destinations but 50% of the transit trip destinations

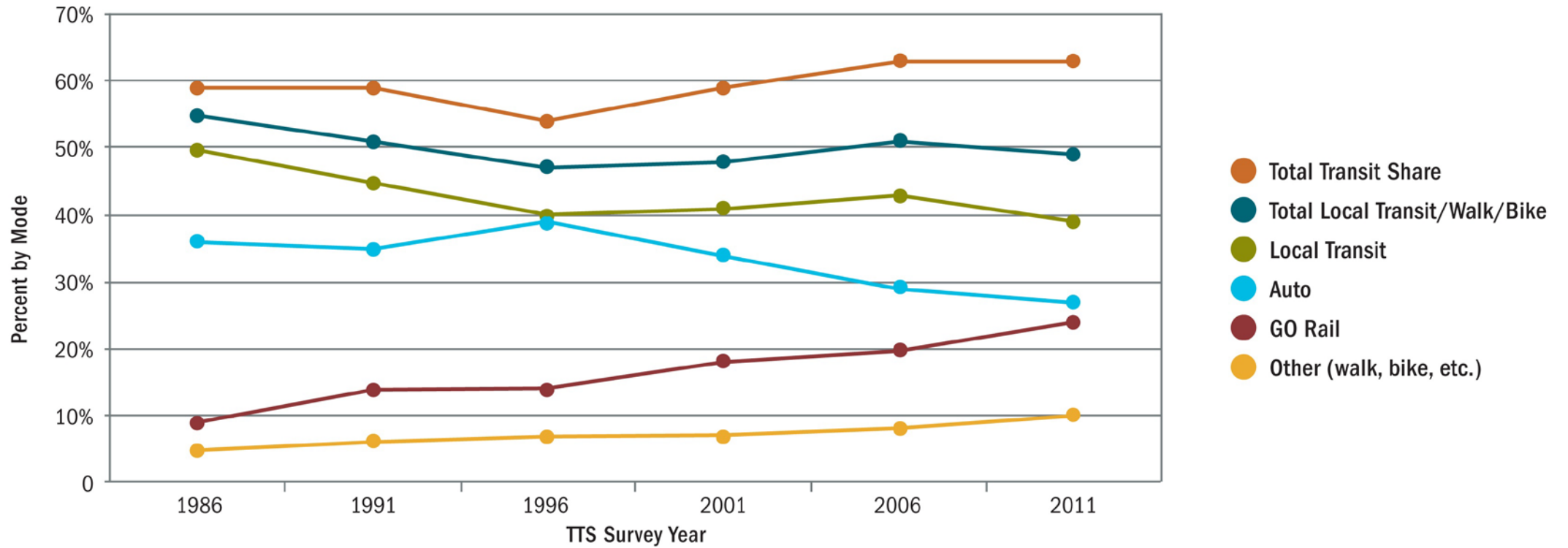
# GO Rail's Success: Serving Downtown Toronto (from 905)

Mode Shares for AM Peak Travel to Downtown From 905 GTHA (1986 to 2011)



# Transit's Success in Serving Downtown

Mode Shares for Total AM Peak Work Travel to Downtown TTS Survey Area (1986 to 2011)



# Video 2: The Biggest Rapid Transit Problem in the GTA

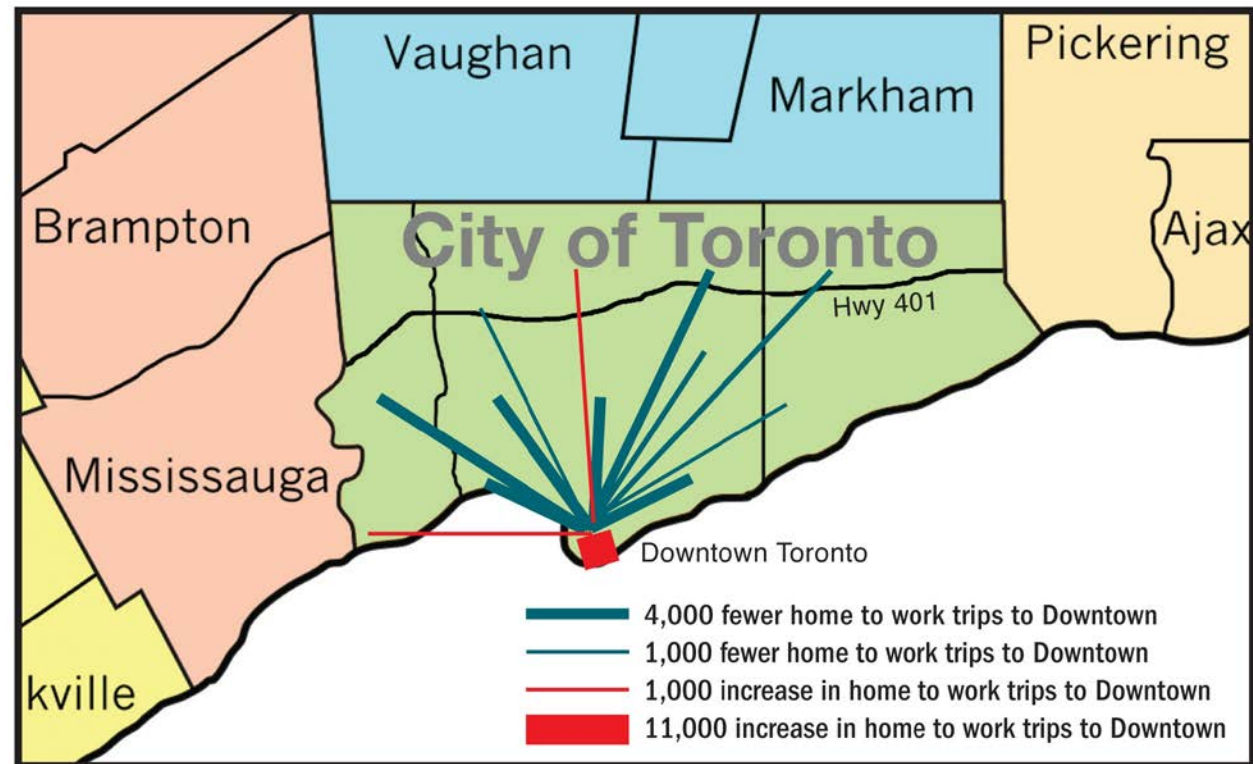
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# 1986 - 2006 : Changes in Commuting to Downtown Toronto

- 27,000 fewer Downtown Commuters from Toronto
- Increases from 3 areas within Toronto:
  - Downtown
  - North York Centre
  - South Etobicoke
- Growth in daily commutes from the 905

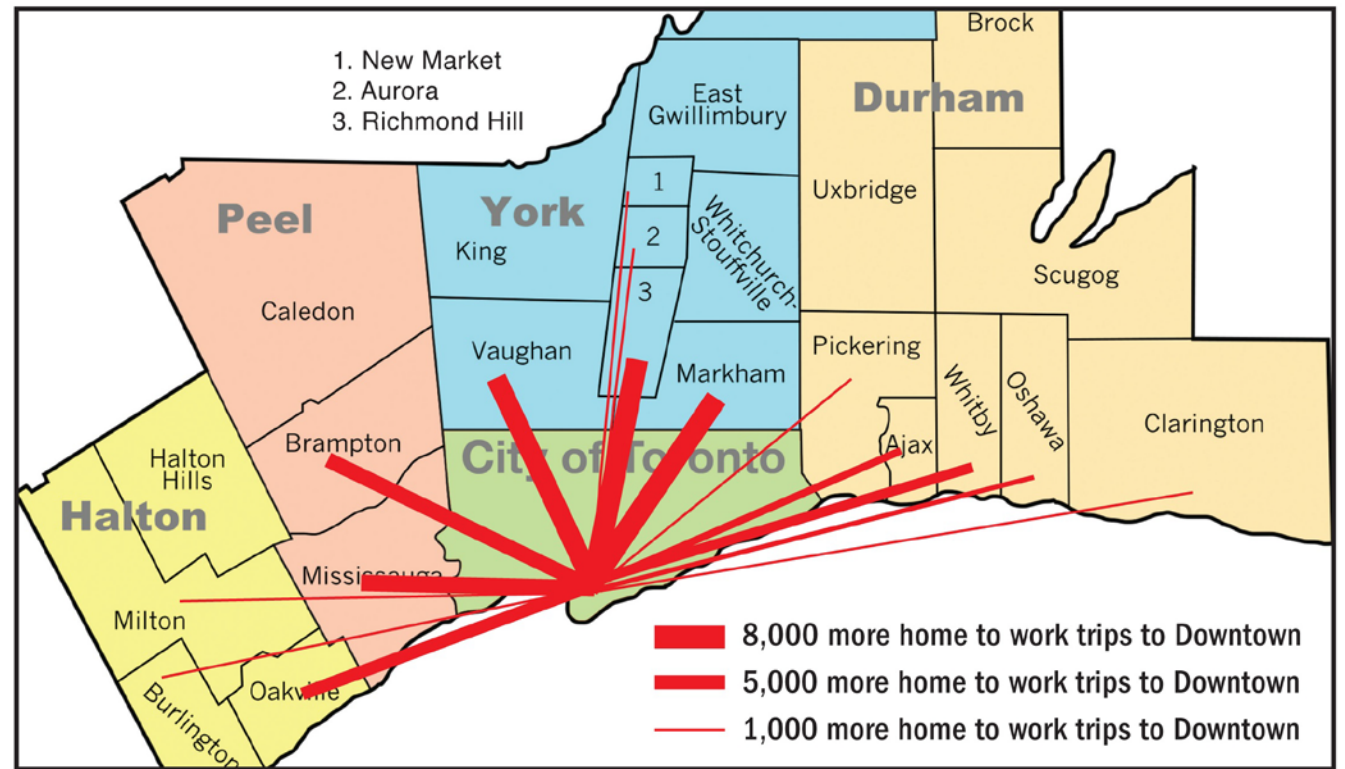
Travel to Downtown Toronto Between 1986 and 2006



# 1986 -2006: Increases in Downtown Commuting from 905

- Daily Home to Work Trips:
  - 41,000 more to PD1 in total
  - 56,000 more from 905
- GO Rail Accommodated Most:
  - West (Halton/Peel)
  - East (Durham)
- Y-U-S Subway:
  - Increase from York Region
  - Yonge Line at capacity south of Sheppard during peaks

As the Middle Class Migrated from Suburban Toronto to the 905, so did many Downtown Workers



# Big Shift in Origins of trips to DT since 2006

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- **Most of the increases in DT commuting came from within Inner City (not 905)**
- Yonge and Bloor-Danforth Lines operating at or near capacity
- So are inner city Streetcar routes
- Subway + DT Streetcars = not enough capacity for current or future demands
- Lowest transit modal splits to DT are from inner city areas served by TTC subway/streetcars (while highest are from 416 and 905 suburbs)
- **However: highest transit priority for politicians is to build more rapid transit in suburban 416 and in 905 locations**

# Video 3: Too Many Rapid Transit Proposals but Few Solutions

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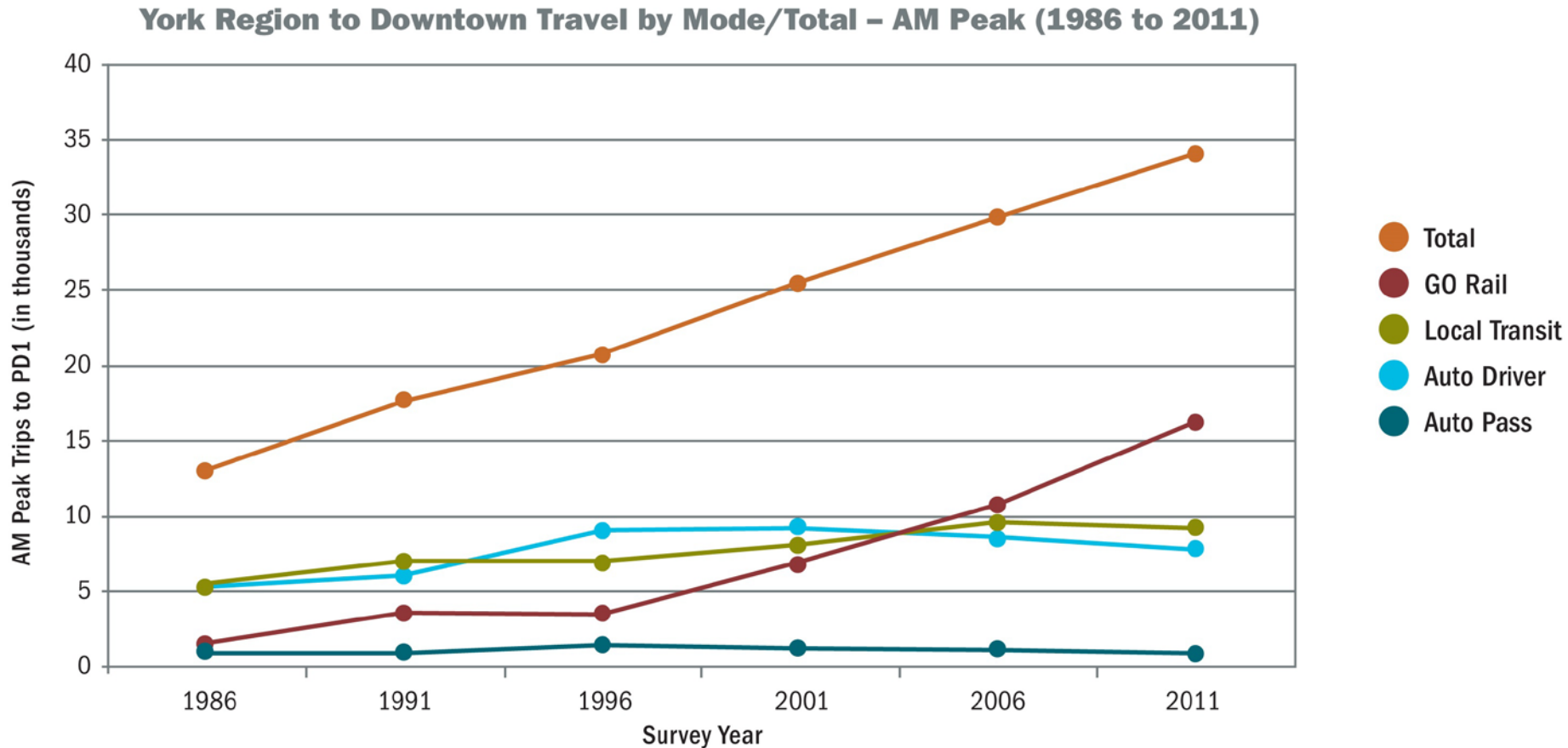


# Solutions to Address Yonge Subway Congestion

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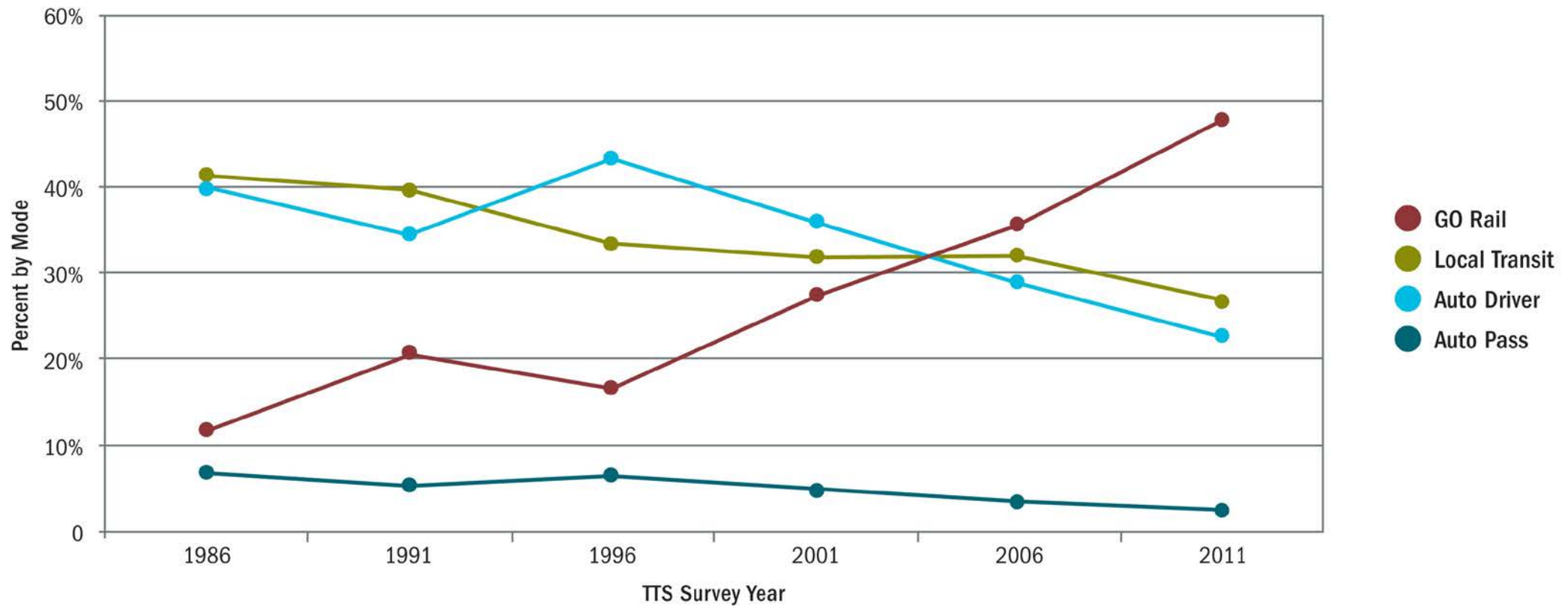
- Focus on GO Rail capacity improvements in South York Region
- Implement GO Rail/TTC fare integration demonstration project at Union Station
- Aggressively pursue detailed planning for the Relief Line

# Diagnosis before Prescription: What do the trends tell us?



# York Region: Changing Mode Shares

York Region to Downtown Travel by Mode Shares – AM Peak Travel (1986 to 2011)



# Potential Diversion of 6,600 riders from Yonge-University-Spadina Subway to GO Rail from York Region to Downtown

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## AM Peak Period Transit Riders (York Region to Downtown, 2011)

- Local Transit (YRT/TTC): 9,200    GO Rail: 16,300 (64%)    Total Transit: 25,500
- GO Rail from Peel/Halton and Durham accounts for **more than 90%** of transit trips to DT

## With 90% using GO Rail, 2011 volumes by mode from York Region would be:

- Local Transit (YRT/TTC): 2,600    GO Rail: 22,900 (90%)    Total Transit: 25,500

**This would result in substantial relief in short to medium term**

# 1969 TTC Rapid Transit Priorities

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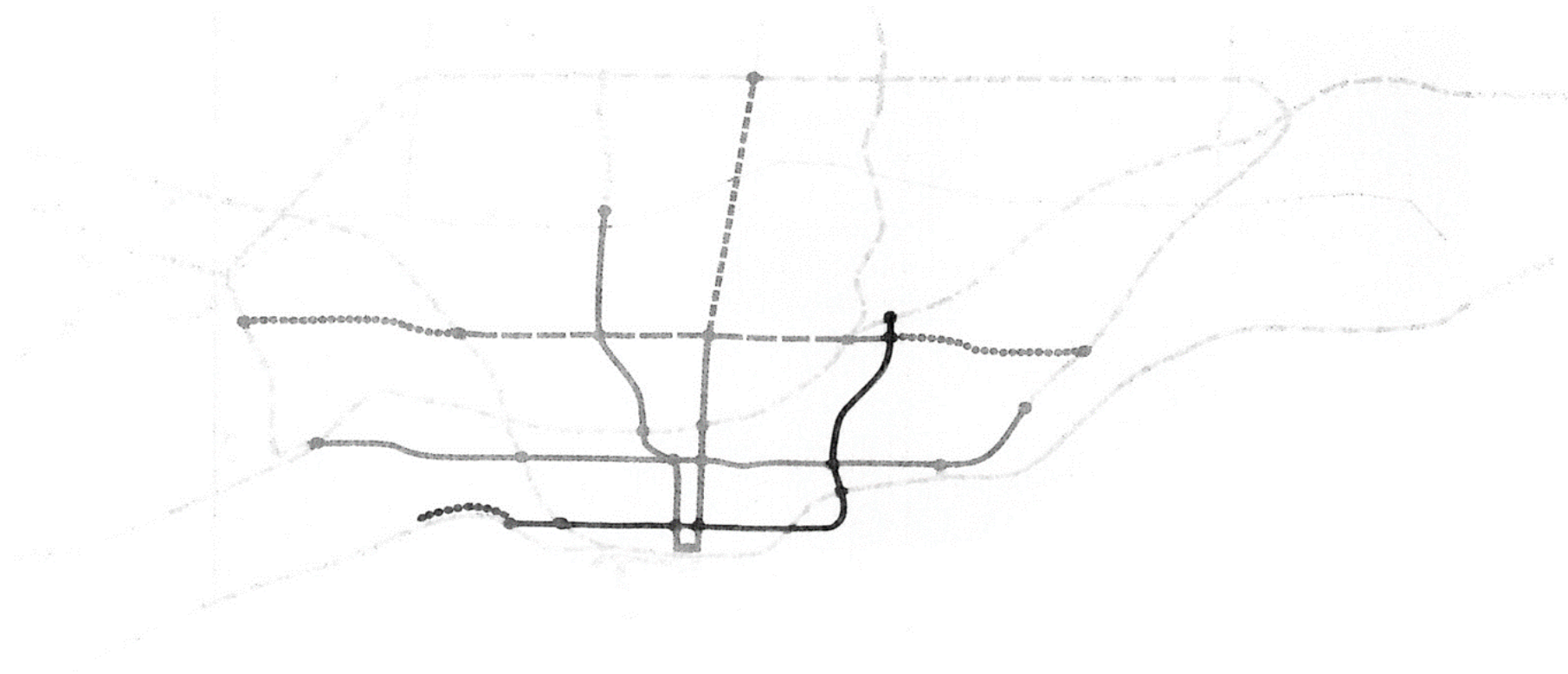
**a concept for  
integrated rapid  
transit and  
commuter rail  
systems in  
metropolitan  
toronto . . .**



**february 1969**

# Queen Subway: Today's Relief Line

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# Queen Street Subway: Second Priority

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*“The Queen subway line is considered vital through the downtown area to provide east-west access to the redeveloping core area.”*

- Provide a third North-South link in the downtown area to Don Valley communities
- Provide relief to the Bloor-Danforth line and further relieve the Yonge line north and south of Bloor to and from the east
- Provide capacity for a future Scarborough line to Malvern to be fed into Warden Station

*TTC Feb 1969, page 7*

# Video 4: Why We Have to Do Better (and How)

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TAKE THE **POLITICS**  
**OUT**  
OF **TRANSIT PLANNING**

# Complex Situation in the GTHA

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- Strong regional growth and resultant increased congestion
- “Places to Grow” and “The Big Move” in place but we are far behind in the delivery of RT projects
- High cost megaprojects require funding from all levels of government
- Numerous projects across many municipalities compete for limited funding

**NO WONDER POLITICIANS OF ALL STRIPES WANT TO BE INVOLVED!**

# Political / Staff Interface

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- Politicians need to be involved, but their role should be focused on ensuring a continuous program of network improvements with necessary funding
- Staff needs to drive a robust planning process:
  - Transportation Master Plans
  - Transit Environmental Assessments for individual projects
  - Cost / Benefit Analyses (consistent methodology to aid in priority setting)
- CBA needs to provide a basis for funding from senior levels of government

# Understanding the Problem

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- Critical to all 3 parts of the Planning Process:
  - Master Plans
  - Transit EAs
  - Cost / Benefit Analyses
- Comprehensive analysis of trends and transit network implications is invaluable:
  - Transportation Tomorrow Survey every 5 years
  - Census Long Form needs to be reinstated as mandatory (Journey to Work component)

# United Staff Positions

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- Multi-disciplinary team approach needed to gain political approvals (Planners, Engineers, Transit operators, and financial analysts all on the same page)
- All department heads and CAO need to support overall plan, key technical aspects of specific projects, and priorities
- Planners well-positioned to assume a lead role:
  - understand growth and its implications
  - develop master plans
  - perform analyses in a multi-modal and transit network context
  - able to lead multi-disciplinary teams

# Audience Input Needed

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1. As planners, what else can we do to take the politics out of transit planning?
2. How can we get politicians to accept a more focused role in transit planning?