



# Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Background Summary Report

October 2019



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## ***Executive Summary***

### ***Context***

The City of Vaughan is transforming into a vibrant and sustainable city which is planned to accommodate a significant number of new residents and jobs in accordance with the City of Vaughan Official Plan 2010 (VOP 2010). Much of the anticipated new development will take the form of intensification of the existing built-up area, in particular in Strategic Growth Areas identified in VOP 2010, along with greenfield development in Vaughan's New Community Areas.

The Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area is identified in the City's Urban Structure as one such Strategic Growth Area. The purpose of the Secondary Plan Study is to prepare a Secondary Plan for the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area and a supporting Comprehensive Transportation Study. The Study examines the urban form and transportation network using an integrated approach.

The Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Background Summary Report has been prepared to provide an overview of the background analysis carried out in Task 1 as a basis for the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan.

**The Background Summary Report is intended to provide input to discussion by the City, residents, landowners, agencies and other stakeholders. After further analysis and input, this will lead to the establishment of a planning framework for the Secondary Plan Study Area including a Vision Statement, Guiding Principles and Goals and Objectives.**

### ***Policy Framework***

The Provincial, Regional and City planning policy framework clearly establishes the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area as a Strategic Growth Area. In particular, VOP 2010 identifies it as a "Primary Centre", with Centre Street west of Bathurst Street and Bathurst Street north of Centre Street designated as "Regional Intensification Corridor". The Study Area is also established as a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) with a density target established by A Place to Grow of 160 people and jobs combined per hectare. However, there is also a proposal by the Region to increase that target to 200 people and jobs combined per hectare.

To implement the goal of the establishment of this area as a "Primary Centre" various policy directions are established. The key directions can be summarized based on the VOP 2010 policies as follows:

- a mix of housing types and tenures;

- a mix of non-residential uses;
- densities supportive of public transit;
- a fine grain network of streets suitable for pedestrians and cyclists;
- well-designed public spaces that are either landscaped parks or public plazas or both;
- pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade; and,
- appropriate transition of intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas.

### ***Background Analysis***

In implementing the policy direction, the Best Practices and Principles, case studies, and key lessons identified through the background review will be considered in the preparation of the Development Framework and Land Use Scenario and Urban Design Guidelines developed in later stages of the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Study. The results of the background studies will also provide direction including the Background Discussion Paper (Draft), Commercial Use Assessment, Population and Employment Estimates and Scoped Community Facilities Study.

### ***Conclusions***

A key consideration arising from the Background Analysis in the development of the Development Framework and Land Use Scenario and Urban Design Guidelines will be the creation of a “complete community” with year-round quality spaces and meeting places including public spaces such as parks, shops, squares and markets. This community will support quality of life and human health through features such as active transportation, compact development, efficient use of infrastructure, employment opportunities, a mix of housing types, access to transit, public spaces and opportunities for social interaction.

As part of the creation of a complete community, the opportunities and challenges identified through the background analyses completed to-date will be carefully considered. The opportunities and challenges will be revised and/or expanded as more detailed information and input becomes available through the Study process:

### **Opportunities**

- Interest in significant redevelopment and intensification by key landowners;
- Strong potential to achieve the population and employment targets set by A Place to Grow;
- Improvements to transit (vivaNext) may assist in enhancing transit modal share through increased service;
- Promenade Mall has a number of positive attributes (i.e. access to two regional arterial roads and vivaNext BRT); and,

- Study Area is well served by recreation facilities, libraries, parks and outdoor recreation facilities as well as schools.

## **Challenges**

- Ensuring new development finds the “right balance” achieving a density supportive of public transit, while creating well-designed public and private spaces, with pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade and appropriate transition in intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas;
- Creating a transportation network that supports transit, walking, rolling and cycling including:
  - Creation of a fine-grain Complete Street network;
  - Build upon the High Street concept;
  - Build upon the City’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan update;
  - Maximize access to transit through first and last mile active transportation connections;
  - Leveraging new mobility solutions;
  - EcoMobility Hubs; and,
  - Increase sustainable modal share through Transportation Demand Management (TDM); and,
- Ensuring that the high level of service provided by the existing community facilities is maintained and provision is made to provide affordable/social housing as well as daycare and medical facilities.

## **Next Steps**

This background analysis will inform the next steps in the preparation of the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan including the establishment of the vision and guiding principles and development of the Emerging Land Use and Design Scenario and transportation network.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The City of Vaughan is transforming into a vibrant and sustainable city which is planned to accommodate a significant number of new residents and jobs in accordance with the City of Vaughan Official Plan 2010 (VOP 2010)<sup>1</sup>. Much of the anticipated new development will take the form of intensification of the existing built-up area, in particular in Strategic Growth Areas identified in VOP 2010, along with greenfield development in Vaughan's New Community Areas.

The Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area (See Figure 1<sup>2</sup>) is identified in the City's Urban Structure as one such Strategic Growth Area (Schedule 1 of VOP 2010). It is identified in VOP 2010 as a "Primary Centre". Primary Centres are described as "locations for intensification accommodated in the form of predominately mixed-use high- and mid-rise buildings, developed at an intensity supportive of transit." (VOP 2010 Section 2.2.1.1)

The Secondary Plan Study Area is also identified on Schedule 14-A of VOP 2010 as an area subject to further examination through the preparation of a Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan will establish a planning framework to guide future development of the Study Area.

To achieve the City's objectives for the Study, a strong foundation is required, including a clear understanding of the Provincial, Regional and City planning framework. It is also critical to understand the implications of available background information from the supporting studies pertaining to matters which may inform the Secondary Plan and the opportunities and challenges to future development, including existing and proposed land use and mobility systems, population and employment, sustainability, servicing and community services and facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: VOP 2010 is currently under review in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*.

<sup>2</sup> Note: Lands between the west boundary of the Study Area and New Westminster Drive, including the site of St. Elizabeth High School, are under review for inclusion in the Secondary Plan Study Area so that the Secondary Plan Study Area aligns with other VOP 2010 mapping.

Figure 1 Study Area and Existing Land Use



## 1.2 Study Process

The purpose of the Study is to prepare a Secondary Plan for the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area (see Figure 1) and a supporting Comprehensive Transportation Study. The Study examines the urban form and transportation network using an integrated approach.

The Study process is summarized in Figure 2. It will be undertaken in four tasks/phases as follows:

- **Task 1 – The Background Study**

Task 1 involves the background review and analysis of existing conditions, the current policy framework and other available information to provide a strong

foundation for the preparation of a planning framework to guide future development of the Study Area.

- **Task 2 – Plan Framework, Development & Testing**

Task 2 focuses on creating the initial Development Framework and Land Use Scenario based on the Community Visioning consultation. Building on the foundation developed in Task 1, through a consultation program with all stakeholders, a vision statement, guiding principles, goals and objectives will be developed for the Study Area, together with evaluation criteria for the Land Use Scenario. The Emerging Land Use and Design Scenario will then be finalized and evaluated from a technical perspective, and through further consultation with stakeholders.

- **Task 3 – Preparation & Refinement of Draft Secondary Plan**

This Task will result in the establishment of a Preferred Land Use and Transportation Plan based on input received in Task 2, including transportation testing and scenario analysis, as well as consideration of the relevant background research and public and stakeholder input. A draft Secondary Plan will then be prepared. Together with the Transportation Plan, the draft Secondary Plan will be reviewed and refined through public, landowner and agency input prior to the initiation of the final formal review.

- **Task 4 – Approvals**

The draft Secondary Plan will go through a formal statutory review process which will include the public open house and a statutory public meeting. The input received will be reviewed, a comprehensive technical report prepared and the Secondary Plan revised before being presented to Council for adoption.

- **Public and Stakeholder Engagement**

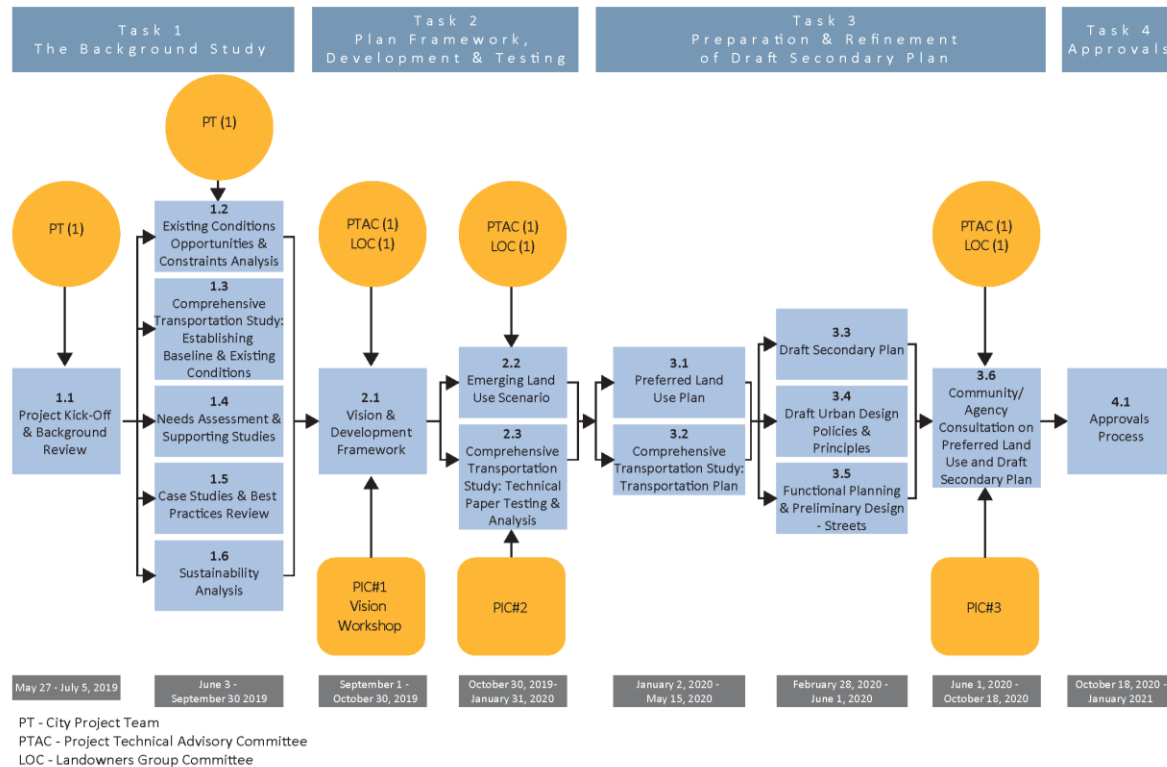
As illustrated in Figure 2, there will be a variety of opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement throughout the Study process. These will include:

- Three public information centres including a Vision Summit at the first session;
- Open House;
- Statutory Public Meeting;
- Regular meetings with the Technical Advisory Committee;
- Regular meetings with the Landowners Group Committee; and,
- Reports to Committee of the Whole/Council.





Figure 2 Study Process



### 1.3 Report Organization

The Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Background Summary Report has been prepared to provide an overview of the background analysis carried out in Task 1 as a basis for the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan.

The Background Summary Report:

- provides an overview of the Study and its context;
- outlines the planning policy context including the Provincial, Regional and City planning framework;
- explores lessons learned from a review of best practices, emerging trends and development principles from past, current and on-going major shopping centre redevelopments across North America and Australia;
- summarizes the opportunities and challenges identified through the results of the preliminary supporting background analyses; and,
- describes how the work to date will inform the Secondary Plan Study.

**The Background Summary Report is intended to provide input to discussion by the City, residents, landowners, agencies and other stakeholders. After further analysis and input, this will lead to the establishment of a planning framework for the Secondary Plan Study Area including a Vision Statement, Guiding Principles and Goals and Objectives.**

## 2. Study Area Context

This section provides an overview of the Study Area context.

### 2.1 Study Area

The Secondary Plan Study Area (See Figure 1) is bounded by Centre Street to the north, Bathurst Street to the east, Clark Avenue West to the south and the property limits of Pierre Elliott Trudeau Park north to Centre Street on the west. This area currently includes the Promenade Mall lands, high-rise residential, commercial and institutional buildings, a woodlot, a public park, and the Transit Terminal, which is served by York Region Transit (YRT), Viva, and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) bus routes.

It should be noted that while the Study Area is the focus of the analysis, the background studies examine wider areas as appropriate. For instance, the Comprehensive Transportation Study Area is bounded by Atkinson Avenue to the north and east, Clark Avenue West to the south and New Westminster Drive to the west and north.

### 2.2 General Study Area Attributes

Key existing and planned attributes of the Secondary Plan Study Area which support intensification include:

- location in the established community of Thornhill which was developed substantially in accordance with a Plan approved in the 1970's which provided for 12 residential neighbourhoods and a "Town Centre". The majority of the development is characterized by low density residential neighbourhoods. In addition, there are neighbourhood shopping centres with mid- and high-rise apartments. However, the Promenade Mall is located in the Town Centre, with larger free-standing retail uses and a number of high-rise apartments (Figure 3 Land Ownership);
- location in proximity to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, the City's planned downtown, which also contains the terminus of the TTC Spadina Subway (+/- 6 kilometres to the west) and the interchange of Highways 407 and 7 (+/- 4 kilometers to the east);
- site of the Promenade Mall, a regional scale shopping centre which was built in 1986, as well as other commercial parcels to the northeast and east of the shopping centre, and associated surface parking;
- served by two major arterial roads (Region of York) – Bathurst Street and Centre Street, and a major collector road (City) – Clark Avenue West (Schedule 9 Future Transportation Network, VOP 2010);

- vivaNext Highway 7 – Bathurst & Centre – the vivaNext Highway 7 Corridor is a rapid bus transit corridor which is planned to be operational in the Bathurst Street and Centre Street area in 2019, connecting east into Richmond Hill, and west to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and beyond. Once built and in operation, this east-west higher-order transit corridor will have two stations on Centre Street and one on Bathurst Street;
- planned transit-related intensification with identification by York Region, based on A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 (A Place to Grow) designations, of a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA)<sup>3</sup> in the Secondary Plan Study Area at Centre Street and North Promenade. In addition, two other MTSA locations are found in close proximity to the Secondary Plan Study Area, one to the west on Centre Street between New Westminster Drive and Carl Tennen Street, and the other to the northeast at Bathurst Street and Atkinson Avenue; and,
- planned for enhanced connectivity by the City with the potential extension southward of the Disera Drive “main street” from Centre Street (located immediately north of the Secondary Plan Area) connecting south to Clark Avenue West. The concept of a “main street” is identified in the Bathurst and Centre Street Area Specific Plan (Section 12.11.2.1).

Figure 3 Land Ownership

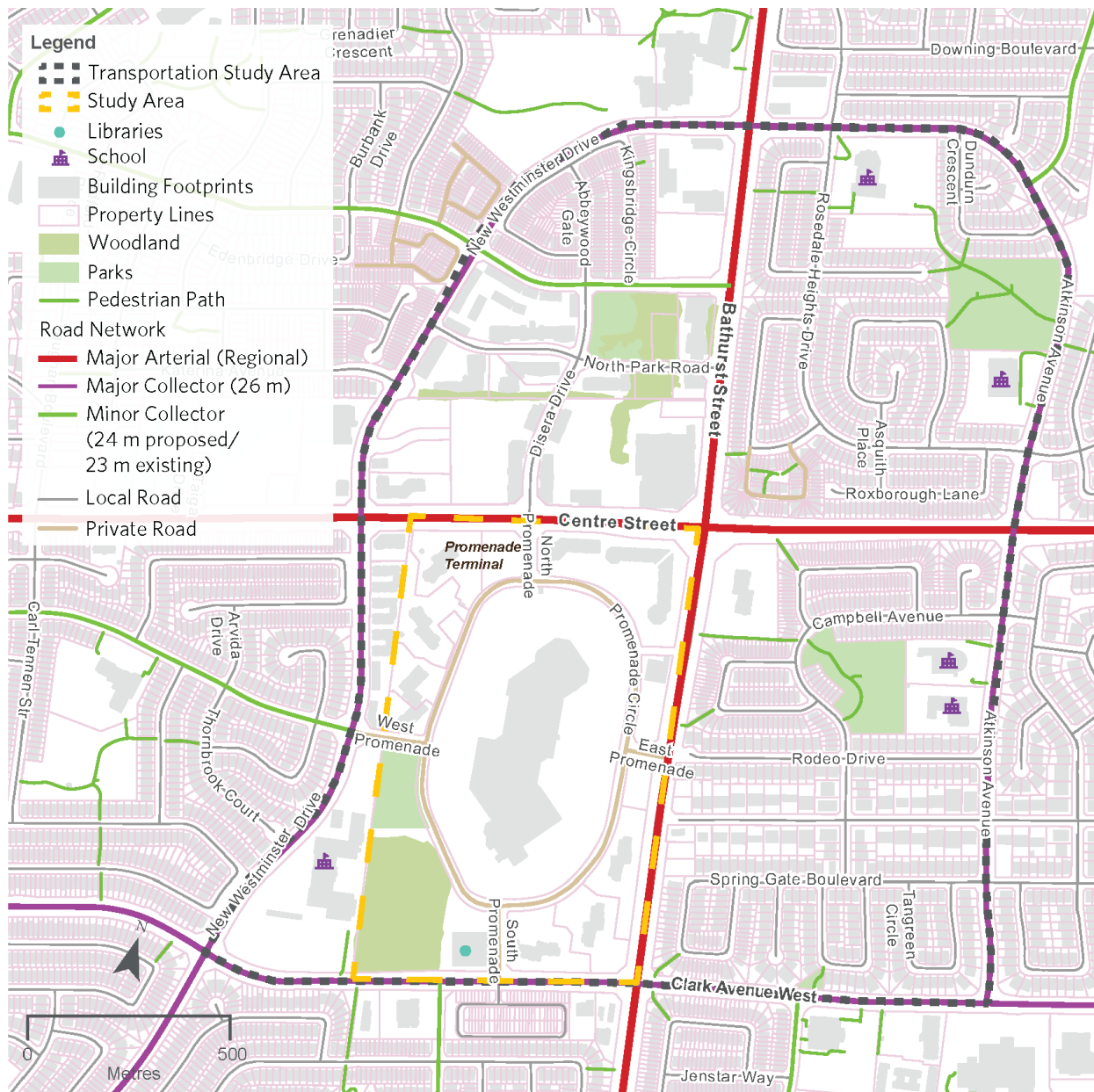


<sup>3</sup> *Major Transit Station Area*” is defined by A Place to Grow as “the area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station within a settlement area or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500m radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.”

### 2.3 Study Area Existing and Proposed Land Use

The Secondary Plan Study Area is generally described as a central area surrounded by a private ring road, Promenade Circle. The lands between Promenade Circle and the boundary of the Study Area are divided into four quadrants by private roads. These private roads provide access to Promenade Circle from Centre Street to the north (North Promenade), Bathurst Street to the east (East Promenade), Clark Avenue West to the south (South Promenade) and New Westminster Drive to the west (West Promenade) (See Figure 4).

Figure 4 Transportation Network



- **Central Area – Promenade Mall Lands**

The Central Area, which is located within Promenade Circle, is predominately composed of retail and some office uses located within the two-storey Promenade Mall. Currently at-grade parking related to the Mall use surrounds the Mall between the Mall and Promenade Circle. The Mall was developed in 1986 and is approximately 81,600 square metres in size.

Over the past 33 years it has played an important role serving both the retail and the broader social and entertainment needs of the community. However, in 2017 Sears Canada, one of its major tenants, declared bankruptcy and in early 2018 the Sears Canada store, which occupied over 1532 square metres of retail space in the Mall, closed. This resulted in a number of challenges for the Mall including how to replace the loss of almost 20% of the occupied space in the Mall in a timely manner; how best to respond to the changing retail market which is increasingly impacted by on-line shopping; and, how to improve the physical design of the Mall so it can remain modern and competitive within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

To begin to address these challenges, Promenade Limited Partnership, the owner of the Mall lands, submitted Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications (Files OP.18.013 and Z.18.020) for Phase 1 of the redevelopment of the Mall lands with 30 and 35 storey apartment buildings connected by a 6 storey podium (maximum 790 units) with at grade retail, and a 26 storey mixed- use building comprised of office, hotel and retail uses. Additional uses are also proposed on the lands as well as reduced parking standards for non-residential uses. Phase 1 is located in the southeast portion of the Central Area. The City approved the application in June 2019.

- **Northeast Quadrant - Existing Commercial and Vacant Lands**

The northeast quadrant is bounded by Centre Street to the north, Bathurst Street to the east, East Promenade to the south, and North Promenade and Promenade Circle to the west.

This quadrant is currently developed with three commercial buildings, two multi-unit buildings and a standalone Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) site. A driveway leading from Promenade Circle to Bathurst Street separates the larger multi-unit commercial buildings from the standalone LCBO site.

A development application has been filed by the landowner within this quadrant. An Official Plan Amendment (File OP.16.006) is proposed for the southwest corner of Centre Street and Bathurst Street. The Subject Lands extend from North Promenade and Promenade Circle to the west to the private driveway which divides the LCBO site from the rest of the lands to the east.

The application proposes to amend the in-effect policies of Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 210, The Thornhill Town Centre Plan, as amended by OPA 671, to facilitate a phased development consisting of seven 27 storey apartment buildings, with commercial uses at grade, together with two low-rise commercial buildings all served by outdoor amenity areas. An appeal to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) has been filed by the applicant (PL111184) and discussions are ongoing with the City to scope and/or resolve the appeals as these were filed prior to the commencement of the Secondary Plan. As the Secondary Plan process unfolds there will be opportunities to engage with the Study Area landowners in achieving a common vision for the site.

- **Southeast Quadrant - Existing Residential**

The southeast quadrant is bounded by East Promenade Drive to the north, Bathurst Street to the east, Clarke Avenue West to the south, and South Promenade and Promenade Circle to the west. Existing land uses include three apartment buildings with heights of 16 storeys adjacent to Clark Avenue West and Bathurst Street.

- **Southwest Quadrant - Existing Public Uses**

The southwest quadrant is bounded by West Promenade to the north, South Promenade and Promenade Circle to the east, Clark Avenue West to the south, and the existing property line to the west. Lands in this area include an existing public library, a public park and a woodlot. Immediately to the west is a secondary school.

- **Northwest Quadrant – Existing Residential and Bus Terminal**

The northwest quadrant is bounded by Centre Street to the north, North Promenade and Promenade Circle to the east and West Promenade to the south. This area is currently developed with four apartment buildings ranging in height from 16 to 19 storeys. Immediately to the west are five blocks of townhouses and an existing 10 storey apartment at the southeast corner of Centre Street and New Westminster Drive. The four apartments in the Study Area are situated between the existing townhouse developments and Promenade Circle north of West Promenade. These buildings have access off Promenade Circle. This quadrant also includes the Transit Terminal, which is served by YRT, Viva, and TTC bus routes.



Transit Terminal

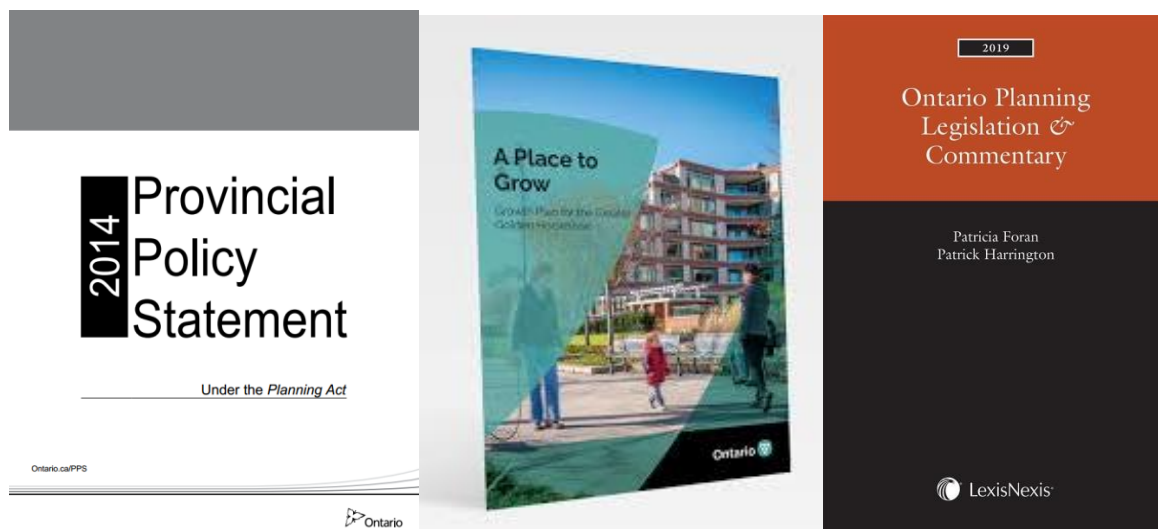
### 3. Planning Policy Review

#### 3.1. General Policy Framework

The Provincial Policy Statement 2014 (PPS), A Place to Grow, and the York Region Official Plan (YROP) provide broad policy direction with respect to development in the Study Area which forms part of a settlement area. In addition, the Province has made several changes to key planning legislation which should also be considered. However, for the detailed planning required at the secondary plan level for Promenade Centre, the Vaughan Official Plan 2010 (VOP 2010) establishes the key policy directions. The Secondary Plan for Promenade Centre must be consistent with the directions in the PPS, and conform with A Place to Grow, the YROP and the VOP 2010. Additional direction which also must be considered is found in the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan, 2018 (RTP), as well as a number of other City policies and guidelines.

This section summarizes the applicable current key policy directions and legislative changes; however, reference should be made to the documents themselves for a complete understanding of all the policies and legislation.

It should also be noted that at the time of this report, September 2019, a review of the PPS is on-going. In addition, comprehensive reviews of the York Region Official Plan and the City of Vaughan Official Plan 2010 are also underway, which will be supported by more detailed review and planning of MTSAs. The final Promenade Centre Secondary Plan will be required to be consistent with the updated PPS, and conform with other Provincial, Regional and City policies in force at the time of its approval.



### 3.2 Provincial Policy Directions

The PPS<sup>4</sup> and A Place to Grow both direct development to settlement areas, and the Study Area forms part of such an area. The policies provide direction related to the creation of “efficient land use and development patterns which support sustainability by promoting strong, liveable, healthy and resilient communities, protecting the environment and public health and safety and economic growth” (Section 1.0 PPS).

A Place to Grow is the main Provincial planning document intended to guide growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). It builds on the policies in the PPS providing more specific direction related to growth management (e.g. intensification targets). A Place to Grow is “about accommodating forecasted growth in complete communities.”(Section 2.1) In addition, it seeks to align transit with growth by directing growth to Strategic Growth Areas<sup>5</sup> including MTSAs.

Schedule 5 of A Place to Grow identifies Centre Street and Bathurst Street as a Priority Transit Corridor (See Figure 5). Related to this designation, the MTSA policies of A Place to Grow are applicable to the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area, as York Region, in consultation with the City, has identified three potential transit stations one in the Study Area and two in close proximity to it. These policies are found in Policy 2.2.4 of A Place to Grow, and establish a minimum density target of 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare for MTSAs served by light rail transit or bus rapid transit. However, a lower target may be approved by the Province where it is demonstrated that the target cannot be achieved.

With respect to planning for MTSAs, land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of the minimum density targets are prohibited. In addition, MTSAs are to be planned and designed to be transit supportive and to achieve multimodal access to stations and connections to nearby major trip generators. A Place to Grow also establishes specific criteria for development including planning for a diverse mix of uses including affordable housing; fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, and providing alternative development standards. Finally, the Plan directs that:

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<sup>4</sup> The PPS 2014 came into effect on April 30, 2014. It is currently under review by the Province with an updated document anticipated in 2020. At that time a further review will be required to establish whether the changes have any implications for the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan.

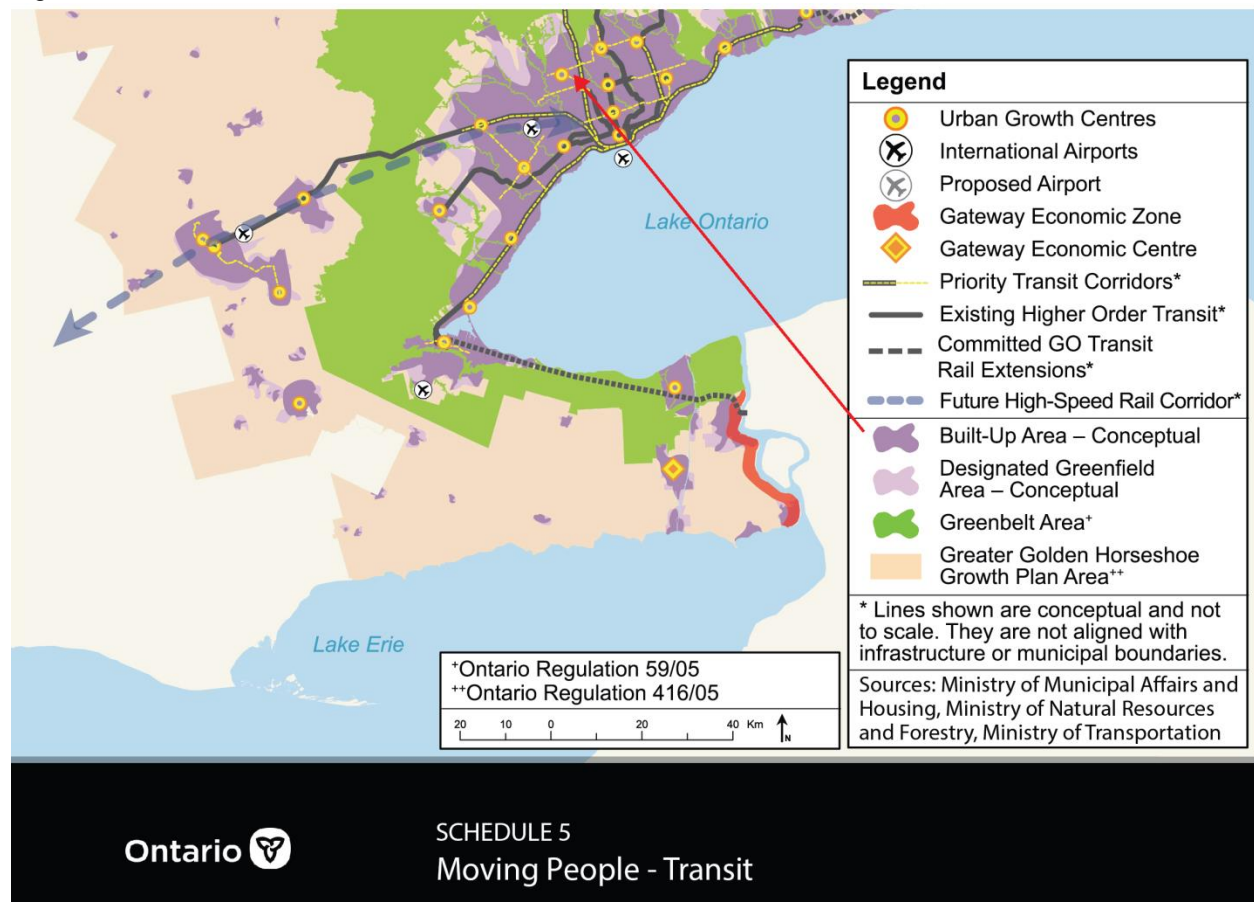
<sup>5</sup> A Place to Grow defines “*Strategic Growth Areas*” as those areas identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed-uses in a more compact built form. These include urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas.



“Lands adjacent to or near to existing and planned frequent transit should be planned to be transit-supportive and supportive of active transportation and a range and mix of uses and activities.” (Policy 2.2.4.10)

The RTP supports and is aligned with the PPS and A Place to Grow. It expands on the transportation direction established by the Provincial plans providing strategic direction for planning, designing and building a regional transportation network that enhances the quality of life, the environment and prosperity. It also recognizes the inter-relationship between transportation and land use planning. The Highway 7 West/Vaughan Metropolitan Centre BRT is the most relevant project to the Study Area.

Figure 5 A Place to Grow



### 3.3 Provincial Legislative Changes

The Provincial Government through *Bill 108, More Homes, More Choices Act, 2019* has implemented several changes to key planning legislation, including, but not limited to:

- *The Planning Act*,
- Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT);

- *Development Charges Act*;
- Building Code;
- *Environmental Assessment Act*; and,
- *Conservation Authorities Act*.

These changes include a number of changes to the planning process including appeals to LPAT. Another key change includes the deletion of provisions under Section 37 of the *Planning Act* which allowed Council to authorize increases in the height and density of development in return for the provision of such facilities, services or matters set out in the by-law. Instead, Council may by by-law impose community benefits charges against land to pay for capital costs of facilities, services and matters required because of development or redevelopment in the area to which the by-law applies. However, prior to passing such a by-law, a community benefits charge strategy is required. The implications of this change for the City, and the Promenade Centre Study Area, for matters such as parkland dedication, are still being reviewed.

### 3.4 Region of York Official Plan

The YROP provides direction with respect to growth and development in York Region in conformity with Provincial policy. The Study Area is designated “Urban Area” on Map 1, Regional Structure of the YROP. In addition, Centre Street and Bathurst Street north of Centre are identified as a “Major Corridor”. (See Figure 6)



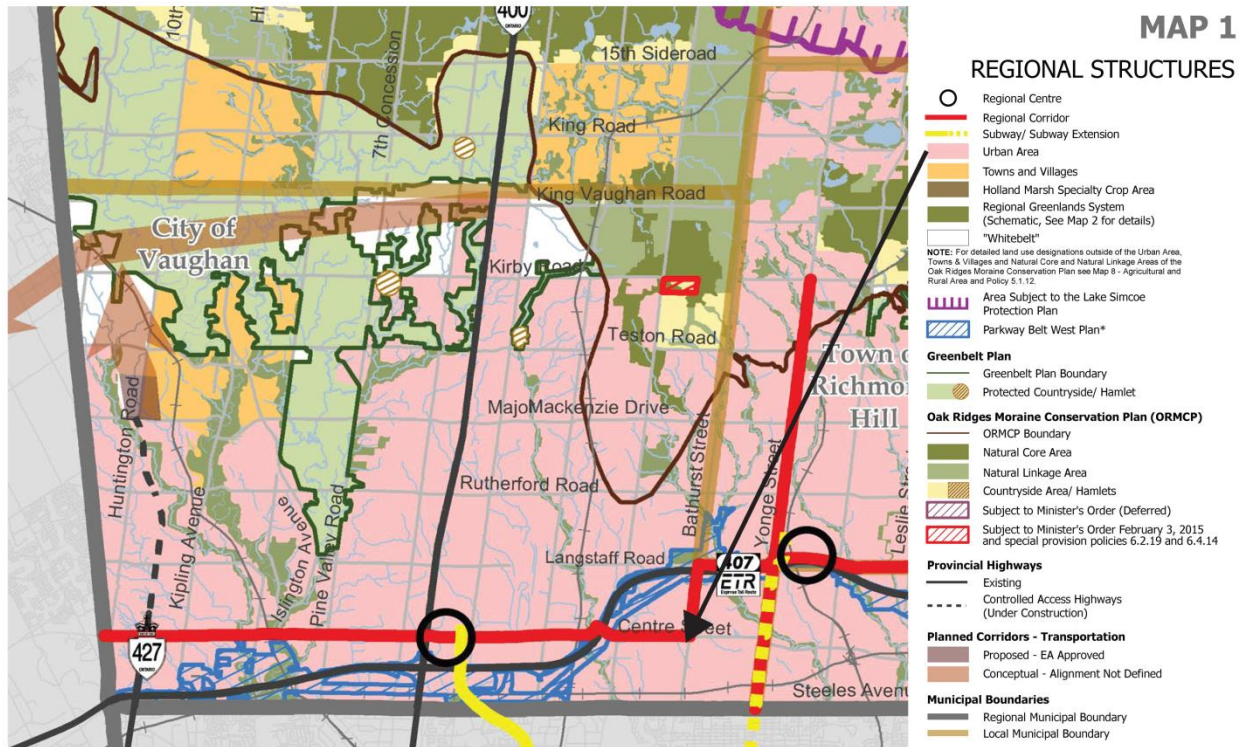
Further, these streets are planned for high level transit service by the Region with identification of Centre Street as a Regional Rapid Transit Corridor which will accommodate Bus Rapid Transit Service (Map 11 Transit Network, Region of York Official Plan). The Regional Rapid Transit Corridor also continues north of Centre Street along Bathurst Street. South of Centre Street, Bathurst Street borders the Secondary Plan Area to the east and is identified as part of the Regional Transit Priority Network which is further designated as a Special Study Corridor.

Regional Corridors are identified in the YROP as serving “a critical role as the primary locations for the most intensive and greatest mix of development within the Region.” (Policy 5.4.1). Policy 5.4.5 requires development along such corridors to be “of an urban form and design that is compact, mixed-use, oriented to the street, pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly, and transit supportive.”

Further, Policy 5.4.6 establishes criteria for the preparation of secondary plans for key development areas along Regional Corridors. The Study Area meets the criteria for a key development area as defined in Policy 5.4.31 of the YROP which include “lands immediately adjacent to transit terminals”. The Secondary Plan process is designed to allow achievement of the criteria in the YROP including establishment of minimum density requirements and targets; a fine-grained street grid that incorporates sidewalks

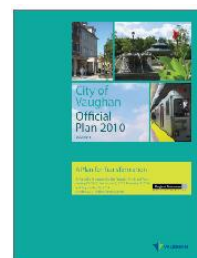
and bicycle lanes; and, urban built form that creates active and attractive streets for all seasons.

Figure 6 YROP



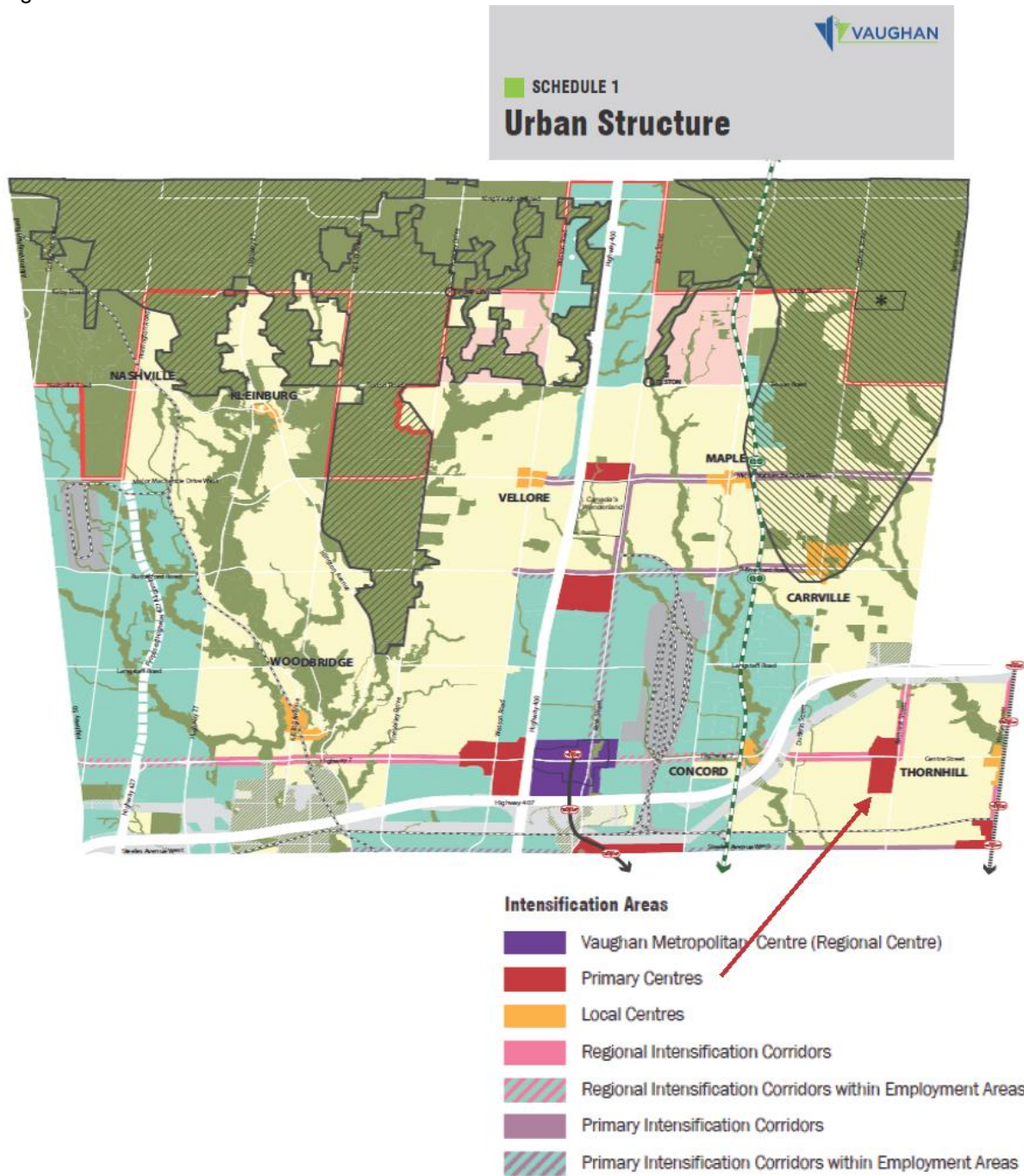
### 3.5 City of Vaughan Official Plan 2010

VOP 2010, in conformity with Provincial and Regional policy, identifies the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area as an Intensification Area. Specifically, the Study Area is designated as a “Primary Centre” on Schedule 1, Urban Structure. In addition, Centre Street and Bathurst Street north of Centre Street are designated as “Regional Intensification Corridors”. (See Figure 7)



Policy 2.2.5, Intensification Areas, describes such areas as “the primary locations for the accommodation of the 45% intensification target. They consist of a hierarchy of mixed-use centres and corridors...Regional Intensification Corridors (e.g. Highway 7 and Yonge Street) will link Regional centres both in Vaughan and beyond and are linear places of significant activity. They may accommodate mixed-use intensification or employment intensification...Primary Centres will accommodate a wide range of uses and will have tall buildings, as well as lower ones, to facilitate an appropriate transition to neighbouring areas.”

Figure 7 VOP 2010



Specific direction related to Primary Centres is found in the introduction to Policy 2.2.5.6 and in Policy 2.2.5.6. Such areas are to “evolve as distinct places of major activity around...existing regional shopping destinations.” They are also to “become mixed-use areas with residential development as well as a wide range of other uses that will serve the residents of the Primary Centre, the surrounding Community Areas and the City as a whole.... They will be designed as transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly places.”

VOP 2010 further recognizes Bathurst Street and Centre Street within the Study Area as one of the shopping destinations in the City “of regional significance, which have potential for residential intensification and the introduction of additional uses through development of surface parking lots, out-parcels and eventual redevelopment or intensification of...Promenade Malls.” (Introduction Policy 2.2.5.6 VOP 2010)

Policy 2.2.5.6 provides specific criteria for the planning of Primary Centres including:

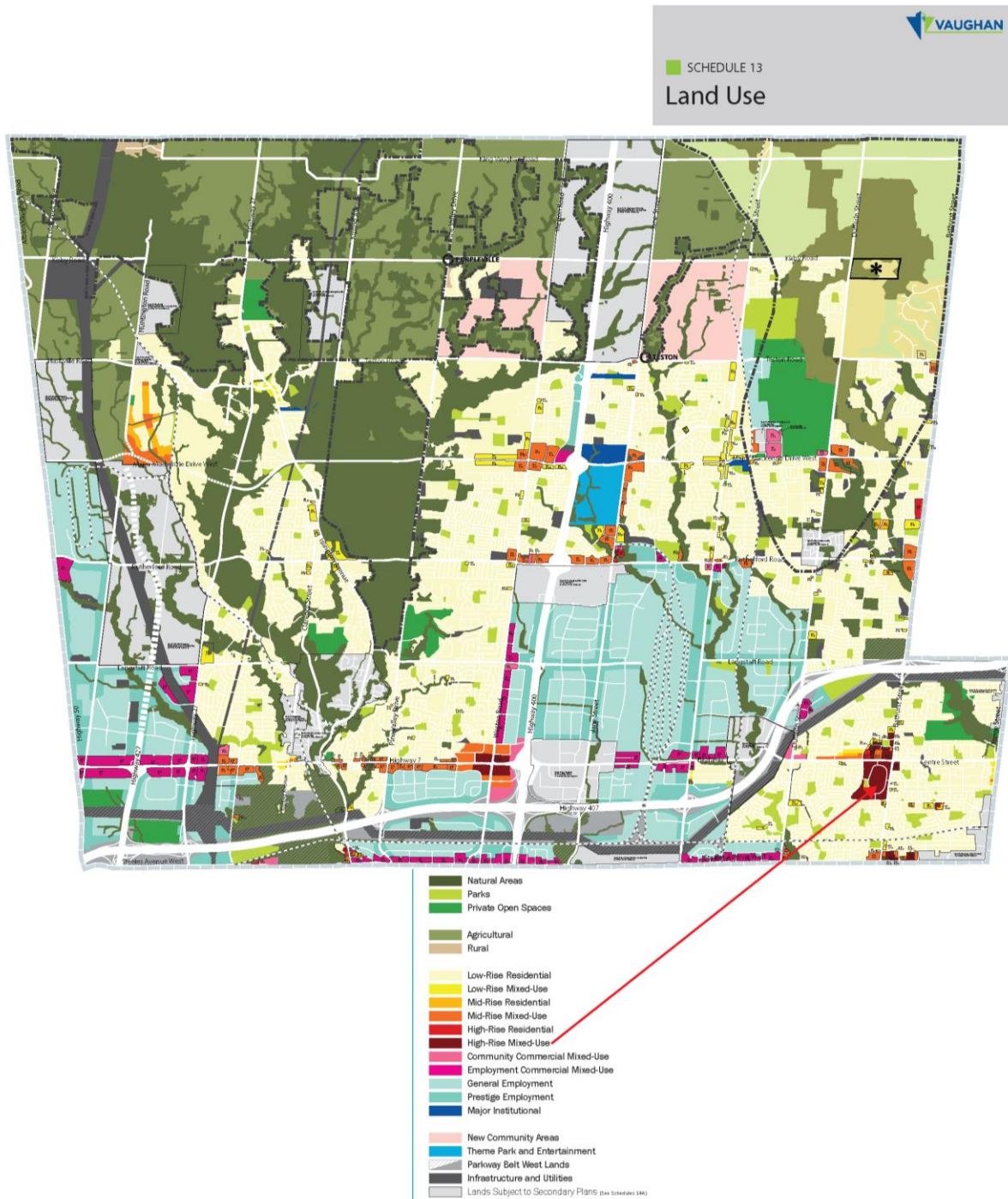
- a mix of housing types and tenures;
- a mix of non-residential uses;
- densities supportive of public transit;
- a fine grain network of streets suitable for pedestrians and cyclists;
- well-designed public spaces that are either landscaped parks or public plazas or both;
- pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade; and,
- appropriate transition of intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas.

The lands are designated “High-Rise Mixed-Use” and “Parks” on Schedule 13 (Land Use) (See Figure 8). In addition, Schedule 14-A identifies the Study Area as an area subject to further examination through preparation of an individual Secondary Plan. The Plan does not specify height or density and this is one of the matters which will be considered as part of the Secondary Plan.

It should be noted that the Secondary Plan policies of VOP 2010, as well as the Areas Specific Plan policies for Bathurst Street and Centre Street, Section 12.11 of Volume 2 of VOP 2010, which include the Secondary Plan area, are subject to appeals to LPAT. The two appeals were filed under the former Ontario Municipal Board process by the same Appellant. One appeal is of the broader City-wide policies and the second appeal is a site-specific appeal related to development applications in the northeast quadrant of the Secondary Plan Study Area.

Given this appeal, The Thornhill Town Centre Plan (OPA 210), as amended by OPA 671, is still applicable. OPA 671 designates the Secondary Plan Area as “Town Centre Commercial/Retail Core” with a “Special Policy Area” overlay. This designation permits the existing commercial uses to continue and also permits “new development”. New development is to occur in a manner consistent with the “mixed-use” and “urban design” principles of OPA 671.

Figure 8 VOP 2010



Other VOP 2010 relevant policies include:

- Chapter 4, Transportation which provides direction in Section 4.2, The Transportation Network, regarding the transportation network including supporting a comprehensive transit system and active transportation. In addition, Section 4.3, Managing Movement, establishes the policy framework for managing movement

including traffic calming, parking and travel demand management (TDM). Regard should also be had to Schedule 9, Future Transportation Network and Schedule 10, Major Transit Network;

- Chapter 9, Building a Great City, in particular Section 9.1.1, The Public Realm, 9.1.2, Urban Design and Built Form, and 9.1.3, Sustainable Development, as well as Section 9.2.2 Land Use Designations, which establishes policies for Mid-Rise Residential (Policy 9.2.2.3); Mid-Rise Mixed-Use (Policy 9.2.2.4); High-Rise Residential (Policy 9.2.2.5); and High-Rise Mixed-Use (Policy 9.2.2.6);
- Chapter 9 also provides in Section 9.2.3, Building Types and Development Criteria, policies related to built form, including townhouses, stacked townhouses, low-rise, mid-rise and high-rise buildings, as well as public and private institutional buildings and gas stations; and,
- Chapter 10, Implementation, which establishes what a Secondary Plan will address for areas where a Secondary Plan has been identified as required, such as the Promenade Centre Study Area. These include general requirements for all Secondary Plans in Policy 10.1.1.3 (e.g. overall capacity for development, parks and open space requirements), as well as additional requirements for “key development areas” in Policy 10.1.1.4 (e.g. minimum density requirements established by the Region and the Province, a fine-grain street grid that incorporates sidewalks and bicycle lanes).

### 3.6 Other Relevant Policies and Guidelines

There are also various additional policies and guidelines which will need to be considered in the planning for Promenade Centre including:

- York Region Transportation Master Plan (2016) (TMP)  
The Region’s TMP addresses the Region’s mobility needs to 2041 and beyond. The recommendations for the 2041 network include:
  - Centre Street west of Bathurst Street and Bathurst Street north of Centre Street to Highway 7 is identified as a Rapid Transit Corridor;
  - New Westminster Drive/Atkinson Avenue is identified as part of the Frequent Transit Network;
  - New Westminster Drive from Centre Street to Clark Avenue West, and Clark from New Westminster to Yonge Street, are identified as a future Rapid Transit Corridor;
  - Separated cycling facilities are planned for Centre Street west of Bathurst Street and dedicated cycling facilities east of Bathurst Street, while separated cycling facilities are planned for the length of Bathurst Street through the Study Area; and,

- Upgrades to Bathurst Street south of Centre Street are planned for the 2022-2026 horizon.
- Draft Major Transit Station Area and Additional Strategic Growth Areas (2019)

York Region has initiated an Intensification Strategy as part of the Regional Growth Strategy. MTSAs form part of this Strategy. MTSAs are defined as a 500 to 800 metre radius around a transit station. The Draft MTSA considers existing Growth Plan minimum density targets and proposes new density targets for certain stations. Two adjacent station areas affect the Secondary Plan Study Area. To the north of the Study Area is the Disera-Promenade BRT Station, and further to the north of the Study Area is the Atkinson BRT Station. Draft density targets proposed are 200 persons and jobs per hectare for the Disera-Promenade BRT Station and 160 for the Atkinson BRT Station.
- Green Directions Vaughan (2009) - Vaughan's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan is meant to guide and measure sustainability in Vaughan through a series of action plans. The Plan's goal is to ensure a healthy environment, vibrant communities and economic vitality for all current and future generations. Some of these actions include:
  - develop sustainable development evaluation criteria;
  - create a Vaughan in 2031 that has more intensification with increased height and density and mixed-use in thoughtfully developed nodes and along transit corridors;
  - ensure that a mix of housing types are provided in Vaughan and that affordability is a consideration in planning;
  - continue to apply energy efficient building standard options for new developments in the City;
  - through Official Plan policies, develop a more walkable and transit-friendly community with adequate public spaces, and a finer grain network of streets; and,
  - through creative urban design, enhance social cohesion by creating more common indoor and outdoor public spaces, public art, parks and open space, and central hubs for arts, culture and recreation.

The City is in the process of preparing a new plan, Green Directions Vaughan 2019, and a draft plan is under review.

- Vaughan Municipal Energy Plan (MEP) (2016) - The MEP is a comprehensive long-term plan designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy use and mitigate climate-changing greenhouse gas emissions. The MEP establishes greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions, and outlines actions that could help achieve them. The GHG target set by the MEP is 22% per capita reduction from the 2013 business-as-usual projection to 2031.

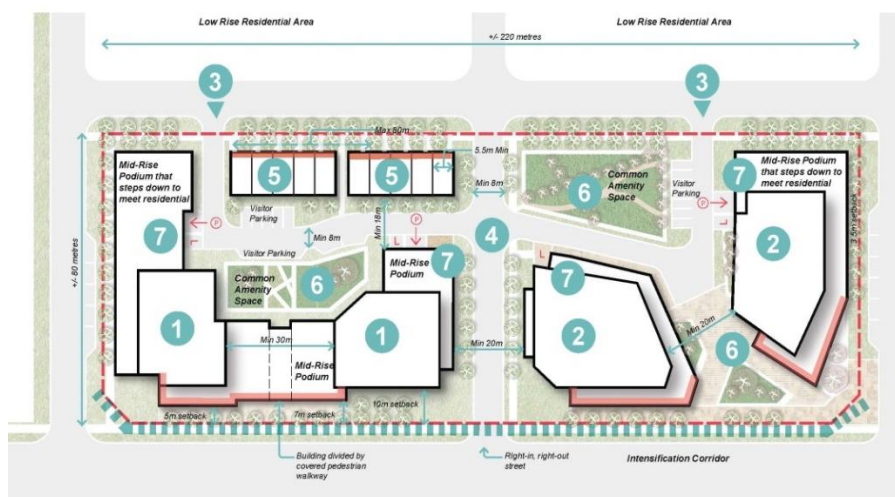


- City-Wide Urban Design Guidelines (2018) – The Guidelines provide design objectives and Performance Standards for building, landscape and site design that seek to create places for people through well-scaled, well-landscaped and context-driven development along the City’s streets, open spaces and Natural Heritage Network. The intent is that these Performance Standards will provide a clear and common set of expectations about how buildings should be developed for City Staff, the public, and members of the development community, including architects and landscape architects.

Within the Study Area, the guidelines will inform the built environment through guidance on topics such as:

- Transitions between High- and Mid-Rise buildings and adjacent properties, including separation distances (Performance Standard Nos. 5.3.6,5.3.7;
- Maximum floorplate sizes for High-Rise Buildings (Performance Standard No. 5.3.2);
- Guidance for mixed use building thresholds and entrances (Performance Standard No 5.3.8);
- Below-grade, above-grade, and surface parking design including access, drainage, and stall sizes (performance Standards No.5.2.3,5.2.4,5.2.5); and,
- Maximum and suggested block lengths and location of streets (Performance Standard 4.3.1).

**Demonstration Plan #3**  
**High and Mid-Rise, Mixed-Use Development**  
**with Employment and Residential**



**Design Principles:**

- 1 High-Rise residential buildings are located along the intensification corridor with Mid-Rise podiums. The building design has a mix of setbacks and stepbacks to create a streetwall that varies in massing, scale and treatment
- 2 High-Rise employment buildings with Mid-Rise bases are located along the intensification corridor
- 3 Primary vehicular and servicing access driveways are located along minor streets
- 4 A new right-in-right-out street connection is provided to break up the long block and connect to the neighbourhood to the north. Approvals process would examine need for a mid-block public road or pathway connection with City Staff.
- 5 Low-Rise development is located along the northern edge of the site to transition to the Low-Rise residential community (within a 45° angular plane). Primary facades are indicated with a solid orange line.
- 6 Central courtyards and open spaces provide semi-private outdoor spaces for residents and employees.
- 7 Minimize vehicular traffic through the site by locating servicing and loading in close proximity to entrance roads.

Source: Vaughan City-Wide Urban Design Guidelines

- Vaughan Transportation Master Plan – A New Path (2012) – evaluates the city-wide transportation needs and identifies policies, infrastructure and services needed to efficiently accommodate population and employment growth to 2031, guided by the vision of “reducing automobile dependence and moving the City closer to achieving the goal of a more livable, sustainable community.”
- Vaughan Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (2007) – The central intent of this Plan is to guide improvements to existing and proposed pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in order to create a friendlier environment for residents. A new City-wide plan is in preparation with completion by 2019, the intent of which is to “grow” walking, rolling and biking in Vaughan through the development of supportive municipal processes, policies and programs as well as a plan for the implementation of more comfortable infrastructure and a connected network. The City is already implementing these directions in the Study Area. For instance, engineering services have been retained by the City to implement a cycling facility along Clark Avenue West from Jason Street to Yonge Street, including an in-boulevard cycle track adjacent to the sidewalk from Dufferin Street to Yonge Street.
- Active Together Master Plan 2018 Review & Update (ATMP) – This is a long-range planning study for parks, recreation and library facilities to the year 2031. With respect to the Thornhill area, based on the ATMP, Thornhill is identified as one of the more mature (and dense) areas of the City. It appears to be generally well served by recreation facilities, libraries and parks and outdoor recreation facilities. However, the ATMP identifies the need for a minimum of two additional local skate zones in Thornhill and four additional outdoor fitness locations, among three other neighbourhoods. Further, as growth occurs, this situation will have to be monitored on an on-going basis.
- Integrated Urban Water Master Plan - The preparation of the Integrated Urban Water Master Plan commenced in the Fall of 2019. It will review and update the City’s existing Water and Wastewater Master Plan (2014) and the Storm Drainage and Stormwater Management Master Plan (2014). This master plan includes a detailed analysis of existing infrastructure and will propose new required infrastructure for future growth, including for intensification areas such as the Study Area.

### 3.7 Conclusions

The Provincial, Regional and City planning policy framework clearly establishes the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area as a Strategic Growth Area. In particular, VOP 2010 identifies it as a “Primary Centre”, with Centre Street west of Bathurst Street and Bathurst Street north of Centre Street designated as “Regional Intensification Corridor”. The Study Area is also established as an MTSA with a density

target established by A Place to Grow of 160 people and jobs combined per hectare. However, there is also a proposal by the Region to increase that target to 200 people and jobs combined per hectare.

To implement the goal of the establishment of this area as a “Primary Centre” various policy directions are established. The key directions can be summarized based on the VOP 2010 policies as follows:

- a mix of housing types and tenures;
- a mix of non-residential uses;
- densities supportive of public transit;
- a fine grain network of streets suitable for pedestrians and cyclists;
- well-designed public spaces that are either landscaped parks or public plazas or both;
- pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade; and,
- appropriate transition of intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas.

## 4. Best Practices Review

### 4.1. Purpose

The Case Studies and Best Practices Review prepared by Brook McIlroy Inc. (BMI) explores best practices, emerging trends, and development principles that can be inferred from past, current and on-going major shopping centre redevelopments across North America and Australia including three Canadian case studies:

- Brentwood Town Centre, Burnaby, British Columbia;
- Agincourt Mall, Toronto, Ontario; and,
- Oakridge Centre, Vancouver, British Columbia.

<b>Table 1: Case Study Statistical Summary</b>			
<b>Key Statistics</b>	<b>Brentwood Town Centre</b>	<b>Agincourt Mall</b>	<b>Oakridge Centre</b>
Site Area	11.5 ha	10.54 ha	11.4 hectares (ha)
Retail GFA	234,519 m <sup>2</sup>	24,2772 m <sup>2</sup>	119,198 m <sup>2</sup>
Residential GFA	379,500 m <sup>2</sup>	375,395 m <sup>2</sup>	256,541 m <sup>2</sup>
Residential Units	6000	4,725	2,548
Office GFA	2 Office towers	9,072 m <sup>2</sup>	40,245 m <sup>2</sup>
Community GFA	N.A.	2,187 m <sup>2</sup>	N.A.
Parkland	N.A.	14,564 m <sup>2</sup>	36,000 m <sup>2</sup>
POPs	N.A.	7,500 m <sup>2</sup>	N.A.
Floor Space Index	N.A.	3.90	3.61

In evaluating the case studies and other precedents based on the identified Best Practices and Principles, a number of themes arose. The following section discusses conclusions derived from this evaluation for consideration as part of the next stages of the Secondary Plan Study.



Brentwood Town Centre, Burnaby, BC





Oakridge Centre, Vancouver, BC



Agincourt Mall, Toronto, ON



## 4.2 Key Lessons: Land Use and Built Form

- **The Right Mix of Uses is Place-Specific**

The precedents and case studies of shopping centre redevelopment all take varied approaches to developing a mix of land-uses based on factors such as market demands, surrounding context, and the existing retail offerings on site. In the case of Brentwood Town Centre, ensuring the correct mix of land uses is linked to the phased approach of the Master Plan. SHAPE Properties, the developer of Brentwood Town Centre, is considering facilitating additional office space within the next phase of development as there has been increased demand throughout the region. On the other hand, the Agincourt proposal focuses much more heavily on creating additional residential space while introducing new ground floor retail uses and maintaining existing anchor tenants such as Wal-Mart. In the case of

Oakridge Centre, the ratio of commercial space was lowered between the proponent's 2014 Rezoning Application and their 2018 Development Application to reflect higher demand for residential units and accommodate additional open space.

- **Residential Uses are Important for a Complete Community**

While ratios of retail, office, and residential uses varied across precedents and case studies, the addition of significant residential land use remained consistent. Thus, intensification through residential uses is an important factor in ensuring successful redevelopment of shopping centres.

- **Approaches to Phasing Should Consider the Final Outcome**

Often, precedents and case studies whose phasing approaches considered the full build out of the site, rather than a portion of the site, had more complete urban design visions that were more considerate of other Best Practices and Principles discussed, such as well-connected streets and paths, and sensitive transitions to existing neighbourhoods. Therefore, it is important to establish a long-term vision for the entire site in order to create a more cohesive and pleasant urban environment.

#### 4.3 Key Lessons: Mobility and Connectivity

- **Residential Uses and Associated Traffic are Critical for Retail Success**

Ground-floor retail within mixed-use developments requires the same attributes as typical retail uses, whether it be on main streets, strip plazas or shopping centres:

- Pedestrian and /or vehicular traffic is critical for long term retail success. A key factor in generating this traffic is the surrounding residential density and the daytime population on or surrounding a site. As a result, the inclusion of residential and other commercial uses on a retail site through redevelopment can act as a catalyst for increased footfall density and demand for retail uses at all hours of the day.
- Each of the case studies examined, and a number of precedents, place a particular emphasis on improving pedestrian access, walkability and movement to, from and within a site, which in turn benefits footfall densities and pedestrian traffic.

- **Strategic Parking Approaches and Phasing Go Hand in Hand**

Each of the case studies proposed underground parking as part of the final stage of their Master Plan, with potential for minimal lay-by parking on streets:

- By making parking uses less visible, a more attractive public realm and pedestrian network can be provided to visitors and residents.
- In the initial phases of the redevelopment process, however, most projects maintained a significant amount of surface parking. This ensures that the site is still functional through the construction stage of redevelopment, prior to new

residential and other uses being added. As new underground parking is provided, the surface parking can be phased out accordingly.

#### 4.4 Key Lessons: Community Amenities

- **Open Space and Public Realm is Increasingly Important**

Approaches to enhancing the quality of the public realm and improving access to open space varied across the case studies and precedents, however it is clear that as shopping centre redevelopments become common forms of intensification, significant public realm contributions are included:

- While the Brentwood Master Plan (2012), proposes a single privately-owned-public-spaces plaza at the corner of the site, the increased expectation for high-quality public realm can be seen in the Agincourt and Oakridge proposals, both submitted in 2019 and 2018, respectively.
- In both the Agincourt and Oakridge proposals, a porous site with generous public realm and open space contribute significantly to the character of the development and are linked to the potential success of retail and residential land uses.

- **New Forms of Parkland are Common**

Privately-owned-public-spaces (POPS) and strata parks (parks that have been developed over top of parking structures) are present in all three case studies and many of the precedents. Siting of open space is approached differently across the examples:

- The largest parkland proposal at Oakridge is placed on the central interior of the site, atop a mixed-use development;
- In the case of Agincourt, public parkland is located at the exterior of the site, and POPS are located more towards the interior along public roads; and,
- In the Brentwood example, the POPS space at the southwestern corner of the site will be privately owned and maintained with a statutory right-of-way granting 24 hour public access and an operating agreement that outlines how the City will permit the underlying owner to program the space; how the City will program the space; and how maintenance costs will be allocated.

However, whether open space and parkland is privately-owned or city-run, each example shows that creating a high-quality public realm requires negotiation, partnership and cooperation between the private sector and the municipality.

#### 4.5 Conclusions

The Best Practices and Principles, case studies, and key lessons identified through the review will be considered in the preparation of the Development Alternatives and Urban Design Guidelines developed in later stages of the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Study.

## 5. Opportunities and Challenges

### 5.1 Background Analyses

In addition to the Case Studies and Best Practices Review and other relevant and applicable plans and studies, the following background studies have been carried out as a basis for the preparation of the Secondary Plan:

- Background Transportation Discussion Paper (Draft), HDR, October 28, 2019;
- Commercial Use Assessment, Promenade Centre Secondary Plan, Tate Economic Research Inc., October 25, 2019;
- Memorandum Vaughan Promenade Centre Secondary Plan – Population and Employment Estimates, Hemson Consulting Ltd., October 25, 2019;
- Sustainability Plan Terms of Reference, buildABILITY Corporation, September 2019;
- Community Energy Plan Draft Terms of Reference, buildABILITY Corporation, September 2019; and,
- Scoped Community Facilities Study, MSH, October 2019.

Based on this available information, it is possible to establish on a preliminary basis, current opportunities and challenges for the Secondary Plan Study Area. These are discussed below. The opportunities and challenges will be revised and/or expanded as more detailed information and input becomes available through the Study process.

### 5.2 Existing Lands Uses and Ownership

Like all existing developed areas, the Study Area is not a “blank slate” and redevelopment can be challenging for a variety of reasons including existing land uses and the existing transportation system, as well as land ownership. However, the two current major development applications in the Study Area demonstrate an interest in significant redevelopment and intensification. Certainly Phase 1 of the application (Files: OP.18.013 and Z.18.020) by Promenade Limited Partnership for the lands located south of Centre Street, west of Bathurst Street, municipally known as 1 Promenade Circle, as approved by the City in June 2019, reflects a direction which is in conformity with Provincial, Regional and City policy.

The application includes 30 and 35 storey apartment buildings connected by a six storey podium (maximum 790 units) with at-grade retail and a 26 storey mixed-use building comprised of office, hotel and retail uses. The redevelopment will provide better accommodations for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic including on-street layby parking and changes to connectivity, including the replacement and revitalization of the existing frontage road/driveway along the east side of the Mall with a new private road (“High Street”). Two new east-west private streets would connect the east side of Promenade Circle to the High Street.



The second application is currently before LPAT (LPAT File PL111184) and discussions are on-going between the appellant and the City with respect to development on the lands at 7700 Bathurst Street. However, it too represents a significant mixed-use redevelopment proposal.



View of Existing Promenade Mall

### 5.3 Population and Employment Estimates

Based on the policy targets (e.g. A Place to Grow, YROP, VOP 2010), developable land area, assumptions and consultation with the Consultant Team and City Staff, draft estimates of housing units, population, non-residential space and employment potential in the Secondary Plan Area have been developed. Minimum and maximum scenarios have been prepared based on varied density and unit mix assumptions and are shown in Table 2. It is anticipated that the estimates will be refined as the Study evolves. Such refinements will consider the Region of York's Municipal Comprehensive Review which is on-going and which will include a 2041 growth forecast which will be reflected in the Land Use Scenario for Promenade Centre.

Table 2 Population and Employment Estimates

Vaughan Promenade Secondary Plan, DRAFT Summary Population and Employment Estimates, 2041						
	Common to Both Scenarios		Min Scenario		Max Scenario	
	Phase 1 Approved (A)	Existing Development (B)	Redevelopment Areas (Min Scenario) (C)	Total Secondary Plan Area (Min Scenario) (A+B+C)	Redevelopment Areas (Max Scenario) (D)	Total Secondary Plan Area (Max Scenario) (A+B+D)
<b>Residential</b>						
Mid-Rise/High-Rise	790	1,610	960	3,350	3,940	6,340
Low-rise/Stacked Towns/Rows	-	-	330	330	230	230
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>1,610</b>	<b>1,290</b>	<b>3,680</b>	<b>4,170</b>	<b>6,570</b>
Est. Population	1,330	2,700	2,300	6,330	7,110	11,130
Census Net Undercoverage	40	80	70	190	210	340
<b>Total pop incl. u/c</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>2,780</b>	<b>2,370</b>	<b>6,520</b>	<b>7,320</b>	<b>11,470</b>
<b>Non-Residential</b>						
Non-Res Space (m <sup>2</sup> )	125,710	4,500	73,750	203,960	123,320	253,520
<b>Est. Place of Work Employment</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>4,580</b>	<b>3,070</b>	<b>5,850</b>
Work @ home Emp	50	110	90	250	280	430
<b>Total Persons plus Jobs</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>2,950</b>	<b>4,260</b>	<b>11,340</b>	<b>10,670</b>	<b>17,750</b>
Gross Developable Area (ha)	2.8	14.7	17.8	35.2	17.8	35.2
PPJ/ha	1,500	201	240	322	601	504

Source: Henson Consulting based on Statistics Canada Census data and information provided by the City of Vaughan.

\* Figures rounded to nearest 10.

## 5.4 Transportation Infrastructure

The Background Transportation Discussion Paper (Draft) clearly identifies a number of major challenges and opportunities for the Study Area:

- Creation of a fine-grain Complete Street network;
- Build upon the High Street concept;
- Build upon the City’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan update;
- Maximize access to transit through first and last mile active transportation connections;
- Leveraging new mobility solutions;
- EcoMobility Hubs; and,
- Increase sustainable modal share through Transportation Demand Management (TDM).

These are discussed as follows in the context of the existing transportation system (See Figure 9).

Figure 9 Existing Pedestrian Network

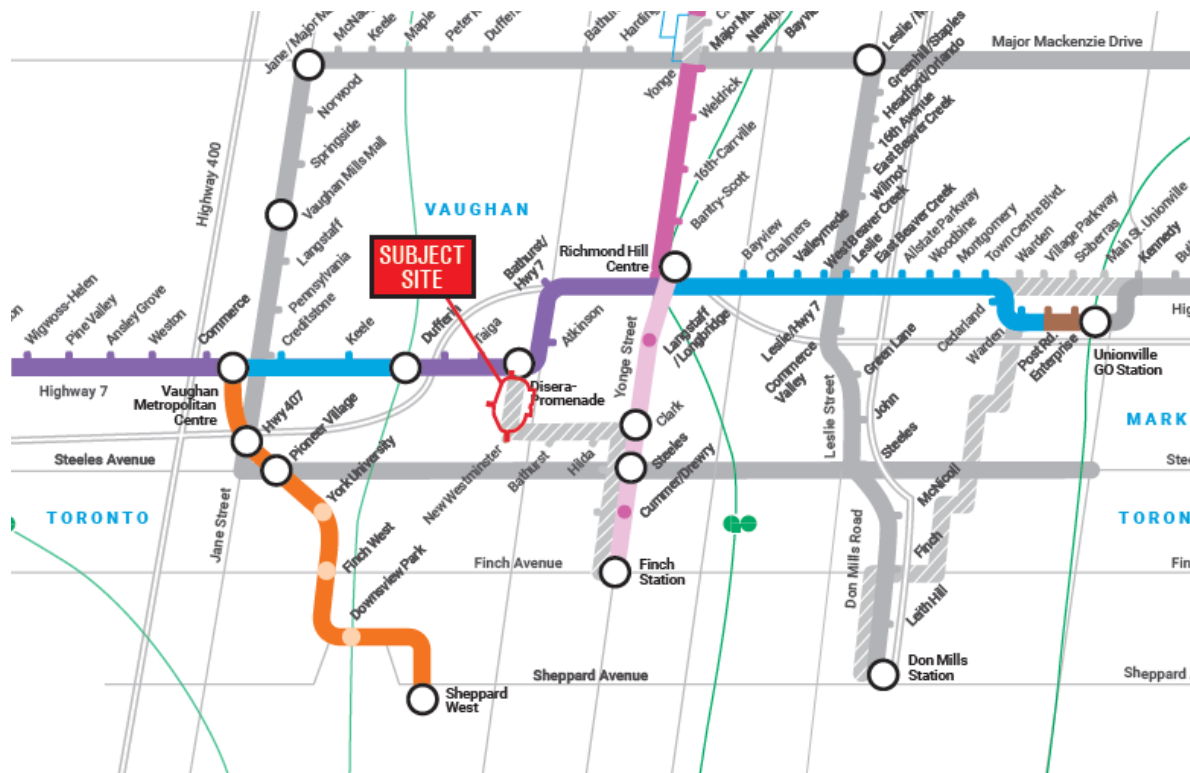


It should be noted that completion of the Bathurst St. and Centre St. vivaNEXT BRT project, currently under construction, may assist in addressing some of the issues related to increasing sustainable modal share. For instance, the project will introduce raised bike lanes and more frequent transit service. In addition, the Yonge North Subway Extension from Finch TTC Station to the Richmond Hill Centre Terminal is anticipated to add five new subway stations. This will include a station at Clarke Avenue and Yonge Street approximately 2 kilometres east of the Study Area.



Transit Terminal

Figure 10 vivaNEXT Improvements



- **Create a Compete Street network**

The Promenade Centre today is characterized by a private ring road encircling Promenade Mall, which is designed to provide access to surface parking lots. There are only a few formal walking paths through the site with portions of the ring road lacking sidewalks. The most direct routes for pedestrians are often through parking lots and this current built form encourages the status quo of automobile access to the mall.

The redevelopment of the Study Area should establish a finer-grained street network that provides direct, safe and comfortable connections, in particular for active transportation modes.

- **Build upon the High Street concept**

Build upon the “High Street” concept as the primary north-south spine road through the block while establishing secondary north-south connections. High Street should be supported by one or two east-west spine roads to provide the building blocks of the network to provide all transportation modes with more mobility choice through, and connecting to and from, the Regional network to the Promenade Centre site.

- **Build upon the City’s Draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update**

The active transportation network should build upon recommendations in the City’s Draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan including providing access to the proposed cycle tracks on Clark Avenue and the bike facilities on Centre Street and Bathurst Street constructed through the vivaNEXT project. Connections should also be provided to existing and proposed trails into adjacent communities and new pedestrian and cyclist crossings should be considered across arterial roadways. One example of this is the missing gap on Clark Avenue west of New Westminster Drive, where a trail crossing should be implemented connecting Downham Green Park to the south to Pierre Elliot Trudeau Park and St. Elizabeth Catholic High School to the north.

- **Maximize access to transit through first and last mile active transportation connections**

Significant transit improvements are expected for the study area with vivaNEXT construction to be completed by the end of 2019, which will bring BRT in a dedicated right-of-way. There are three MTSA’s in the transportation study area, Taiga, Disera-Promenade, and Atkinson. The future extension of the Yonge Subway to Richmond Hill Centre will also improve transit access to Toronto with Viva curbside service planned to be implemented between the Yonge Subway and the Promenade Centre. With all of these investments in transit services, the Promenade Centre study can capitalize on them through redevelopment by creating a fine-grid Complete Street network that promotes safe and convenient access to future transit stops.

- **Leveraging new mobility solutions**

First and last mile improvements can also be facilitated by new mobility technologies such as micro-mobility (shared electric scooters and bikes). With the provincial government’s five year pilot program to allow electric scooters on Ontario roadways, there is an opportunity to allow these devices wherever bicycles are allowed to provide more mobility choice in Promenade Centre.

Existing ride hailing technology (such as Uber / Lyft) and car share programs for trips are already providing shifting travel behaviour away from single-occupancy vehicles to

other modes by reducing overall auto-ownership and parking requirements in urban centre type areas.

The combination of these new mobility solutions and generational shifts in behaviour such as increased sustainability awareness, the shared and pay-per-use economy present a tremendous opportunity to create Promenade Centre as a sustainable, transit-oriented development area.

- **Establishing EcoMobility Hubs**

The “EcoMobility hub”<sup>6 7</sup> concept provides single-point nodes for multiple shared mobility services and has been implemented in Europe and other parts of the world, while the City of Toronto is also working on implementing these hubs. Designated, comfortable waiting areas to find a bike-share rack, car-share vehicle, or wait for a ride-share driver are provided at key gathering locations in an area. This includes at transit stops and in close proximity to them which can address the “first and last mile” problem. These hubs may also be smaller scale, such as an on-street car-share station or an integrated bike share and bus stop. These measures can improve the transit mode share in the Study Area and help achieve the targets indicated in YROP and VOP 2010.

- **Increase sustainable modal share through TDM**

The Smart Commute program has demonstrated successful shifts in mobility behaviour away from the single occupant vehicle. This Secondary Plan has the opportunity to encourage or require the program for developments in the Study Area and tailor it to the needs of local businesses and residents.

Transportation is a key component of any sustainability plan. More than one third of Ontario’s greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution is caused by the transportation sector, with cars and trucks responsible for more than 70% of the total. Most trips (more than 84%) to the Study Area today are made by auto drive or passenger modes. Among them, a significant amount of trips are short distance trips, under 1km (15% of all trips), and 3km (41% of all trips), which has a high potential to be shifted to walking or cycling trips with the safe active transportation facilities and relevant policy directions in place. With Viva Orange service opening by the end of 2019, there is also a high potential for people to shift to transit trips. Further to the policy direction to increase transit mode share in the Study Area to meet the YROP and VOP 2010 targets of 40-50% in the Study Area, the key opportunity in the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area is to develop a land use and mobility plan which maximizes connectivity to the Major Transit Station Areas within, and adjacent to, the Study Area.

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<sup>6</sup> Karim D. M., Innovative Mobility Master Plan: Connecting Multimodal Systems with Smart Technologies, Disrupting Mobility Conference, MIT Media Lab, Cambridge, USA, November 11~13, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Karim D. M., Creating an Innovative Mobility Ecosystem for Urban Planning Areas, Disrupting Mobility - Impacts of Sharing Economy and Innovative Transportation on Cities, Springer Book, Lectures in Mobility, ISBN: 978-3-319-51601-1, pages 21-47, 2017.

## 5.5 Commercial Use Assessment

The Commercial Use Assessment prepared by Tate Economic Research Inc. identifies a number of positive attributes of the Promenade Mall:

- From a locational perspective, the Mall has good access from two regional arterial roads with access to the future vivaNext BRT;
- Existing customer draw is indicative of a regional class shopping centre with most customer support coming from the surrounding region within a 20-minute drive;
- Dominant commercial centre in the local area, a role which will be retained in the future as adjacent commercial centres redevelop; and,
- Unique because it is one of two enclosed malls in the City, although it is Vaughan's third-tier retail node behind Vaughan Mills and the Highway 400 and Highway 7 Node (Weston 7 Primary Centre). As an enclosed centre, the Mall has been able to maintain a critical mass of specialty retailers.

However, it lacks the locational and visibility characteristics typical of other regional shopping centres. In addition, as development in the City continues to occur, the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre may usurp Promenade Mall's position as Vaughan's third tier retail node. Furthermore, the potential de-malling of the Promenade Mall in the future may diminish or eliminate its retail function and ability to retain critical mass, as competition for retailers within other significant mixed-use projects becomes amplified. This conclusion is reinforced by the findings of the Case Studies which indicate that there are opportunities for both significant retail expansion, and conversely moderate retail reduction, based on existing performance, function and attributes of the shopping mall being redeveloped.

The Commercial Use Assessment, therefore, concludes that the future function of the Promenade Mall is "more local and less regional". The future retail commercial centre would likely offer a mix of specialty and local serving retail uses and would operate largely as a convenience-oriented node. Therefore, from a warranted space analysis, the minimum amount of space required to serve the residents of the Promenade Secondary Plan Study Area would be between 23,225-32,515 square metres.

## 5.6 Community Facilities

An assessment of the community facilities in the Study Area concluded that:

- The Study Area, and the area surrounding it, is generally well served by recreation facilities, libraries and parks and outdoor recreation facilities;
- The Study Area is also generally well served by elementary and secondary schools; with most elementary schools below capacity (in terms of enrollment) and the amount of capacity is expected to increase. However, all the area secondary schools are operating above capacity with enrollment in two of the three schools expected to increase in the coming years;

- There is very limited capacity for daycare spaces in the Study Area, especially for younger ages (i.e. infants and toddlers);
- There are no public medical or emergency facilities located within the Study Area or the Concord-Thornhill area. Medical practitioners are located in the Study Area, but there are currently only five such facilities in the Study Area; and,
- There are no affordable or social housing options (operated by the Region or non-profit corporations), within the Study Area.

It is recommended that the following be considered through the Study process:

- An updated Community Facilities analysis should be required to be submitted with each development application;
- Policies should consider potential changing demographics of the community (i.e. aging and diverse population) and potential solutions;
- The proposed policy regime should build on the Region of York and City policies related to the provision of affordable housing;
- The City should work with stakeholders and Region of York Housing to determine if there is a need to include social housing locations in the area (as part of the redevelopment of the Study Area);
- Special emphasis (early in the process) should be placed on some of the areas of concern, both in the review of Community Facilities studies, but also in the provision of non-residential spaces within developments that can accommodate daycare centres and/or medical and medical-related facilities;
- Emphasis should be placed, when planning for Community Facilities, on flexible and accessible spaces and accommodating a range of uses and programming; and,
- Community Facilities should be monitored to ensure that they are delivering the services that the residents require (as Promenade Centre grows, this may change).

## **5.7 Sustainability Plan and Community Energy Plan**

Preparation of Terms of Reference for these plans has commenced. The plans will ensure that any future development is sustainable. The purpose of the Sustainability Plan is to provide vision coupled with guidance for the future development and redevelopment to guide sustainable development of the Secondary Plan Study Area. The Community Energy Plan will help the City develop qualitative, targeted strategies to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions (the inventory) and systemically identify ways (using target thresholds and scenarios) to reduce emissions in support of a transition to a low carbon future. The Plan will also describe planned implementation and monitoring. Potential opportunities and challenges will be identified through the preparation of both these Plans.

## 5.8 Opportunities and Challenges

The summary of the opportunities and challenges identified to date include:

### Opportunities

- Interest in significant redevelopment and intensification by key landowners;
- Strong potential to achieve the population and employment targets set by A Place to Grow;
- Improvements to transit (vivaNext) may assist in enhancing transit modal share through increased service;
- Promenade Mall has a number of positive attributes (i.e. access to two regional arterial roads and vivaNext BRT); and,
- Study Area is well served by recreation facilities, libraries, parks and outdoor recreation facilities as well as schools.



Diversa Drive, north of Centre Street

### Challenges

- Ensuring new development finds the “right balance” achieving a density supportive of public transit, while creating well-designed public and private spaces, with pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade and appropriate transition in intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas;
- Creating a transportation network that supports transit, walking, rolling and cycling including addressing the following challenges and opportunities:
  - Creation of a finer-grain Complete Street network;



- Build upon the High Street concept;
  - Build upon the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan update;
  - Maximize access to transit through first and last mile active transportation connections;
  - Leveraging new mobility solutions;
  - EcoMobility Hubs; and,
  - Increase sustainable modal share through Transportation Demand Management (TDM); and,
- Ensuring that the high level of service provided by the existing community facilities is maintained and provision is made to provide affordable/social housing, as well as daycare and medical facilities.

## 6. Conclusions

The Provincial, Regional and City planning policy framework clearly establishes the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan Study Area as a Strategic Growth Area. In particular, VOP 2010 identifies it as a “Primary Centre”, with Centre Street west of Bathurst Street and Bathurst Street north of Centre Street designated as “Regional Intensification Corridor”. The Study Area is also established as an MTSA with a density target established by A Place to Grow of 160 people and jobs combined per hectare. However, there is also a proposal by the Region to increase that target to 200 people and jobs combined per hectare.

To implement the goal of the establishment of this area as a “Primary Centre” various policy directions are established. The key directions can be summarized based on the VOP 2010 policies as follows:

- a mix of housing types and tenures;
- a mix of non-residential uses;
- densities supportive of public transit;
- a fine grain network of streets suitable for pedestrians and cyclists;
- well-designed public spaces that are either landscaped parks or public plazas or both;
- pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade; and,
- appropriate transition of intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas.

In implementing the policy direction, the Best Practices and Principles, case studies, and key lessons identified through the background review will be considered in the preparation of the Development Framework and Land Use Scenario and Urban Design Guidelines developed in later stages of the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Study.

A key consideration will be the creation of a “complete community” with year-round quality spaces and meeting places including public spaces such as parks, shops, squares and markets. This community will support quality of life and human health through features such as active transportation, compact development, efficient use of infrastructure, employment opportunities, a mix of housing types, access to transit, public spaces and opportunities for social interaction.

As part of the creation of a complete community, the opportunities and challenges identified through the background analyses completed to-date will be carefully considered. The opportunities and challenges will be revised and/or expanded as more detailed information and input becomes available through the Study process:

## Opportunities

- Interest in significant redevelopment and intensification by key landowners;
- Strong potential to achieve the population and employment targets set by A Place to Grow;
- Improvements to transit (vivaNext) may assist in enhancing transit modal share through increased service;
- Promenade Mall has a number of positive attributes (i.e. access to two regional arterial roads and vivaNext BRT); and,
- Study Area is well served by recreation facilities, libraries, parks and outdoor recreation facilities as well as schools.

## Challenges

- Ensuring new development finds the “right balance” achieving a density supportive of public transit, while creating well-designed public and private spaces, with pedestrian-friendly built form with active uses at grade and appropriate transition in intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas;
- Creating a transportation network that supports transit, walking, rolling and cycling including:
  - Creation of a fine-grain Complete Street network;
  - Build upon the High Street concept;
  - Build upon the City’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan update;
  - Maximize access to transit through first and last mile active transportation connections;
  - Leverage new mobility solutions;
  - Establish EcoMobility Hubs; and,
  - Increase sustainable modal share through Transportation Demand Management (TDM).
- Ensuring that the high level of service provided by the existing community facilities is maintained and provision is made to provide affordable/social housing as well as daycare and medical facilities.

## Next Steps

This background analysis will inform the next steps in the preparation of the Promenade Centre Secondary Plan including the establishment of the vision and guiding principles and development of the Emerging Land Use and Design Scenario and transportation network.