

# PLANNING POLICY ANALYSIS

APPENDIX 5

October 29, 2018





## 1. Planning Context

### 1.1. Introduction

The development of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan Area (SPA) is guided by a number of policies and plans including the Provincial Policy Statement (2014), the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the York Region Official Plan, the City of Vaughan Official Plan (VOP 2010), and other relevant guidelines and plans. This policy framework has clearly identified Weston 7 as a place for intensification in the form of compact, mixed-use development that is of transit-supportive density.

The following Planning Policy Analysis describes the policy framework established by the Province, Region and City related to how Weston 7 is expected to grow. In addition, other relevant guidelines and plans are analyzed and summarized to provide a coherent image of the planning framework surrounding the Weston 7 SPA.

## 1.2. Provincial Policy Context

### 1.2.1. Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), enacted in April 2014, provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Provincial planning policy is at the top of the land use planning policy hierarchy and municipalities are obligated to create plans that are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The following section describes the key policy directions in the PPS that the Secondary Plan for Weston 7 must reinforce.

The PPS supports efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure. It encourages development patterns that support strong, liveable and healthy communities by endorsing intensification as a means to accommodate growth and increase urban vitality. The PPS supports growth within settlement areas and away from significant or sensitive resources and areas which may pose a risk to public health and safety. It encourages intensification and redevelopment to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities, housing and other land uses (Policy 1.1.2).

In addition to broad policy direction, the PPS also provides specific land use planning direction through general land use categories. The Weston 7 Plan Area is within a designated Urban Area under the York Region Official Plan, and is thus subject to Settlement Area policies of Section 1.1.3 of the PPS. The PPS directs settlement areas to be the focus of growth and development, and promotes their vitality and regeneration (Section 1.1.3.1).

Land use patterns within settlement areas are to be based on densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use land and resources and

are transit-supportive, where transit is planned, exists or may be developed (Section 1.1.3.2a). Section 1.6.7 addresses transportation systems and sub-policy 1.6.7.4 encourages densities and land use patterns that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and supports the use of public transit and active transportation. Weston 7 is designated by VOP 2010 as a Primary Centre, for intensification and mixed-use development. PPS Section 1.1.3.4 states appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety. Section 1.8.1 directs planning authorities to support energy conservation and efficiency through land use and development patterns which promote compact form and a structure of nodes and corridors, and the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, and employment (including commercial and industrial) areas. The PPS provides a general direction for land use planning that supports intensification in mixed-use compact formats in areas well-served by transit. The identification of intensification areas such as Weston 7 by lower tier municipalities is consistent with the direction of the PPS.

### 1.2.2. Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Growth Plan for the Golden Horseshoe ("Growth Plan"), which took effect in July 2017, is a Provincial plan that directs how regional growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe should be managed until 2041. The Growth Plan provides specific guidance for growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe by identifying strategic areas for growth that are connected to public transit infrastructure and directing residential and employment growth in existing-



built-up areas. The Growth Plan provides people and jobs growth targets for municipalities to meet, as well as policy direction for what qualities growth areas should meet. The Growth Plan includes policies addressing transportation, infrastructure, land use planning, urban form, housing and natural heritage protection on a regional scale. One of the main objectives of the Growth Plan is to prioritize intensification of strategic growth areas to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability. It intends to direct new residential and employment growth in existing built-up areas and strategic growth areas, defined by the 2017 Growth Plan as lands “that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form.” Strategic Growth Areas include Urban Growth Centres and Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs), as well as lands along higher order transit corridors. As a strategic growth area, the Growth Plan in Section 2.2.1 directs new growth to built-up areas, and strategic growth areas in particular.

The Growth Plan includes specific direction as to how MTSAs and Priority Transit Corridors (PTCs), are to be planned, calling on these areas to be transit supportive, and incorporate a diverse mix of uses including affordable housing, achieve multi-modal transportation options to access transit stations, and provide connections to nearby major trip generators (Section 2.2.4).

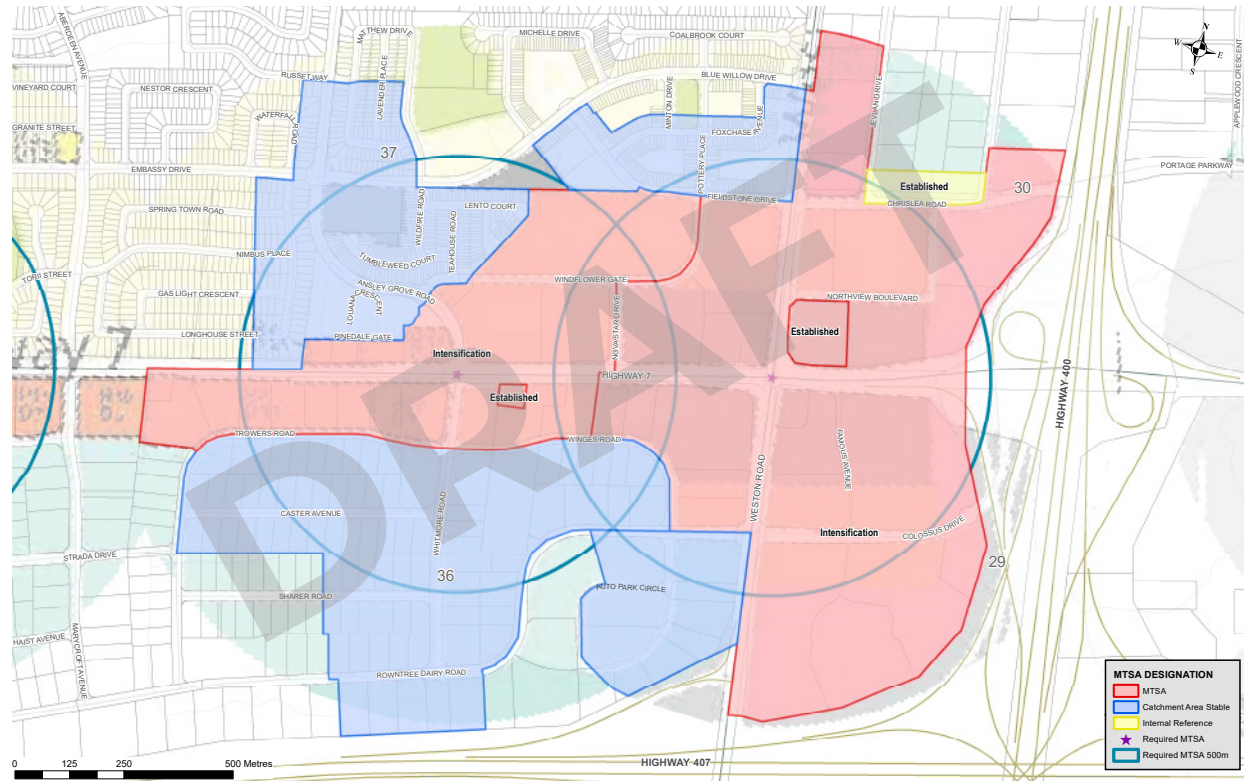
Major transit station areas (MTSAs) are defined by upper- or single-tier municipalities in consultation with lower-tier municipalities in such a way that the size of the area and number of potential transit users within walking distance (approximately 500m) is maximized. Priority

Transit corridors (PTCs) are corridors with existing or planned higher order transit, as defined in Schedule 5 of the Growth Plan. Higher order transit can include subways, light rail transit and bus rapid transit in dedicated rights-of-way. The VIVAnext BRT rapidway along Highway 7 will operate in its own dedicated right-of-way, and the areas surrounding the planned centre-lane stations at Highway 7 and Weston and Highway 7 and Ansley Grove will meet the MTSA definition. Higher order transit corridors are also considered intensification corridors, with the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed-use development consistent with planned transit service levels.

Section 2.2.4 of the Growth Plan provides policies for transit corridors and station areas, calling on MTSAs served by bus rapid transit to meet a minimum density of 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

The Growth Plan directs municipalities to support development in MTSAs by a number of means, including:

- “planning for a diverse mix of uses, including second units and affordable housing, to support existing and planned transit service levels;
- fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, such as joint development projects;
- providing alternative development standards, such as reduced parking standards; and
- prohibiting land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of



transit-supportive densities.” (2.2.4.9).

The City of Vaughan includes approximately 17 MTSAs within its boundaries, along with other higher-order transit stations throughout York Region at existing GO transit and VIVA transit stops. Each of these areas requires a planning process to understand the site specific development capacity and what, if any, modifications in the growth target (contemplated in policy 2.2.4.4) may be required to maintain consistency with the Growth plan. The density accommodated in the MTSAs in the Weston 7 area may be modified to achieve the appropriate balance of intensification across the Highway 7 corridor that results in appropriate

and desirable built form and community amenities. The Weston 7 consultant team is working closely with City of Vaughan Planning staff responsible for the city-wide study of the MTSAs to ensure that density scenarios tested in the land use alternatives phase are reflective of current strategies for how to plan appropriately for MTSAs in the city more broadly.

Ultimately, the land use alternatives determined through Phase 1 of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan process will need to be consistent with the Growth Plan and demonstrate how the MTSAs that can realize a diverse mix of uses as envisioned in Growth Plan policy.

### 1.3. Municipal Policy Context

#### 1.3.1. York Region Official Plan

The 2010 York Region Official Plan (YROP) is the overall planning tool to guide growth and development in York Region, and sets the stage for detailed planning by local municipalities. The YROP identifies that the Region's future development will be in the form of infill and redevelopment, and will need to fit in, respect and improve the character of the surrounding area. Policies aim to strengthen the connections between the natural and built environment, job opportunities, human services, transportation, public health and fiscal capacity. The ultimate Secondary Plan for Weston 7 must be consistent with the policy direction set out by York Region in their official plan. The following section explores the key policy directions to consider in the Secondary Plan process.

In 2014, York Region began a review of its Official Plan (2010) as a component of a broader Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). However, following the release of a number of draft Provincial Plans in 2016 (the Growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Greenbelt Plan, and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan), work was halted and restarted in early 2017. This review process will deliver several products: revised population and employment forecasts as per Growth Plan direction; a land budget, including a regional land supply/demand analysis and a review of the existing regional policies. A range of reports and studies were completed as part of the Official Plan Review, including the York Region Preferred Growth Scenario (2015). The current MCR Consultation is being conducted in five phases, over a three-year time period (May 2017 to Spring 2020). Phase Two (2018) is ongoing, with a draft updated Regional Official Plan anticipated in fall 2019.

An overarching goal of the YROP is to enhance the Region's urban structure through city building, intensification, and the development of compact and complete communities. The Plan allocates population targets for each local municipality and requires local municipalities to prepare intensification strategies that identify the role of Regional Centres and Corridors and Local Centers and Corridors in helping to achieve assigned intensification targets. The York Region Residential Intensification Targets by Local Municipality, 2016-2041 found in Attachment 3 of the Region's 2041 Preferred Growth Scenario Report identify 26,250 new intensification units for the City of Vaughan and a population growth of 61,400 people.

Map 1 "Regional Structure" of the YROP 2016 identifies Regional Centres and Corridors. The section of Highway 7 that runs through Weston 7 is designated as a corridor, seen in Figure 18. Regional Centres and Corridors form part of a larger regional system of urban growth centres and intensification corridors, which are vital to the long term prosperity and identity of communities within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area (Section 5.4.3). The YROP 2016 instructs lower-tier municipalities to direct the most intensive and widest range of uses within the Regional Corridors to specific intensification areas, identified as Key Development Areas (Section 5.4.31).

Key Development Areas are focused on existing and planned transit and have the highest densities and mix of uses in the Regional Corridor. Section 5.4.31 of the YROP directs Key Development Areas to include the following segments of the Regional Corridor:

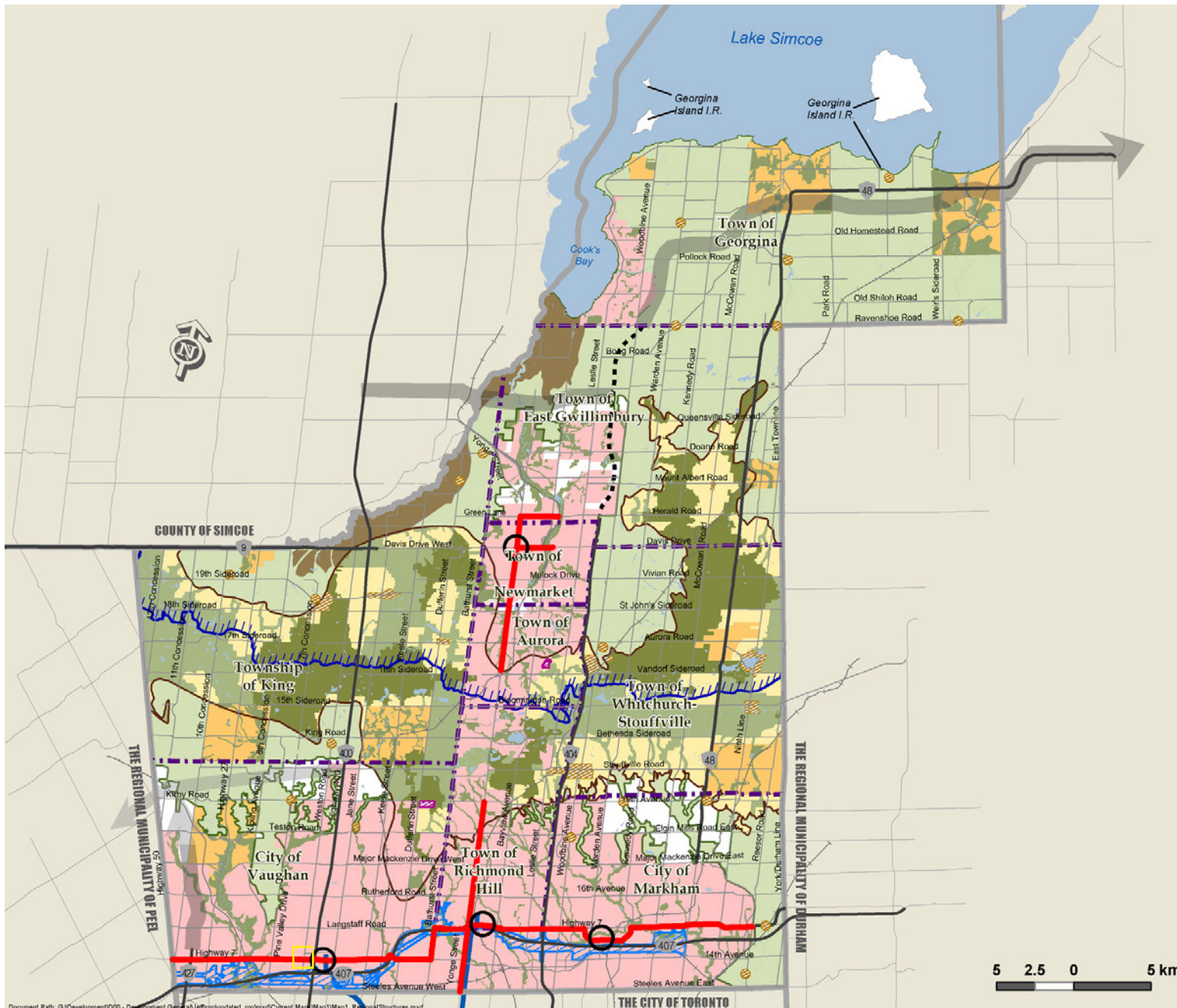
- Lands within a reasonable and direct walking distance from all planned subway stations, and

select rapid transit stations as identified by local municipalities

- Major transit station areas immediately adjacent to transit stations and terminals, including GO transit
- Large and/or contiguous properties that are under-utilized and are appropriate and desirable locations for redevelopment or intensification

The policies outlined in Section 5.4.6 instruct local municipalities to prepare comprehensive secondary plans for Regional Centres and Key Development Areas. The City of Vaughan, through this study, has begun to undertake this process for the Weston 7 area. These plans shall include minimum density requirements and targets, and will also establish a fine-grained street grid, a pedestrian-oriented built form and will seek to concentrate development close to rapid transit stations. As per Section 5.4.34, Key Development Areas will support an overall long term density target of 2.5 floor space index for developable areas. Because Key Development Areas are directed to accommodate growth, policies ensure such growth is equitable and provides housing options for all households. Section 3.5.7 directs a minimum 35 per cent of new housing units in Regional Centres and Key Development Areas to be affordable, offering a range of affordability for low and moderate income households.

The land use alternatives created in Phase 1 of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan process will be consistent with the direction for KDAs in the York Region Official Plan. The YROP will also inform the development of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan in later stages of work.



# MAP 1 REGIONAL STRUCTURE

- Regional Centre
- Regional Corridor
- Subway Extension
- Urban Area
- Towns and Villages
- Regional Greenlands System (Schematic, See Map 2 for details)
- Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan**
  - Oak Ridges Moraine Boundary
  - Natural Core Area Designation
  - Natural Linkage Area Designation
  - Countryside Area Designation/Hamlet
- Greenbelt Plan**
  - Greenbelt Plan Area Boundary
  - Greenbelt Protected Countryside/Hamlet
  - Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area
  - Area Subject to the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan
  - Parkway Belt West Plan
  - Ministers Decision on ORMCP Designation Deferred
- Provincial Highways**
  - Existing
  - Under Construction
- Controlled Access Highway**
  - Proposed - EA approved
  - Conceptual - Alignment Not Defined
- Municipal Boundary**
  - Municipal Boundary
  - Regional Boundary

Note: For detailed land use designations outside of the Urban Area, Towns & Villages and Natural Core and Natural Linkage Areas of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan see Map 9 - Agricultural and Rural Area and policy 5.1.12

**York Region** **yorkmaps**  
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Weston 7 Area



FIGURE 1. Regional Structure, York Region Official Plan

### 1.3.2. City of Vaughan Official Plan

Adopted in 2010, the City of Vaughan's Official Plan (VOP 2010) forms a part of the City's overall Growth Management Strategy, which, in addition to the OP, includes *Vision 2020*, the City's strategic plan, and *Green Directions*, the City's Sustainability Master Plan. The Official Plan is the primary planning tool used to guide development in Vaughan to 2031.

The City of Vaughan OP acknowledges population and employment growth pressures that exist within the City, supported by a number of factors, including strong road and rail transportation links, and its central location within the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). Through to 2031, Vaughan is expected to accommodate 29% of population growth in the York Region (approximately 167,000 new residents) and 33% of York Region employment growth (103,900 jobs). Vaughan's OP aims to direct this growth in a sustainable way, establishing a land use planning framework "that will foster the continued transformation of Vaughan into a vibrant and sustainable city..." (2.1.2.1).

Vaughan's *Vision for Transformation* is articulated through 8 goals, most of which will have direct bearing on the Weston 7 Secondary plan. Relevant OP Goals are:

- **Strong and Diverse Communities:** "maintain the stability of existing residential communities, direct well designed, context-sensitive growth to strictly defined areas, and provide for a wide range of housing choices and a full range of community services within each community."
- **A Diverse Economy:** "[attract] a wider range of employment including major office

uses, research, and health and education employment. These uses can be located in mixed-use centres, thereby also supporting transit, and preserving designated employment lands for other forms of economic activities..."

- **Moving Around Without a Car:** "the Official Plan will focus on implementing planning and design policies that make walking, cycling and transit use realistic options for moving around."
- **Design Excellence and Memorable Places:** "... the City as a whole has the opportunity to develop the various attributes that make wonderful built landscapes. Cities take time to develop a sense of place and the next phase of Vaughan's evolution, guided by this Official Plan, will focus not only on accommodating growth, but doing so in a manner that contributes to the overall beauty of the City."
- **A Green and Sustainable city:** "The main principles of sustainable land-use planning relate to the protection of the natural environment, protection of agricultural lands, and the ability for people to live in communities that minimize energy use, water consumption and solid waste generation, encouraging the adaptive reuse of older and/or historical buildings in support of sustainable development and allow for alternative transportation choices."
- **Directing Growth to Appropriate Locations:** "a shift in emphasis from the development of new communities in greenfield areas to the promotion of intensification in areas of the City with the infrastructure capacity and existing or planned transit service to accommodate growth."

Overarching policies to implement the City of Vaughan's new direction include a range of policies directly relevant to the Weston 7 Secondary Plan. These include:

- 2.1.3.2 (b): directing a minimum of 29,300 residential units through intensification within the built boundary;
- 2.1.3.2 (c): identifying *Intensification Areas*, consistent with the intensification objectives of this Plan and the Regional Official Plan, as the primary locations for accommodating *intensification*;
- 2.1.3.2 (h): identifying a hierarchy of mixed-use centres to be developed in a compact form and at appropriate densities to support transit service and promote walking and cycling;
- 2.1.3.2 (i): promoting public transit use by encouraging transit-supportive densities and an appropriate mix of uses along transit routes, and particularly at Viva stations, GO stations and future rapid transit stations;
- 2.1.3.2 (j): providing for a diversity of housing opportunities in terms of tenure, affordability, size and form;
- 2.1.3.2 (k): establishing a culture of design excellence with an emphasis on providing for a high quality public realm, appropriate built form and beautiful architecture through all new development;
- 2.1.3.2 (l): ensuring environmental sustainability through the protection of natural features and ecological functions and through the establishment of green development standards to be achieved by all new development;
- 2.1.3.2 (m): developing a linked system of active and passive parks, greenways and Natural Areas throughout the City;



Weston 7 Area

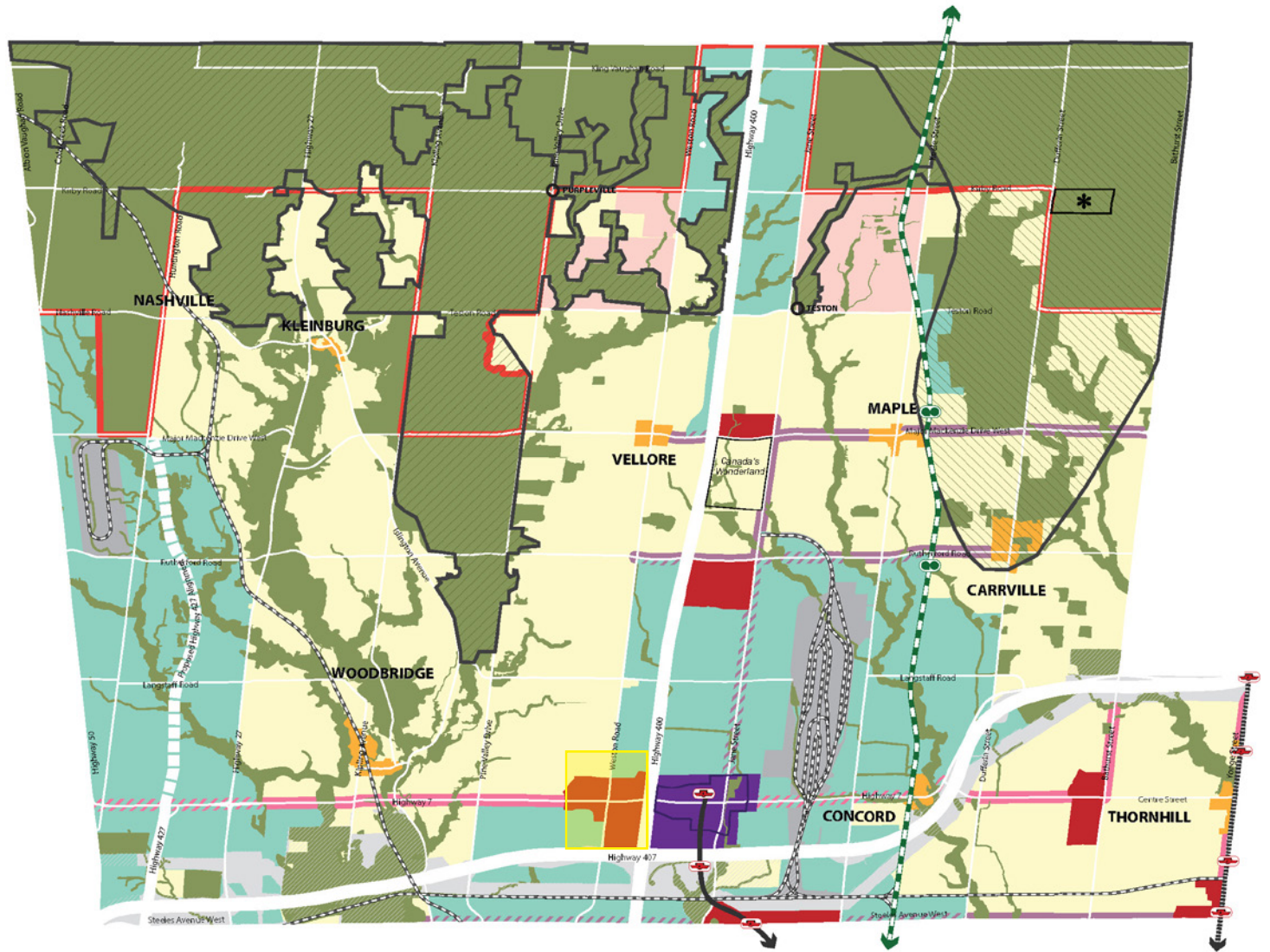


FIGURE 2. Urban Structure, City of Vaughan



- 2.1.3.2 (o): ensuring development is phased in an appropriate manner to allow for the creation of complete communities and that such phasing is coordinated with infrastructure investments made by the City and York Region; and
- 2.1.3.2 (p): planning and designing communities in a manner that facilitates inclusivity and accessibility for residents, workers and visitors.

Vaughan's OP policies and objectives are translated into a number of Urban Structure elements, each with distinct objectives and policies. These elements include *Stable Areas*-Natural Areas and Countryside, Community Areas, Employment Areas, New Community areas, Rail Facilities as well as *Intensification Areas*, which include the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC), Primary Centres, Local Centres, and Regional and Primary Intensification Corridors. The direction of the OP is that *Intensification Areas* will be the primary locations for the accommodation of Vaughan's 45% intensification target.

The Weston 7 area is a *Primary Centre* within the OP. Highway 7, which transects the area from east to west, is a *Regional Intensification Corridor*. OP policy direction for *Primary Centres* (2.2.5.6) includes a focus on mixed-use development, including a mix of non-residential uses such as retail, office, institutional and community facilities that serve both the local and City-wide population. It also directs that the area "develop with a mix of housing types and tenures, including housing suitable for seniors and families with children and affordable housing." The area should be planned with densities that are supportive of public transit. The transportation network should

include a fine-grained street network that is suitable to pedestrians and cyclists, with active uses at grade for a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The area should include well designed public open spaces appropriate to the local context, and should "be designed and developed to implement appropriate transition of intensity and use to surrounding Community Areas, and/or separation from adjacent Employment Areas."

The VMC neighbours Weston 7 to the West, and the relationship between the two areas will be an important consideration of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan. The VMC is intended to become Vaughan's downtown, an area of regional importance centred around the TTC subway station located at Highway 7 and Millway Avenue. Vaughan's greatest densities of people and jobs most significant mix of uses will be located here. Weston 7 will need to be planned to complement the VMC, rather than compete for densities. The mix of uses and densities ought to be lower in Weston 7 than in the VMC, based on the urban structure in VOP 2010. Weston 7 will need to be planned to complement the VMC, rather than compete for densities. Mix of uses and densities will be lower in Weston 7 than in the VMC.

Vaughan's OP includes a number of Environmental policy directions relevant to the Weston 7 Secondary plan, including:

- "supporting the ability of Vaughan's residents to live in a manner that has a low impact on the natural environment" (3.1.1.2);
- "To require new stormwater management facilities to be designed as local amenities" adjacent to open spaces and parks, as publically accessible open space, and are

designed "as naturalized or formal landscapes that are complementary to adjacent features" (3.6.6.6);

- "That low-impact development techniques, as described in the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's Low Impact Development Stormwater Management Planning and Design Guide (2010), will be established, where appropriate, for all new Block Plans, or Site Plans for large development sites, in order to protect groundwater resources and aquatic habitat, and overall groundwater flow patterns." (3.6.2.2); and
- Reduction in air emissions and impacts from air emissions through a number of strategies, including "increasing opportunities for natural carbon sequestration by establishing annual targets to grow the urban forest through tree planting programs" and "supporting alternatives to single occupant vehicle use and automobile travel" (3.7.1.2);

The VOP's direction for the transportation recognizes the foundational linkage between land use and transportation, and that a compact pattern of urban growth is required to support pedestrian, cyclist and transit use. Relevant transportation policies include:

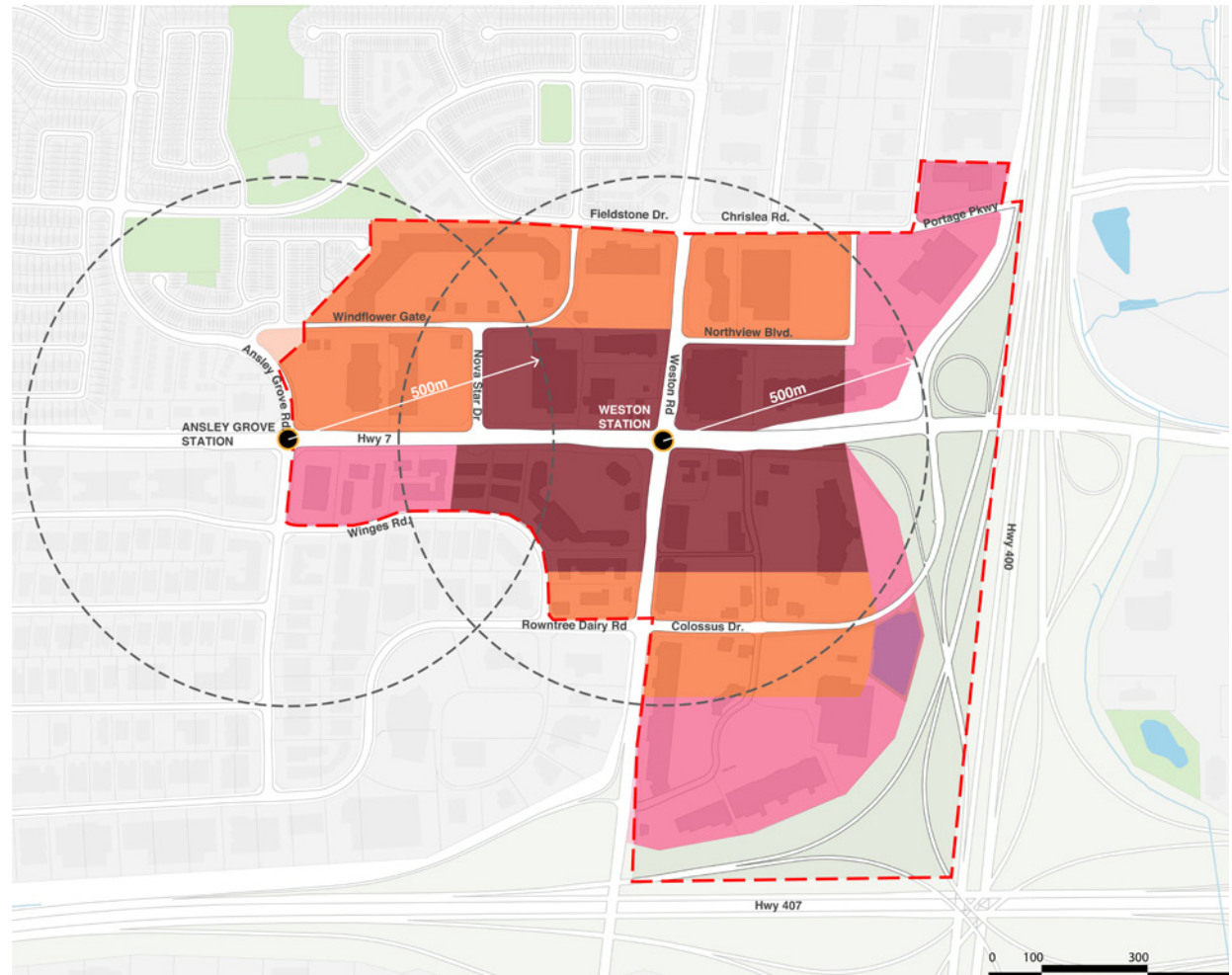
- "To recognize the integrated nature of land use, urban design, and transportation in land use planning decisions that support a full range of transportation options, and specifically prioritize opportunities to enhance walking, cycling and transit options." (4.1.1.3);
- "That Intensification Areas are priorities for transit investments. Land-use planning decisions within Intensification Areas should maximize the use of existing and planned transit infrastructure in accordance with

the policies of this plan, taking into account the existing and planned level of transit service and potential impacts on nearby neighbourhoods.” (4.1.1.4);

- “To develop a connected and continuous, grid-like street network that supports convenient and efficient travel by all modes of transportation and to discourage the development of street types that disrupt the grid network...”(4.2.1.5);
- “To encourage and support the early implementation of transit in a dedicated transitway within the Highway 407 and 427 corridors...” (4.2.1.12) and;
- “To encourage and support grade separated crossings of Provincial highways as needed at arterial and collector streets that would accommodate all modes of travel, and to encourage and support pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Provincial highways in areas of high demand or strategic need. The City will seek to secure land for such purposes, where warranted, through the development approval process” (4.2.1.13).

In addition to the broad policies outlined above, the VOP provides direction for specific land use areas. High-rise Residential, Mid-Rise Mixed Use, and Community Commercial Mixed-use apply to the Weston 7 area.

**Mid-rise Mixed Use** areas are located within intensification areas in Vaughan’s OP, and are planned to provide for a mix of residential, retail, community and institutional uses. Permitted building types are mid-rise buildings (generally between 5 and 12 storeys in height) and public and private institutional buildings. In addition, Townhouses, Stacked Townhouses and Low-Rise Buildings are permitted within 70 metres of



**FIGURE 3. Land Use Designations**



areas designated as Low-Rise Residential, such as areas to the north of the area.

**High-rise Mixed Use** areas are located within intensification areas within Vaughan's OP, and are planned for a mix of residential, retail, community and institutional uses. Permitted uses in these areas include Residential Units, Home Occupations, Community Facilities, Cultural Uses, Retail Uses, Office Uses, Parking Garages, Hotels, and Gas Stations. Frontages facing arterial and collector streets are to predominantly consist of retail uses and other active uses. Building types permitted in these areas include High-rise Buildings (over 12 storeys), Mid-rise Buildings (5 to 12 storeys), public and private institutional buildings, and gas stations (9.2.2.6). As with the Mid-Rise Residential areas, Townhouses, Stacked Townhouses and Low-Rise Buildings are permitted within 70 metres of areas designated as Low-Rise Residential.

**Community Commercial Mixed Use** areas are primarily located along intensification corridors, and are planned for predominantly commercial uses and non-residential intensification. Uses permitted in these areas, within an intensification area are office uses, hotel, cultural and entertainment uses, retail uses, and gas stations. Permitted building types area low-rise buildings, mid-rise buildings, public and private institutional buildings, and gas stations.

The VOP provides clear direction for developing a denser, more transit supportive urban form in the Weston 7 secondary plan area, with a finer grained street network that supports

active transportation, a range of housing types, tenures and affordability and development that supports the City's sustainability goals. The Weston 7 Secondary Plan will also need to recognize the relationship of this Primary Centre with the neighbouring VMC, and ensure that development is complementary to the role of the VMC as Vaughan's urban core. The Weston 7 Secondary plan will form a part of the Vaughan Official Plan, and policies within should be developed to reflect the directions of the VOP.

### 1.3.3. City of Vaughan Zoning By-law

The Weston 7 SPA is governed by the City of Vaughan Comprehensive Zoning By-Law 1-88, as amended. The bylaw was passed by the council of the then Town of Vaughan in 1988. The Zoning By-law identifies the as-of-right land use, density and height permissions as well as a variety of required built form standards for new development.

The current zoning in place for properties located in the Weston 7 SPA is not reflective of the intent of the current policy environment as identified in the City of Vaughan's OP, direction in the ROP, or the Growth Plan. Existing zoning allows for primarily low-intensity commercial, in addition to some employment and open space parcels. For C1, C2, C5, C6 and C7 parcels, heights are limited to a maximum of 11m, and lot coverage is limited to 30%-50%. Some parcels zoned as C9 and C10 allow for greater heights, up to 25m.

Areas surrounding the SPA include EM1 (Prestige Employment) to the south, commercial (C1 and C2) to the west, and a variety of residential districts to the north, including single family detached and semi-detached (R5), street townhouses (RM1), and apartments (RA1). This medium intensity residential located at the interface between established communities to the north and the Weston 7 SPA could

contribute to the transition between the two areas.

### 1.3.4. City of Vaughan Zoning By-law Review

At the time of this report, the City of Vaughan is undertaking a City-wide comprehensive review of its Zoning By-law. This review is intended to help ensure the Zoning By-law implements the Official Plan and accurately reflects the intent of policy direction under one consolidated, streamlined Zoning By-law. At this time, it is anticipated to be passed in Winter 2019.

## 1.4. Guidelines and Plans

A number of non-statutory documents are also relevant to review and understand in relationship of planning for Weston 7. The following section reviews City, Regional and Provincial guidelines that will impact the development of the Weston 7 Secondary plan.

### 1.4.1. York Region Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors

An important goal for York Region and its local municipalities is to concentrate planned growth within the centres of those municipalities, including Vaughan and the Highway 7 corridor. The York Region Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors document does not provide policy direction or guidelines, but is intended as a resource to assist with planning and developing centres and corridors, through an overview of the context, key challenges and approaches to address these challenges, and case study examples.

The wide range challenges identified in the Centres and Corridors Best Practices document are directly relevant to the development of the Weston 7 Secondary plan. These include: planning infrastructure at all scales, phasing

and coordination of infrastructure, responding to roads that were initially designed for a suburban context and resistance to creating more fine-grained street networks, oversupply of parking and high parking ratios, challenges with parkland acquisition, land requirements for storm water management, attracting employment, ensuring affordable housing provision, and achieving design excellence. Beyond this wide range of challenges, the Centres and Corridors Best Practices document also provides a wide range of approaches to addressing these challenges, many of which Vaughan is currently undergoing. These approaches include: integrated planning (ongoing communication and cooperation among infrastructure providers and developers), Infrastructure working groups, front-ending significant public investment, providing development incentives (such as development charge credits and cost sharing agreements), developing complete street standards and guidelines, grid patterns, transportation demand management, reduced parking standards, stratified parking, modifying parkland dedication requirements, optimizing access to existing parks networks. The approaches and strategies from the Centres and Corridors Best Practices document will should be considered in the ongoing development of the Weston 7 Secondary plan.

### 1.4.2 Active Together Master Plan

The City of Vaughan’s 2018 Active Together Master Plan (ATMP) is used to guide City departments in the provision of parks and open space areas, recreation programs and facilities, libraries, and other community services and facilities. In addition to documenting the existing inventory of community assets, the ATMP also

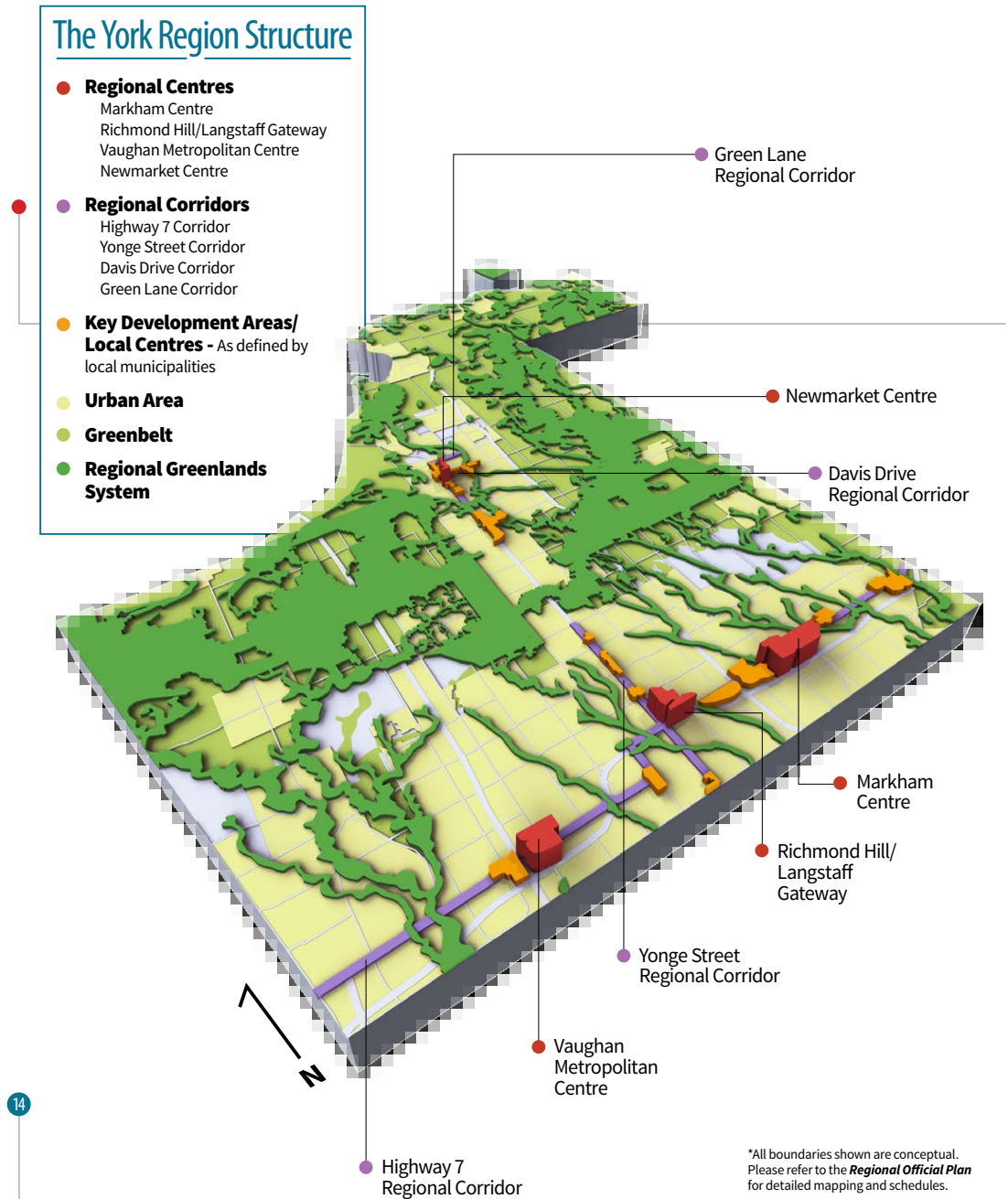


FIGURE 4. The York Region Structure, Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors

establishes provision targets to maintain the high quality of life in the City of Vaughan as the City continues to grow.

The City uses a parkland per capita measure as a tool to monitor how the City is achieving the active parkland goals relative to past measurement and future projections. While parkland provision varies across the City, the current city-wide level of provision is 1.86 hectares per 1,000 residents. Based on anticipated population growth in Vaughan of more than 100,000 residents by 2031, the ATMP establishes a target provision rate of 2.0 hectares per 1,000 residents, applied to future growth.

The ATMP also establishes current levels of provision for a range of outdoor recreation facilities including soccer fields, ball diamonds, basketball courts, pools, off-leash dog parks and playgrounds, among others. The plan establishes targeted levels of provision based on future population growth, trends in sports and leisure, and feedback from public consultation. The planning process for Weston 7 will need to consider the targets outlined in the ATMP and devise a strategy for accommodating the appropriate amount of parkland, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. Further exploration of the direction in the Active Together Master Plan as related to the projected population and employment projections for Weston 7 is found in the Community Facilities Impact Study in Appendix 6.

#### **1.4.3. Parks Redevelopment Strategy**

The City of Vaughan Parks Redevelopment Strategy (Parks Strategy) provides a decision-making framework to establish priorities for park redevelopment in the City in order to ensure resources are targeted where they are needed most. The Parks Strategy recognizes that parks are a shared resource, and are an

important element in creating healthy, complete communities. The goals of the Parks Strategy are:

- “To ensure that the City’s parks and open space facilities continue to be responsive to the current and future needs of Vaughan communities in a responsible and cost effective manner.”; and
- “To provide a comprehensive strategy for making investments into the renewal of parks and open space facilities that support an appropriate level of service provision and the City’s commitment to Service Excellence.”

While the focus of this strategy is the redevelopment of existing parks in order to optimize the current parks system, recommendations within could have implications for redevelopment of parks in neighbouring communities that could serve future residents of Weston 7. Population growth in Vaughan is putting pressure on parks that were not initially designed for higher population densities. This pressure is greatest in areas with high density and growth.

The Parks Strategy states that parks “that are adjacent or within close proximity to sizeable residential infill and intensification projects are primary candidates for redevelopment consideration” (7.1). The Parks Strategy identifies parks without major amenities serving major intensification areas as a redevelopment priority, however no such parks are identified near the Weston 7 area. The Weston 7 area contains no public park spaces today. Blue Willow Square and Giovanni Caboto, located to the north of Weston 7, were not identified as candidate sites for redevelopment in the current Parks Strategy, although redevelopment prioritization of these parks may be a future consideration in light of planned population growth in the area. Further

exploration of the parks redevelopment strategy as related to the projected population and employment projections for Weston 7 is found in the Community Facilities Impact Study in Appendix 6.

#### **1.4.4. Ontario’s Transit-Supportive Guidelines**

The Transit-Supportive Guidelines produced by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (2012) are not a statement of provincial policy, but identify tools to meet the objective of building transit-supportive communities, a key goal outlined in the Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan. The Transit Supportive Guidelines contain strategies, case studies and resources to promote development patterns that make transit less expensive, less circuitous and more convenient, with an overarching goal to enhance service and make transit more appealing to potential users. Weston 7 is situated in the urban area and is identified as a key development area.

Section 1.1.7 articulates how to coordinate land uses alongside existing and proposed transit investments to ensure that appropriate densities and a mix of uses are provided in proximity to transit service. According to the Transit Supportive Guidelines, such as The Highway 7 rapidway centre-lane BRT stations have a suggested minimum density of 72 units per hectare and 160 residents and jobs combined. Because these are suggested minimum densities, they are not intended to be applied as standards, yet such numbers demonstrate the intent to increase density at transit nodes, within a 5-10 minute walk of the station.

Section 2.4.3 explains that the planning for station areas should take into consideration the potential for intensification over time. This can allow station facilities and infrastructure to be designed and located so that they do not

hinder the long-term development potential of the station area. The Highway 7 rapidway has the potential to attract new riders, and poses an opportunity to redevelop underutilized lands used for surface parking.

Transit Supportive Guidelines, along with the York Region Transit Oriented Development Guidelines, will inform the policy recommendations anticipated as part of the final recommendations of this study.

#### **1.4.5. York Region Transit Oriented Development Guidelines**

The purpose of the Regional Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines (2006) is to advance the implementation of York Region's planned urban structure of Regional Centres, linked by Regional Corridors, served by public transit. These guidelines reflect the vision articulated in the Regional Official Plan to develop in a way that is compact, well-designed, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is an approach to planning that recognizes the fundamental relationship between growth and transit access, and aims to shape development in a way that reflects the needs of transit users, and the transit service. Several key elements to TOD include:

- Development is concentrated around transit stations
- Buildings are in a compact form and well-designed
- A mix of land uses are provided along transit routes, including a mix of commercial and residential in one building
- Activity-generating uses, like schools and shopping, are located along transit routes

- Buildings and the spaces in between are connected by sidewalks that lead to transit stations

The guidelines seek to increase transit ridership by concentrating people-serving uses around transit stops, and clustering higher density mixed-use development. The Weston 7 SPA is defined by auto-oriented development and large blocks, and TOD guidelines emphasize that such sites represent opportunities for compact redevelopment. Guidelines that link buildings and the spaces between them to transit are important to consider because the Weston 7 SPA will contain 2 major transit stations along Highway 7, at Weston Road and Ansley Grove. Ultimately, transit stations are encouraged to integrate into the surrounding neighbourhood by making connections as direct as possible and barrier free. The York Region TOD Guidelines will inform the creation of land use and development options for the SPA and will be an input into the Secondary Plan process.

With regard to the Weston 7 SPA, mixed-use development is envisioned to support pedestrian activity and TOD guidelines re-inforce these principles, by encouraging activity-generating uses at street level, and adjusting the quantity of parking to reflect the level of transit service available in the area.

#### **1.4.6. Community Improvement Plan**

The City of Vaughan Council enacted the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) bylaw 177-2015 in November 2015. The bylaw was developed in response to the fact that primary centres and intensification corridors are “fundamental building blocks of the city’s growth management strategy, and essential to the long-term economic vibrancy of the City as

an office employment centre”. The CIP aims to incentivize office development in the VMC and Weston 7 areas. At the time of the development of this CIP, development applications in the two areas were more heavily skewed towards high-rise residential development. These two centres are planned as mixed use areas in the VOP, and this bylaw is intended to support a mix of uses. While recent investments in new transit infrastructure in these two areas is supporting intensification, “transit investment alone is not enough to overcome market disadvantages in Vaughan.”

The CIP aims to encourage additional office development through three categories of tools: Development Charge (DC) grants or reductions, Tax Increment Equivalent Grants, and Cash-in-lieu of parkland reductions. Office developments that are located within the designated areas are eligible, provided they include a minimum of 7,000 square metres of new office space. The by-law will expire once 139,355 square metres of office space has qualified under the by-law, or five years from enactment, whichever occurs first.

#### **1.4.7. Vaughan City Wide Urban Design Guidelines**

The City of Vaughan's City Wide Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) were adopted by Vaughan Council in January 2018. The UDG provide performance-based directions for building and site design. The UDG provide for a level of design excellence and consistency across the City- they apply to all building types except for low density residential development (such as single family, semi-detached, duplex and triplex housing). The focus of the UDG are primarily on intensification areas such as Weston 7. The performance

standards outlined in the UDG are intended to be applied throughout the development process, and are identified in pre-consultation meetings and carried through the process.

As stated by the UDG, development in Vaughan is guided by the following principles:

1. Reflect Vaughan's unique context by promoting a green City development approach and contextual analysis that responds to sense of place
2. Promote Mid-Rise development as the 'missing middle' to connect nodes including historic settlement areas and employment areas
3. Encourage creativity and variety through context specific guidelines that respond to adjacent land uses, built form conditions and natural and cultural heritage
4. Frame and activate the public realm
5. Create a balance between built form and open space
6. Address interim development and changing conditions
7. Promote active transportation and healthy environments.

The UDG aims to realize these principles through a range of performance standards pertaining to site context, site and building design, landscape typologies, and building uses. While the majority of the performance standards in the UDG will apply to sites in Weston 7 at various stages of development, some sample standards include:

- Streets and Blocks (4.3.1) - new blocks should be a maximum of 250 metres in length to encourage walkable blocks, with mid-block connections.

- Development adjacent to employment and/or highways (4.3.9) should not impact the long term feasibility of employment lands, and should include setbacks, sound buffering and screening.
- Building location and orientation (5.2.1) - buildings should be positioned to frame adjacent streets, while minimizing the visual impact of parking, servicing and loading areas.
- Surface parking (5.2.3) - should be designed to reduce overall appearance through proper location and landscaping. Parking should not be located between a public road and the front or side yard of an institutional, low-rise, mid-rise or high-rise building.
- Buildings on Intensification Corridors (5.3.1) - will promote the Vaughan Green Approach by creating a consistent landscaped area at grade level.
- The Green Approach (6.1.1)- "create a network of green spaces, edges and buffers that collectively reconnect and enhance the City's existing natural systems while increasing the tree canopy."
- Mixed Use Buildings (7.2.1) - outlines specific standards for the design of mixed use buildings.

The principles and performance standards of the City of Vaughan UDG are well aligned with the general direction for intensification in the Weston 7 area, supporting excellence in design, appropriate transitions to surrounding sensitive land uses, an active public realm, and pedestrian and active transportation supportive environments. These performance standards will inform the development of the Weston 7

secondary plan, and should be used to support high-quality development in the area in future phases.

#### **1.4.8. Vaughan City Wide Streetscape Implementation Manual**

The Vaughan City Wide Streetscape Implementation Manual (Streetscape Manual) is an integrated design and financial framework intended to manage the design and costing of streetscapes in intensification areas. The Streetscape Manual does not address roadways or street cross-sections, but rather the public realm component- from the curb to building frontage. The intent of these streetscape improvements is to support active transportation, provide consistent quality of design, and design streets that are appropriate to their context.

The Streetscape Manual includes a context-sensitive design framework to guide streetscape improvement decision-making. The three factors considered are the road classification, streetscape type, and level of service. Road classifications refer to the classification within Vaughan's Transportation Master Plan. Streetscape types refer to the surrounding land uses or road functions, and include four categories- mixed use commercial, transit intensification corridor, technology/office, and neighbourhood. Finally, level of service refers to a consolidation of a number of factors, and falls into one of three categories- standard urban, enhanced, and premium.

The mixed-use, higher intensity quality of future development in the Weston 7 area will mean that a greater importance needs to be given to developing a quality pedestrian realm. The streetscape design guidelines provided in

the Streetscape Manual will be considered in preparing the land use concepts that will set the policy directions of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan. Further, the Streetscape Manual will be an important resource and guide in the Weston 7 Secondary Plan's implementation.

#### **1.4.9. Green Directions Vaughan**

Green Directions Vaughan was first issued in 2009 and as of 2018 is undergoing an update. Green Directions is Vaughan's city-wide sustainability plan, intended to help shape future development in Vaughan in a way that achieves a healthy natural environment, vibrant communities and a strong economy. Six goals structure the Green Directions document including:

1. To significantly reduce the use of natural resources and the amount of waste generated;
2. To ensure sustainable development and redevelopment;
3. To ensure that Vaughan is a City that is easy to get around with a low environmental impact;
4. To create a vibrant community where citizens, businesses and visitors thrive;
5. To demonstrate leadership in advocacy and education on sustainability issues; and
6. To ensure a supportive system for the implementation of Green Directions

A detailed description of Green Directions Vaughan is found in Urban Equation's Sustainability Analysis report, found in Appendix 3. The policy recommendations developed for the future growth of the Weston 7 area will need

to consider the Green Directions document as well as the update and reflect site-specific ways to reinforce these environmental directions on a local community level. The work of Urban Equation found in their Sustainability Analysis document takes the first step in applying this kind of thinking to Weston 7, including site-specific recommendations to consider in the future policy development for the area.

#### **1.5. Conclusions**

The policy framework for the Weston 7 area is one that is supportive of growth and intensification. From the provincial to the local level, the Weston 7 area is clearly identified as a strategic location where a portion of Vaughan's expected population and employment growth is to be accommodated. Phase 1 of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan development process will culminate in a final report that include draft policy directions for Weston 7. The recommendations developed as part of this work will be consistent with the policies described above and provide a framework for future stages of work leading up to the draft Secondary Plan.