



BUILDING A GREATER GTA  
Building Industry and Land  
Development Association

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COMMUNICATION	
F&A -	Nov 12/12
ITEM -	5

November 9, 2012

**Chair and Members of the Finance and Administration Committee**

Vaughan City Hall  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, Ontario  
L6A 1T1

Sent via email to: [clerks@vaughan.ca](mailto:clerks@vaughan.ca)

Dear Chair and Members of the Finance and Administration Committee,

**Re: November 12<sup>th</sup> Finance and Administration Committee  
Cash-in-lieu of Parkland Dedication for High Density Residential Development**

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The Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) is in receipt of the staff report for the Cash-in-lieu of Parkland Dedication for High Density Residential Development and we offer you the following comments in advance of the November 12<sup>th</sup> Finance and Administration Committee meeting.

In principle, we still believe that the process for this review should be produced in conjunction with the City of Vaughan's Official Plan exercise. Neighbouring municipalities have also followed this process in their own reviews. We believe that linking the reviews together is essential because many of the planning policy principles from the Official Plan inform this proposal, which will directly affect the quantum of fees, and /or the formula/rate being applied, which should be equitable for all development types.

BILD would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the members of this committee for the June 26<sup>th</sup> decision to defer this item to allow for consultation with our members. In doing so, BILD was able to meet with staff on a few occasions and at these meetings, staff showed a clear willingness to listen to our issues and discuss solutions.

Although the conversations took place, the staff report presented to Committee today notes that staff are continuing on their course to raise the quantum of the fee from \$4100 to \$8500 and while we value the consultation to date, our members have continued concerns for their proposed rate.

Given the advent of the shift in provincial, regional and municipal policies and development goals over recent years which aim to promote intensification, smart growth and high density developments near or in centres and corridors, our members are designing for this shift in development projects to adapt to such development goals. Accordingly, our industry is assisting in the achievement of these new developments and is proud to implement them.

BILD is significantly concerned that the City is considering implementation of such a high rate when it is contrary to the City's own policies for increased densities, and it is contrary to the Province's objectives for higher levels of intensification. If adopted, achieving these intensification objectives will prove even more challenging. BILD and its members believe that the City should look at a more

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balanced approach, as this increased rate will serve as a disincentive for increased levels of intensification.

We acknowledge that Vaughan is caught in a complex position where the City has maintained its competitiveness in past years by maintaining the rate, and the City is now benchmarking against neighbouring municipalities that have raised their fees.

The industry has considered Vaughan a leader in recent years because the City maintained its parkland dedication rate in erratic market conditions. Our industry recognized this as a clear willingness for Vaughan and our industry to continue course as partners in city building.

BILD urges you to stay the course and uphold these objectives now as the disconnection between the provincial Growth Plan's intensification objectives and the local municipal by-laws has never been more predominant. Affordability of home-ownership and choice are also growing industry concerns that are challenged by this proposal.

We acknowledge that staff have requested endorsement to complete a review or "credit report" of appropriate parkland credits for the intensification areas being the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and the Yonge/Steeles Secondary Plan area and other intensification areas throughout the City, as identified in the Vaughan Official Plan 2010. Ideally, this credit report would have come forward with this staff report. But, we do look forward to the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss this report in greater detail. We have submitted written comments to staff (*as attached*) that would support the preparation of this report.

**In closing, we strongly recommend that you to reconsider implementing a quantum of this magnitude and to encourage staff to present a figure that is reflective of intensification objectives and supportive of housing affordability.**

BILD appreciates the opportunity to submit comments and we look forward to meeting with you again with respect to the credit report. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if you have any comments or concerns.

Sincerely,



Danielle Chin, MCIP, RPP  
Municipal Government Advisor

CC:            *Michael Pozzebon, BILD York Chapter Chair*  
                 *Paula Tenuta, Vice President, Policy & Government Relations, BILD*  
                 *BILD Vaughan Parkland Dedication Working Group*

July 30, 2012

Ms. Liana Haughton  
Senior Manager of Real Estate  
City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, Ontario  
L6A 1T1

**Re: Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland Dedication High Density Residential Development**

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Dear Ms. Haughton,

The Building Industry and Land Development Association is in receipt of staff report entitled *Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland Dedication High Density Residential Development* and the presentation from the June 18<sup>th</sup> City of Vaughan's Finance & Administrative Committee, and we offer you the following comments to discuss at our July 30<sup>th</sup> consultation meeting.

In an effort to comprehensively review this proposal, BILD created a working group made up of active York Chapter members. This group met with staff on June 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss our preliminary issues. On July 24<sup>th</sup> our working group met to discuss the proposal, as well as to review the concerns and suggestions made by deputants at the June 18<sup>th</sup> committee of the whole meeting, and prepare the following list of issues and suggestions.

## **IN PRINCIPLE**

We believe that the process for this review should be produced in conjunction with the City of Vaughan's Official Plan exercise. Neighbouring municipalities have also followed this process in their own reviews. We believe that linking the reviews together is essential because many of the planning policy principles from the OP inform this proposal, which will directly affect the quantum of fees, and /or the formula/rate being applied, which should be done equitable for all product types.

### **(a) REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In an effort to comprehensively understand this proposal, we would like to request the amount of acres of parkland that the city is aiming to obtain as part of their parks program and the location of these sites. An illustration or mapping of this program would help our working group fully understand the methodology that the city has used. Additionally, we would like to request the amount of cash-in-lieu needed to this acquire parkland, and the current CIL balance, and historical acquisition values.

## **(b) PROACTIVE PARKLAND INVESTMENTS**

We support a parks program that seeks to make proactive investment in land bank park sites for current/future development. We believe that acquiring these sites should occur well in advance of the development applications in queue coming to market, to ensure they can be acquired by the city well in advance of a potential price increase and ready for the use of forthcoming residents.

## **(c) PRIORITIZE THE PROVINCIAL INTENSIFICATION OBJECTIVES**

We believe the application of parkland dedication policies at its maximum of 1 hectare for every 300 dwelling units runs counter to the intensification targets found in the *Growth Plan, 2006*.

The Province of Ontario has advocated for intensification to be the key direction for managing growth in communities throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe in its Places to Grow Plan. Integral to the Growth Plan is an emphasis on intensification and re-urbanization of existing built-up areas. In an effort to promote intensification in urban areas, they also provided a "Reduction in Parkland Dedication Payments" which outlines tools that a municipality can utilize to overcome some of the unintended effects. We support these tools and encourage the city to consider these options for all areas of the city.

## **(d) IMPLEMENT INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS**

BILD is concerned by the quantum of the charge; therefore we would support a reduced ratio. BILD recommends that the city consider a 'cap' on the formula that puts a ceiling on the maximum amount of parkland requirements to be obtained from a development, based on its size along a graduated threshold. Furthermore, the formula should be reduced to 0.4/ha for every 300 units, commensurate with an intensifying jurisdiction.

Where high density developments provide facilities, such as open space, exercise equipment, easements over open space in condominium lands for public through fare, etc., a discount on parkland requirements or levies could be provided.

In addition to developer/builder discounts for providing amenities as indicated above, consideration could be given to providing a tax rebate back to the homeowner representing the capital/operating savings to the municipalities.

Section 42.(6.2) and (6.3) of the *Planning Act* also permits the municipalities to invoke a reduction in parkland dedication payments if sustainability features are included in development proposals. We support the above noted tool and encourage the city to utilize it.

In an era of intensification, our members continuously seek efficiency in land use patterns. Perhaps there is an opportunity to look at an alternative to the definition of Parkland, stratified title agreements is one method of creating efficiencies in land use designs.

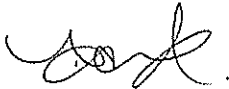
Additionally, if we view parkland as open space for recreational purposes, then we should also be able to include green roofs, woodlots, plazas, public/private easement and dry stormwater management ponds into the classification of parkland dedication. If no credits are to be provided, the current rate of \$4100 should be maintained in conjunction with a cap formula rate of 0.4 ha/300

units. Also, the city should apply the formula on a person per unit basis to ensure each apartment is equitably taxed.

## **NEXT STEPS**

BILD appreciates the opportunity to submit comments and we look forward to meeting with you again in advance of a final staff report being brought to Committee in the fall. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if you have any comments or concerns.

Sincerely,



Danielle Chin, MCIP, RPP  
Municipal Government Advisor

CC:            *John MacKenzie, Commissioner of Planning, City of Vaughan*  
                 *Michael Pozzebon, BILD York Chapter Chair*  
                 *Paula Tenuta, Vice President, Policy & Government Relations, BILD*  
                 *BILD Vaughan Parkland Dedication Working Group*

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*With more than 1,350 members, BILD, formed through the merger of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association and Urban Development Institute/Ontario is the voice of the land development, home building and professional renovation industry in the Greater Toronto Area. We are proudly affiliated with the Ontario and Canadian Home Builders' Associations.*

*Across the Greater Toronto Area, more than 193,300 jobs were created in the new home construction, land development and renovation fields in 2011. Those jobs generated more than \$10 billion in wages, which ripple out as purchases across the local economy, and provide more than \$6.5 million in provincial and federal government revenues last year.*