

**DRAFT WOODBRIDGE HERITAGE DISTRICT URBAN DESIGN
STREETSCAPE PLAN STUDY
WARD 2**

Recommendation

The Director of Development Planning recommends:

1. THAT the report and presentation entitled, "Draft Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan", BE RECEIVED as information.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the goals and objectives of Green Directions Vaughan, the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan, specifically:

How We Get Around

Goal 3: To ensure that getting around Vaughan is easy and has a low environmental impact.

Objective 3.1: To develop and sustain a network of sidewalks, paths and trails that supports all modes of non-vehicular transportation

Objective 3.2: To develop and sustain a network of roads that supports efficient and accessible public and private transit

How We Live

Goal 4: To create a vibrant community for citizens, business and visitors.

Objective 4.1: To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage

Objective 4.2: Ensure that the City of Vaughan attracts businesses and investment that will result in well-paying jobs for Vaughan citizens, a sustainable tax base and continuing prosperity into the 21st Century

Economic Impact

An implementation strategy for the build out of the Woodbridge Avenue Streetscape Plan will be delivered through this project, including detailed costing and phasing that considers the coordination and partnership with private development, civil engineering and urban design improvements to Woodbridge Avenue.

Communications Plan

The Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan is a result of an extensive public and stakeholder engagement process. The project used a combination of on-line techniques, place-based engagement, and focused workshop and open houses, with activities timed to support key project decisions along the way. A project web page with a vaughan.ca/designwoodbridge vanity URL was established to share project information and key public engagement dates. Public meetings were also advertised on SNAP Woodbridge online community events media, Vaughan TV, and communications via email and Canada Post.

Corporate Communications also supported awareness of public engagement events through social media using the #designwoodbridge hashtag.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan for information, and to receive Heritage Vaughan input on the proposed Woodbridge Avenue streetscape design prior to finalization of the plan.

Background

Synopsis:

The Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan Study will deliver a visual design guide for development within the study area for supplemental design guidance on how to implement the policies outlined in the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan and the Woodbridge Centre and Kipling Avenue Secondary Plans. Additionally, a conceptual streetscape plan for Woodbridge Avenue between Islington Avenue and Kipling Avenue will provide the City of Vaughan and York Region with a public realm vision, layout and design details for improvements to this important heritage main street, including gateways. The project delivery process included extensive consultation with the community, landowners, multiple city departments and external agencies. The resulting streetscape plan will be an integrated Complete Street design, delivering upon the need to transform what is today a vehicle-dominated corridor into a greener, pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal street that celebrates existing heritage features, landscape context, social life and cultural activities. As a public realm framework, the streetscape plan will coordinate future development interfaces with Woodbridge Avenue, and inform civil engineering, parks development, urban design and transit facility works in the short, medium and long terms. The implementation strategy will include capital, operations and maintenance costing with phasing recommendations.

Ward 2

Woodbridge Avenue Streetscape Plan - Approach and Methodology

The Woodbridge Avenue Streetscape Plan is a public realm design concept to support the identity, functions and mixed uses needed for Woodbridge Avenue to be a successful and resilient commercial main street in the Heritage Conservation District. To this end, a coordinated public realm design considers the evolving fabric of architecture, programs and seasonality, scale and edge conditions, landscape features, connections and the experience of people in this unique place. The Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan will coordinate future private development interfaces with Woodbridge Avenue in order to maximize pedestrian space along the street and to ensure a coherent public realm identity. The overall approach to the streetscape design is to protect and leverage the cultural and natural heritage qualities of the District, while responding to contemporary demands on the street as a multi-modal movement corridor and as a public space for people.

Early in the study process, it became clear that the streetscape design for Woodbridge Avenue requires an integrated design solution including civil engineering components, to transform the existing vehicle-dominated street into the vision described through policy documents. A gap analysis was conducted by the consulting team to identify key issues and opportunities for the street. Staff and the consulting team heard through the public engagement process that pedestrian safety, especially crossing Woodbridge Avenue, is a big concern. The team also heard

that the existing streetscape does not reflect the pride and aspirations of the community or support its function as the main social and commercial hub in the Heritage Conservation District. Additionally, the preservation of existing mature trees and additional street tree planting is important to the community. The resulting integrated design objectives of the renewed street are to: reduce conflicts between modes of movement, promote active transportation, support social activity, build on the unique access to the Humber River system, capture inspiring educational, heritage and interpretive moments, provide ecosystem services, increase the street tree canopy, ensure the design is financially sustainable, and to create a strong public realm identity for the Heritage Conservation District. City departments will use this streetscape framework to inform and coordinate their respective capital projects along Woodbridge Avenue and for future application to Regional partnership funding for the gateway design at Islington Avenue. Implementation and ongoing operations and maintenance have been considered throughout the design process to deliver a street design and phasing strategy that captures both short term opportunities and longer term strategic value for social, environmental and economic prosperity.

Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)

This report relates to the following Term of Council Priorities:

- Improve municipal road network
- Continue to develop transit, cycling and pedestrian options to get around the City
- Re-establish the urban tree canopy
- Invest, renew and manage infrastructure and assets
- Continue to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens
- Attract investment and create jobs
- Continue to cultivate an environmentally sustainable city
- Support and promote arts, culture, heritage and sports in the community
- Continue to advance a culture of excellence in governance

Regional Implications

The study area includes the interface with Islington Avenue, a Regional Road, at its eastern boundary. Accordingly, the Woodbridge Avenue Streetscape Plan includes a gateway design for the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District at Islington Avenue. This gateway design is eligible for Regional partnership funding through the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program (MSPP). The study area includes a Special Policy Area (Schedule 9 in the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan) associated with the Humber River floodplain. The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has participated in the project consultation process.

Conclusion

The draft Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan document provides detailed design guidance for the built environment and public realm in the study area to help achieve the policies of the Secondary Plans and the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan. The success of the public realm and the unique character of place are important for the long term social, cultural, and economic sustainability of the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District. As the main commercial street and social destination in the District, the ambition is to transform Woodbridge Avenue into a pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal street with a coherent public realm identity that showcases heritage assets and landscape character and with public spaces, connections and amenities that enhance daily life. The streetscape plan is a long term framework to coordinate public realm improvements and capital projects, and to inform future private development along the street.

Attachments

1. Study Area Map

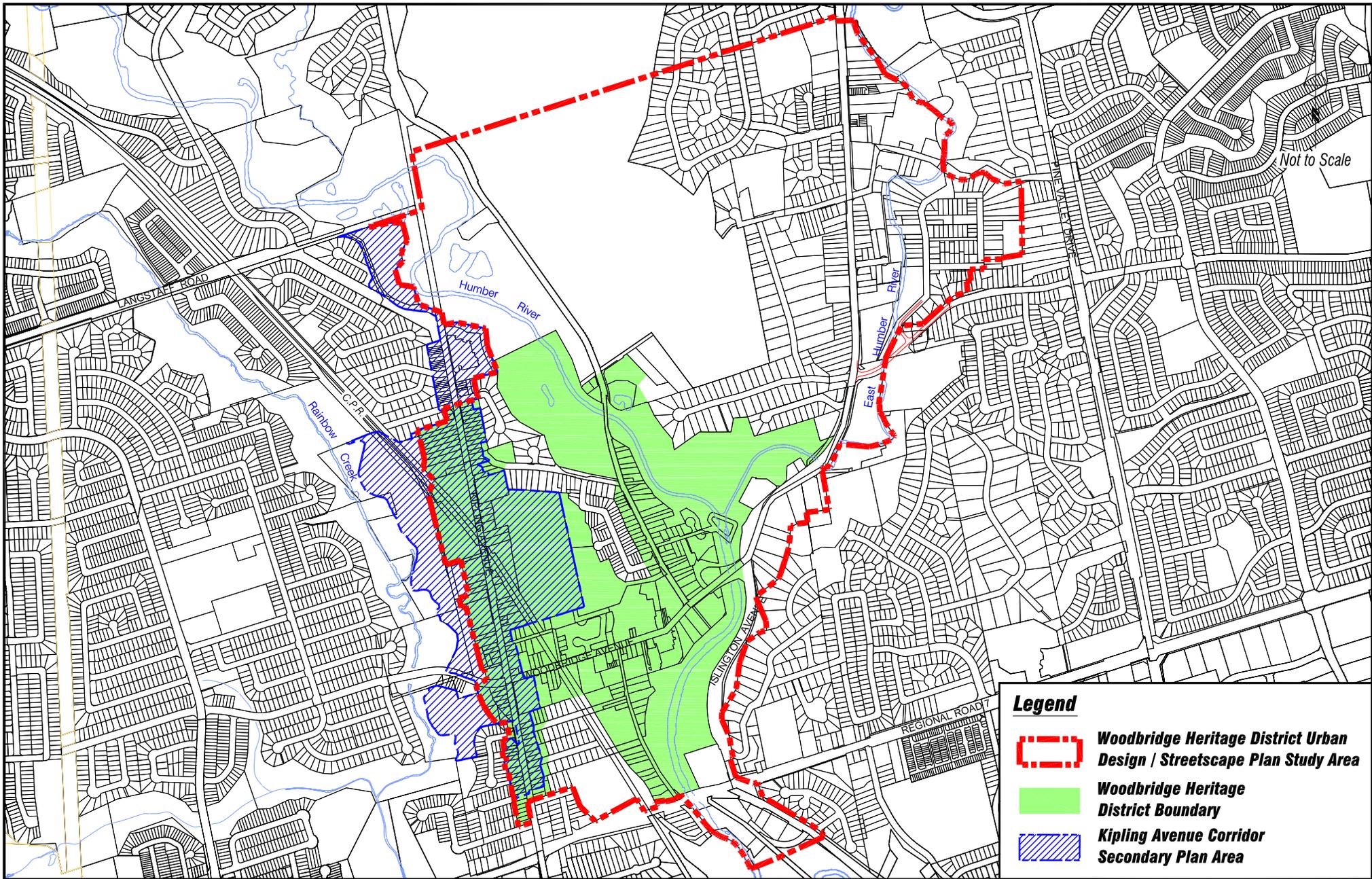
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Respectfully submitted,

Grant Uyeyama,
Director of Development Planning

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Woodbridge Heritage District Urban Design Streetscape Plan Study - Location Map

LOCATION: Part of Lots 5 - 11, Concessions 7 & 8

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Attachment

FILE:
DP-9029-12

DATE:
March 10, 2015

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