



# Woodbridge Centre

## SECONDARY PLAN



Prepared for: The City of Vaughan, September, 2010

FINAL DOCUMENT





# WOODBRIIDGE CENTRE SECONDARY PLAN

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## **PART A – PREAMBLE OF THE PLAN**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE WOODBRIDGE CENTRE SECONDARY PLAN**

#### **1.1 Location**

The Secondary Plan generally includes the area between the east boundary of the Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan to the west, the Humber River valley and Special Policy Area (SPA) lands east of Islington to the east, Langstaff Road to the north and Regional Road 7 to the south. Lands in the SPA south of Regional Road 7 are also subject to the policies of this Plan. The Kipling Avenue area, while forming a part of the study area, is not subject to the policies of this Secondary Plan. The Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan, formerly Official Plan Amendment 695, which was approved in June 2009, remains as a stand-alone policy document. See Schedule 1: Policy Areas for the Plan boundaries.

#### **1.2 Plan Process and Public Consultation**

##### **Plan Process**

The Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan process was initiated by the City of Vaughan in March 2009. The planning process included a background document review and compilation of policy; a land use and urban design analysis and development of a cohesive vision and principles for the Plan Area; the development of a consolidated policy framework and urban design guidelines; a transportation assessment for the preferred land use scenario; a parking needs and commercial sector review; an assessment of sustainable development measures; a review of the Special Policy Area in terms of boundaries, flood risk, and policy; a parkland/open space assessment review; and finally, the development of a Secondary Plan document. The development of the policy framework included ongoing coordination with the City of Vaughan Official Plan process with respect to aligning overall principles, goals and objectives, and intensification analysis and directions.

##### **Public Consultation**

With the anticipation of changes regarding land use and urban design policies, the Plan Process included a series of public consultation events for the purpose of ensuring public awareness of the changes to the area and to the City, as well as determining resident's objectives for their community, and garnering community participation and input in the development of the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan. Participants included residents, property owners, and other key

community stakeholders, and events were regularly attended by City Staff, Council and associated consultants.

The consultation process also integrated Public Open House events held for the purpose of review of the City Official Plan, as well as a focused charrette with City staff and the Sora delegation from Italy for the purpose of generating design scenarios for the development of Market Lane.

The following are a list of the combined consultation scenarios:

- a. The Sora Charrette (May, 2009) – Design Development for Market Lane
- b. Vaughan Official Plan Public Open House (May 28, 2009)
- c. Woodbridge Centre Study Kick-off Public Open House 1 (September, 2009), included a presentation of the Analysis, Principles, Goals, Objectives, and a Cohesive Vision for the Study Area
- d. Vaughan Official Plan Public Open House (November, 2009)
- e. Woodbridge Centre Public Open House 2 (February, 2010), included a presentation of the Draft Land Use and SPA Policies and Urban Design Guidelines
- f. Woodbridge Centre Ward 2 and 3 Public Open Houses (April, 2010)
- g. A Statutory Public Hearing (June, 2010)

### **1.3 Purpose, Scope, and Focus of the Secondary Plan**

The primary focus of the Plan is to provide guidance for development and investments in the Woodbridge Centre. While much of the Woodbridge Centre area is either stable residential areas or open space, the Plan includes policies to direct modest intensification along Woodbridge Avenue and Islington Avenue. Together with the Kipling Avenue Corridor, Woodbridge Avenue and Islington Avenue comprise the main character areas of the Secondary Plan to which the urban design framework applies.



The City of Vaughan recently adopted the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan. The Woodbridge HCD provides an over-arching framework for the urban design policies of the Secondary Plan.

The Special Policy Area (SPA) review is another key component of the Secondary Plan. SPA policies and boundaries are updated to reflect the most recent policy direction from the Province and revised information and guidelines from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority regarding flooding hazards and flood vulnerable sites.

In addition, the Secondary Plan provides updated land use and policies to ensure conformity of planning policy with current Provincial, Regional, City, and TRCA policies, particularly with respect to issues of intensification, urban design, transportation, sustainable development measures, and the natural environment.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

### **2.1 Background**

In the last seven years the Woodbridge Focused Study Area has been the subject of four studies: the Islington Avenue Study (2002) resulting in OPA 597; the Kipling Corridor Study (2008), resulting in OPA 695; the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Study (2008); and the Highway #7 Land Use Study (2007), resulting in OPA 661. Each of these studies had its specific Terms of Reference and focus in relation to the Secondary Plan area.

The purpose of the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan is to identify any gaps in the overall policy framework for the area, which encompasses the Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan (formerly OPA 695), the Islington Avenue Corridor OPA 597 area, the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan area, and a small portion of the Highway #7 OPA 661 area, as identified on Schedule 1: Policy Areas. The remainder of the Secondary Plan Area is subject to the policies of Volume 1 of the City of Vaughan Official Plan.

A specific focus of the Plan is to provide an overall urban design framework for the entire Plan area and to update the Special Policy Area (SPA) mapping and policies in consultation with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement. The SPA review informs any decisions to change land use designations in the areas identified as the SPA based on an assessment of flood risk in conjunction with community planning objectives. In addition, the process was to ensure consistency of planning policy with current Provincial, Regional, City, and TRCA policies as mentioned above.

Since the Kipling Avenue Corridor Study (2008) was just recently completed and entailed a comprehensive review of land uses and urban design, this Secondary Plan does not amend the policies of the Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan.

Part 1 of the City of Vaughan Official Plan sets the general policy context for the Woodbridge Community Area. Where any of the policies of the Secondary Plan conflict with the policies set out in Volume 1 of the Official Plan, the policies of this Secondary Plan shall prevail.

## **2.2 Area History**

Woodbridge is one of four historic villages within the City of Vaughan, and the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District (HCD) within Woodbridge Centre represents one of the highest concentrations of heritage properties in the City. Woodbridge has always been an attractive place to live and do business since its founding, given its location within the valley and table lands associated with the Humber River; and its proximity to other communities. The Humber River was recently designated as a Canadian Heritage River and is part of the Carrying Place Trail system identified in the Humber River Watershed Plan.

## **2.3 Policy Framework**

The Plan area is subject to Provincial, Regional, and municipal policy, some of which are referenced below:

### **2.3.1 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)**

The PPS supports efficient land use, a mix of housing types and densities, residential intensification, public transit ridership, and the protection of cultural heritage and natural heritage resources. The PPS provides guidance on the reduction of costs and the risks to public safety with policies on natural hazards. It encourages growth in built up areas by providing opportunity for mixed uses, housing and employment, parks and open spaces, transportation choices and pedestrian movement.

Section 3 of the PPS addresses natural hazards, including flooding hazards, and provides direction regarding policies and boundaries applying to a Special Policy Area.

### **2.3.2 Places to Grow Act, 2006**

The Places to Grow Act provides a vision and growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in southern Ontario and is based on a set of principles for guiding

decisions on how land is to be developed and public investments are managed. The Places to Grow Act supports the following principals:

1. Building compact vibrant neighbourhoods;
2. Protect, conserve, enhance and wisely use valuable natural resources such as land, air and water for current and future generations;
3. Optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth in a compact, efficient form;
4. Provide for different approaches to managing growth that recognize the diversity of communities; and
5. Promote collaboration among all sectors including government, private and non-profit, and community members to achieve the vision.

### 2.3.3 York Region Official Plan (ROP)

The York Region Official Plan (ROP) is the upper tier planning document, to which the City of Vaughan's planning documents must conform with respect to goals, objectives, and policies. The ROP provides the framework for the overall planning structure for the Region, including specific guidance and policies for the urban structure and regionally significant areas relevant to the context of this Plan, including:

1. Directing the majority of growth to the Urban Areas identified in the Regional Structure Plan. The Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan area is located within the identified Urban Area;
2. Protecting and restoring the Regional Greenlands System as a permanent resource of the Region. The Humber River and the Rainbow Creek corridors are identified as part of the Regional Greenlands System;
3. Creating employment opportunities across the Region and reducing the overall levels of travel;
4. Providing rapid transit services linking the Regional Centres within the adjacent urban area. Highway 7 within the Plan area is identified as a Regional Rapid Transit Corridor; and

5. Promoting healthy communities by providing employment opportunities, encouraging the use of public transit, promoting walking, cycling trails, providing a range of housing options, protecting the natural environment, and improving community partnerships.

#### 2.3.4 The New City of Vaughan Official Plan

The “vision for transformation” for the new City of Vaughan Official Plan (new City of Vaughan OP), is based on eight key principles or themes; seven of which relate directly to the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan area. These seven principles are described as follows:

1. **Strong and Diverse Communities:** The Vaughan Official Plan (VOP) seeks to maintain the stability of existing residential communities, direct well designed, sensitive growth to strictly defined areas, and provide for a wide range of housing choices, full range of community services and amenities within each community.
2. **A Robust and Prominent Countryside:** A focus of the Plan is to maintain a prominent and accessible countryside within Vaughan.
3. **A Diverse Economy:** Build on Vaughan’s economic success through policies which aim to diversify the local economy.
4. **Moving Around without a Car:** The VOP focuses on planning and design policies that make walking, cycling and transit use realistic options for moving around.
5. **Design Excellence and Memorable Places:** The two river valley corridors and the historic village cores, and parks, are identifiable placemaking features in Vaughan. There is a focus on accommodating growth, in a manner that contributes to the overall beauty of the city.
6. **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 and allow for alternative transportation choices.
7. **Directing Growth to Appropriate Locations:** The VOP provides an appropriate balance in this regard by accommodating 45% of new residential growth through intensification. These areas are outlined

through the “Where and How to Grow Report” prepared by Urban Strategies Inc. for the purposes of the VOP.

The principles and objectives of the Woodbridge Centre are very much aligned with those of the Vaughan Official Plan. Important objectives of the Secondary Plan are to maintain the low-rise residential character of the area, protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage, and to permit intensification where appropriate, in a manner sensitive to the environment and heritage character.

### 2.3.5 Previous Official Plan Amendments

This Secondary Plan also takes into consideration the policy framework that originated in the previous Official Plan Amendments for the area. Some of the key principles, objectives, and policies of the past Amendments have helped shape and define those established for this Plan. Policy recommendations of OPA 240 – the Woodbridge Community Plan, OPA 440 the Woodbridge Commercial Core, OPA 597 the Islington Avenue Corridor are updated in the context of this Plan to address policy recommendations of the recently approved Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan (2009), and current Provincial and Regional policies respecting urban intensification and planning for healthy communities, urban corridors, and local centres.

## **3.0 THE VISION FOR THE SECONDARY PLAN**

### **3.1 Overall Character of Development and Vision**

The Woodbridge Centre has a distinct character within the larger Woodbridge context in that it is defined by its heritage features and mixed uses, including commercial, institutional, residential, and open spaces. The Woodbridge Commercial Core is the historical commercial centre of the community and should continue to serve as an important social gathering area and commercial focus. The vision of the Plan is one of an enhanced local centre, with some residential intensification, a strong animated commercial avenue, and a designated public square. The Islington Avenue corridor while also providing some residential intensification where appropriate should retain the predominantly low density character and community-in-a-forest quality of the established adjacent neighbourhoods. The retention of the natural features and views, the focus on heritage character, quality built form, and the expansion and connection of the open space system through this Secondary Plan, is intended to promote a stronger identity and community cohesiveness for the Woodbridge Centre.

A key aspect of the vision is the support for a shift in the dependency of vehicular use to other transportation modes such as transit, cycling, and walking. The vision for the Woodbridge Centre recommends the intensification of development that supports this multi-modal shift as opposed to future road widening. The vision also builds upon other initiatives such as the City of Vaughan's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, which also seeks to establish a shift toward non-auto modes of travel in order to create a healthier pedestrian-friendly environment and encourage healthier lifestyles.

## **3.2 Land Use Designations**

### **3.2.1 Proposed Land Use Designations in the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan**

The Secondary Plan is based on the policy framework that originated in the Woodbridge Community Plan, the Woodbridge Commercial Core Plan and the Islington Avenue Corridor Plan (2006). This Plan updates the policy framework of the former Plans to address the recommendations of the recently approved Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan (2009), and the current Provincial and Regional policies respecting urban intensification and planning for healthy communities, urban corridors, and local centres. A primary focus of the new policies is urban design. The land use designations for the Woodbridge Commercial Core, the Islington Avenue corridor, and the low density neighbourhoods, incorporate specific urban design policies to strengthen the identified character of each. The Secondary Plan also presents a framework for urban design policies throughout the entire Secondary Plan area.

The entire Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan area, including the Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan area, is projected for a total of approximately 4,230 residential dwellings by the 2031 time horizon.

The Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan includes three distinct character areas: The established Low-Rise Residential neighbourhoods, the Woodbridge Commercial Core, and the Islington Avenue Corridor area as shown on Schedule 5: Distinct Character Areas.

#### **1. The Established Low-Rise Residential Neighbourhoods**

The Plan maintains the low density residential character of the established neighbourhoods and therefore no land use changes are proposed in these areas. The land use policies of Volume 1 of the Official Plan apply to the Low-Rise Residential land use designation of this Secondary Plan. The overall design framework policies developed in this Plan (Part B: Section 5.0 and 6.0), including

the proposed Public Realm enhancements, also apply to lands designated Low-Rise Residential by this Plan.

## 2. The Woodbridge Commercial Core

The Woodbridge Commercial Core, as shown on Schedule 5 is a local centre providing retail, business, and commercial services to the surrounding community. This area was also identified as an area of intensification in the “Where and How to Grow” report for the City of Vaughan Official Plan Review. The Secondary Plan provides for approximately 600 additional dwelling units in the Woodbridge Commercial Core, which is considered beneficial to the vitality and economic health of the local centre. This represents an increase of approximately 200 dwelling units in addition to the 400 dwelling units that could redevelop on available parcels and according to previous approved policies.

The development densities shown on Schedule 3 are derived based on the following factors:

- a. selecting vacant parcels or parcels with a high redevelopment potential;
- b. deriving densities, expressed as Floor Space Index (FSI), for select properties by testing height and built floor coverage within the parameters of the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan (2009); and
- c. considering the proportion of the property in the TRCA regulated area.

In accordance with the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan (2009), this Secondary Plan proposes that development facing the Woodbridge Avenue frontage and Market Lane Public Square frontage must include commercial uses at grade level. This land use policy will reinforce the historical function of this area as a commercial and social focus of the community and enhance the pedestrian quality of the street.

## 3. The Islington Avenue Corridor

The Islington Avenue Corridor is to retain its primarily low density character, with pockets of established higher density residential. An increase of approximately 276 residential units (above what was previously allowed) is estimated on Islington Avenue between Gamble Street and Davidson Drive. The remaining lower density lands immediately fronting Islington Avenue along this short section



of the street corridor have been re-designated from an FSI of approximately 0.3 to 0.5 (with the possibility for an additional 0.5 FSI bonus density to achieve a maximum total FSI of 1.0).

The re-designation of these lands is considered appropriate in the context of the existing adjacent Low-Rise Residential (0.5 FSI) in this section of the street corridor.

The Special Policy Area (SPA) review which forms a component of the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan process concluded that no further intensification shall be permitted in SPA located in the Islington Avenue corridor due to associated flood risks. As a result, the Secondary Plan proposes that where the previous Islington Avenue corridor Plan had proposed increases in density within the SPA, these areas be returned to a Low-Rise Residential designation at the following locations:

- a. immediately north of Davidson Drive on the west side of Islington Avenue;
- b. north of Woodbridge Avenue on the east side of Islington Avenue; and
- c. at the intersection of Woodbridge Avenue and Islington Avenue on the east side of Islington Avenue.

#### 4. The Hayhoe Mills Industrial Site at Pine Grove Road

This Secondary Plan re-designates the Hayhoe Mills site from its long standing industrial use to Commercial Mixed-Use and Public Park use as shown on Schedule 2 - Land Use Plan. The City was advised in the latter stages of the planning process that the land owner was no longer interested in operating the mill, and subsequently asked to consider alternative uses for the site. Since the lands are located partially within an SPA, and below top of bank, alternative uses must comply with the policies related to these environmental conditions.

Given the restrictions associated with Provincial policies for lands located within an SPA and/or below top of bank, the alternatives are limited to commercial and parkland uses. It is considered appropriate in the context of the surrounding residential uses to permit a re-designation of the westerly portion of the lands to commercial mixed-use, including small scale grade related retail and business office, cafes, and small restaurant uses; and, cultural and recreational facilities. The easterly part of the lands are located in the more sensitive portion of the SPA, and given the need for parkland in the Secondary Plan area, provide a

good opportunity for a public park use. The public park at this particular location permits ideal trail connections between the established Pine Grove Road trail and the valley trails of the Humber River.

### 3.2.2 Low-Rise Residential

The Low-Rise Residential designations provided in the Secondary Plan consist of houseform buildings and community related functions in a low-rise form no greater than 5 storeys. The different numerical symbols which follow the Low-Rise Residential designations are provided for easy reference to the specific height maximums, housing forms, and design policies applicable to the various Low-Rise Residential areas of the Plan.

### 3.2.3 Low-Rise Mixed-Use

Low-Rise Mixed-Use areas of this Secondary Plan are located on the Woodbridge Avenue and Market Lane Public Square frontages within the Woodbridge Commercial Core. They are primarily residential areas with an integrated mix of community and small scale retail uses intended to serve the local population. The commercial component is to be integrated on the ground floor of buildings facing Woodbridge Avenue and Market Lane Public Square. Stand alone commercial or residential uses shall not be permitted fronting Woodbridge Avenue and Market Lane Public Square. Stand alone residential development, where the lot depth permits, is intended for the areas to the rear of buildings located on Woodbridge Avenue and Market Lane Public Square within this designation.

Low-Rise Mixed-Use areas shall be carefully designed in accordance with the specific design policies provided for the Woodbridge Commercial Core and Market Lane Public Square contained in Part B: Section 4.0 of this Plan.

### 3.2.4 Mid-Rise Residential-Use

There are two areas of Mid-Rise Residential within the Woodbridge Commercial Core, the established six-storey condominium on Arbors Lane, and the lands located to the rear of 121, 131, and 137 Woodbridge Avenue. The Mid-Rise Residential designation supports the commercial viability of the local centre, and adds to the diversity of housing within the Secondary Plan.

### 3.2.5 Mid-Rise Mixed-Use

Mid-Rise Mixed-Use areas are located in the Woodbridge Commercial Core, fronting Woodbridge Avenue. These areas are primarily residential with an integrated mix of community and small scale retail uses intended to serve the local population. The commercial component is to be integrated on the ground floor of buildings facing Woodbridge Avenue. Similar to the Low-Rise Mixed-Use designation, stand alone commercial or residential uses shall not be permitted fronting Woodbridge Avenue. These areas of greater residential density help establish the local centre as a vibrant area and also aid in achieving the City's intensification objectives.

Mid-Rise Mixed-Use areas shall be carefully designed in accordance with the specific design policies provided for the Woodbridge Commercial Core in Part B: Section 4.0 of this Plan.

### 3.2.6 Commercial Mixed-Use (1) Designation

Lands designated as Commercial Mixed-Use (1) are located along the Islington Avenue corridor, with the exception of the re-designated Hayhoe Mills site which is located on Pine Grove Road. They shall be predominantly commercial areas appropriate for non-residential intensification and making efficient use of existing and planned transit investments. These areas shall be developed with commercial buildings that allow for a variety of business use to occur in close proximity to each other in order to assist the City in achieving its overall employment targets and intensification objectives. It should be noted that all existing commercial uses on Islington Avenue are located in the SPA. For this reason, some uses permitted in the Commercial Mixed-Use designation within Volume 1 such as hotels, gas stations, and day care, have been excluded from the Commercial Mixed-Use (1) designation of this Secondary Plan.

## 3.3 Urban Design

### 3.3.1 A Comprehensive Urban Design Framework

One of the key objectives of this Secondary Plan is to provide an overall urban design framework for the Woodbridge Centre area. The urban design guidelines associated with studies applicable to areas within the Woodbridge Centre area have been reviewed. In addition, a set of general policies have been developed to provide an urban design policy framework in support of detailed urban design guidelines. The following conclusions have been made in terms of providing a comprehensive set of urban design policies for this Secondary Plan, as well as a

comprehensive set of guidelines in the corresponding Woodbridge Centre Urban Design Guidelines document:

1. All policies and guidelines from the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan (WHCD) apply to the areas within the WHCD boundary of the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan.
2. Additional policies are introduced to address identified gaps in the existing framework of urban design policies, including:
  - a. policies for the protection of the heritage character of the stable residential neighbourhoods;
  - b. specific urban design policies to further define and enhance the character of the Islington Avenue Corridor, Clarence Street, and Woodbridge Avenue, and to guide development in these areas;
  - c. the identification of new open spaces and trail opportunities to achieve the required parkland and recreational needs for the area; and
  - d. opportunities to create a pedestrian-oriented environment, encouraging a shift to other modes of travel.

The majority of the urban design policies within the Islington Avenue OPA 597 (not including the environmental guidelines), have been replaced by specific urban design policies established for this Plan.

1. Urban design policies that are specific to the Islington Avenue area are identified in Part B: Section 4.2.4 Urban Design Policies.
2. Specific urban design policies have been developed for the Woodbridge Commercial Core and the Market Lane Site Specific Development Area, and are identified in Part B: Section 4.1.3 Urban Design Policies.
3. Specific urban design policies have been developed for Clarence Street regarding the protection of its right-of-way, and are identified in Part B: Section 5.1.1 Urban Form.

### **3.4 Parks and Open Space**

The purpose of the parks and open space review undertaken in the Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan process was to assess the current service levels of parks and open space for the Woodbridge Centre community in response to the

recommendations brought forward in the *Active Together Master Plan, 2008*, taking into consideration the future demands that growth and intensification will have on the area, and as such, on the existing parks and open spaces. Woodbridge Centre is considered an area of intensification in accordance with Volume 1 of the City official Plan, particularly the Woodbridge Commercial Core and the Kipling Avenue Corridor areas (as identified in the “Where and How to grow Report”). The official Plan recognizes that intensifying communities are the focus for, “new and creative parkland opportunities provided on a more urban scale, mostly in the form of Neighbourhood Parks and Public Squares”. The Official Plan also recognizes that more efficient and intensive park use will become the trend. Such is the case for Woodbridge Centre.

#### 3.4.1 Current and Future Service Levels

Currently, the Woodbridge Centre area has a sufficient amount of active and passive parkland resources to meet the needs of the existing community, in compliance with the standards set forth in the Provincial Planning Act. The area is currently in excess of active parkland by approximately 4.43 hectares. Public squares in this Secondary Plan are calculated as part of the active parkland dedication, and are considered to function in the same fashion as Neighbourhood Parks, accommodating both active and passive use. In terms of passive parkland, all of the active parks within the study area function to accommodate both active and passive recreation. In addition, the proximity to the natural areas provides opportunities to augment the passive recreation for the area by completing the trail system through the valley open spaces.

The total existing and proposed active park space is 15.77 hectares. An estimated total dwelling units for the Woodbridge Centre is in the range of 4,230, requiring 14.10 hectares of active parkland. The area, therefore, has sufficient active park space to meet projected future development.

#### 3.4.2 A Parks and Open Space Framework

The Woodbridge Centre Secondary Plan recognizes not only the long-term goals of the Active Together Master Plan, but also that a diversity of park types will be required to suit a growing urban community. In this regard, the Plan provides a parks and open space framework and policies with the objective to continue to maintain levels of parkland services, to provide services that are suitable to a changing community, and to maximize the potential for increased use of existing parks and open space. There is an abundance of valley open space in the area that provides opportunities for passive recreational activity, such as trail use, to augment the overall parks and open space service requirements for the community. There is also an abundance of larger neighbourhood and regional

scale parks and facilities adjacent to the area that can be made more accessible with improved trail connections, pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, and an improved transit system.

The parks and open space framework also takes into consideration increasing the potential for accessible, spontaneous, community-oriented recreation, and day-to-day activity, including more children and youth play areas and community gathering places, by increasing the integration of public squares and neighbourhood parks within a five minute walk of all parts of the residential neighbourhoods. With enhanced streetscapes and an animated commercial core, the built form and open space framework provides opportunities for increased café spaces, dog walking routes, street events and civic gatherings, all connected by an expanded and complete trails system. All aspects of the public realm, including the main streets shall become attractive areas to recreate on a day-to-day basis.

More specifically, the Parks and Open Space Framework and policies will:

1. Establish the parks identified in this Secondary Plan;
2. Provide a more even distribution of park types throughout the community;
3. Improve the trails network, creating a connected network of parks and open spaces within the area and improve connections to outer-lying open spaces such as the surrounding regional parks within the valley system;
4. Create a green streetscape environment that is inviting, pedestrian friendly, and accessible;
5. Introduce more urban public open spaces and gathering places such as public squares that are flexible in use and vary in size. The Market Lane Public Square along Woodbridge Avenue is envisioned as the central open space hub for the community;
6. Maintain a regular practice of upgrading existing parks and facilities to meet the needs of a changing community;
7. Continue the process of actively seeking land for park use, that is designed in accordance with Volume 1 of the City Official Plan, Section 7.3.2; and
8. Ensure that the acquisition of new parks and open spaces shall continue under the provisions of the Planning Act through the use of parkland dedication or cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication, as well as through the

parkland dedication policies in Section 7.3.3 of Volume 1 of the City Official Plan.

### **3.5 The Environment**

There are two main themes driving the environmental policies. The first theme addresses protection of environmental features and ecosystem functions. This includes opportunities to enhance the system of core features either through habitat additions or habitat improvements. Core features are protected from development and comprise the Natural Heritage Network as shown on Schedule 2 of the City of Vaughan Official Plan, consistent with the Regional Greenlands policies in the Region of York Official Plan (2009). The Special Policy Area (SPA) policies fall under this general theme as the flood plain and river valleys are natural heritage features, but are addressed separately given the prominence of the SPA in the Woodbridge area. Environmental policies addressing natural heritage protection are located in Part B - Section 7.0 of the Plan.

Schedule 2 of the City of Vaughan Official Plan (Volume 1) also identifies Built-up Valley Lands in the Woodbridge Secondary Plan area. These are existing and occupied developed lands located below the physical top of bank and contribute to the overall Natural Heritage Network. It is noted in the City of Vaughan Official Plan (Volume 1) that “new development and/or site alterations on Built-up Valley Lands are prohibited, except where a Secondary Plan or site-specific management strategy has been developed, to the satisfaction of the City and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.”

The second theme addresses sustainable built form to reduce ecological footprints of development. This is addressed in Part B - Section 7.3 of the Plan and includes measures to use resources more efficiently, such as energy and water conservation measures for new buildings, and promote active transportation and transit use. Stormwater management measures are also addressed to reflect the prominence of the Humber River in the Woodbridge Centre area and the extent of existing development below the top of bank.

### **3.6 Cultural Heritage**

The Woodbridge Centre is part of one of the five historic villages in Vaughan and conservation of its heritage resources is paramount in this Secondary Plan. The policies of the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan will guide development within the WHCD boundaries. In addition, development of areas outside of the WHCD boundary must comply with the Cultural Heritage policies identified in the Official Plan for the protection, conservation, maintenance, and promotion of heritage resources.



### **3.7 The Transportation Network**

The approach to transportation in this Secondary Plan fully supports the objectives and policies of the Official Plan Volume 1 in terms of transforming transportation in Vaughan, and more so, in its heritage villages. The Transportation Network for the Woodbridge Centre must provide a safe, efficient, pedestrian-oriented movement system, and enable a variety of transportation options to function in a well-balanced way, and meet the needs of future development in the area.

For the purpose of this secondary plan, a separate traffic impact analysis was completed in examination of existing traffic conditions as well as future scenario with respect to the proposed land use strategies within the Woodbridge Focus Area by the year 2031. In addition to transportation recommendations in the Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan, and consistent with the York Region Transportation Master Plan Update, key transportation recommendations are identified below.

#### **3.7.1 Transportation Impact Assessment**

The criteria established for the movement system is guided and supported by a Transportation Impact Assessment for the area. The assessment is meant to guide decisions respecting the amount of future development in the Woodbridge Centre, establish informed projections for future transportation conditions, and provide the City with conclusions and recommendations for future transportation and development, and plan implementation.

The transportation Impact Analysis indicated that the additional site traffic generated onto area roadways would result in a slight increase in congestion levels along Woodbridge Avenue and Clarence Street, as compared with the current roadway operations. Results also indicated that the future traffic growth can be accommodated in the future during both the AM and PM peak hours, albeit at levels somewhat lower than desired. Close monitoring of the traffic conditions within and adjacent to the Woodbridge Focus Area, will be necessary in conjunction with the proposed development being constructed in the future. In addition, through the review of development applications, the City will pursue opportunities to implement geometric improvements at the Kipling Avenue/Woodbridge Avenue intersection to enhance roadway safety.

The Regional intersections of Highway 7/Kipling Avenue and Highway 7/Islington Avenue will operate close to its capacity during both AM and PM peak periods with some movements likely to experience significant delays. The City will support efforts by the Region of York to improve the Highway 7 intersections at

Kipling Avenue and Islington Avenue in conjunction with the implementation of upgrading VIVA service.

Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies include requiring TDM plans for major new developments and adopting TDM initiatives to encourage alternative modes of travel are essential for reducing single occupant vehicle use. With the successful implementation of TDM strategies, traffic operations within the Woodbridge Centre area are expected to be acceptable. The achievement of higher transit modal splits, in line with Regional and City targets, would result in improved levels of traffic service. All public transit improvements serving the Plan area and broader surrounding area, as well as TDM initiatives should be supported.

### 3.7.2 Streetscape Design

The main objectives of streetscape design will be achieved primarily through redevelopment and street improvements, to ensure:

1. A coherent system of streets;
2. A hierarchy of streetscaping and furnishing;
3. Walkable, connected pedestrian-oriented streets;
4. Reduced front car parking garage access onto the main avenues of Woodbridge, Kipling and Islington, and the development of connected rear lane access where possible;
5. Defined street edges with building frontages and entrances oriented to the street;
6. An elimination of surface parking between public streets and private buildings;
7. Publicly accessible streets, discouraging private roads and laneways;
8. A cohesive character and identity for each street type;
9. On-street parking and bike lanes where possible;
10. Safe street and rail crossings;
11. An identification of opportunities for enhanced streetscape treatments and pedestrian priority nodes; and

12. Increased transit service and streetscaping that supports increased transit use.

### 3.7.3 Pedestrian Priority Nodes

Pedestrian Priority Nodes, as shown on Schedule 8 – Street Network, Nodes and Gateways, occur mainly along Woodbridge Avenue in the Woodbridge Commercial Core and at key intersections along Clarence Street and Islington Avenue, where higher concentrations of pedestrian activity are expected to occur or at key trail or open space junctions along these streets.

As the Woodbridge Centre area intensifies, increased pedestrian activity is anticipated along Woodbridge Avenue as the main commercial street for the area and within Market Lane as the main pedestrian hub. Areas along the avenue and the Market Lane Public Square are considered as pedestrian priority nodes. Priority shall be given to providing safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing and movement along Woodbridge Avenue, especially as it is the main connection between the river valley and Market Lane Public Square, and safe pedestrian circulation within the Public Square and within other potential open spaces that may develop within Market Lane.

In general, Clarence Street, Woodbridge Avenue and Islington Avenue will no longer function only as through-streets. The Pedestrian Priority Nodes along these streets will be used as a method of street calming and traffic management.

### 3.7.4 Parking Standards

Woodbridge Centre is viewed by the City as a distinct heritage area that is experiencing urban growth, and as a result, it is evolving into a diverse urban community. The Transportation Impact Assessment identified the potential for future increased traffic conflicts that could be detrimental to the heritage village if other non-auto transportation options are not pursued, in order to decrease vehicular dependency. In this regard, the parking standards objective for this Secondary Plan is to promote sustainable forms of development to preserve the distinct heritage area, in accordance with the City of Vaughan Official Plan Volume 1.

### 3.7.5 Clarence Street and Woodbridge Avenue

Clarence Street and Woodbridge Avenue are considered important heritage streets within Woodbridge Centre. The general character of these streets is defined by a tight pedestrian oriented cross section with heritage buildings fronting onto them. Both of these streets have been identified in the Woodbridge

Heritage Conservation District Plan as contributing to the heritage character of the area. The policies for Woodbridge Avenue reflect a zero setback condition along the street to establish a continuous street wall. This policy was established to respect the existing zero setback condition of most of the contributing heritage buildings along the avenue. Similarly, Clarence Street, specifically between Arbors Lane and Mounsey Street, is fronted on the east side by the majority of contributing heritage buildings located on this street, many of which are actually within the existing right of way.

Consideration for roadway widening for these streets would be contrary to the policies outlined in the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan for conserving the heritage character and maintaining heritage buildings in-situ. Specific urban design policies have been established for Clarence Street and Woodbridge Avenue in order to protect the existing right-of-way.