

# WESTON CONSULTING

planning + urban design

Community Planning and Development  
York Region  
17250 Yonge Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1

September 16, 2020  
File 9112

**Attn: Paul Freeman, Chief Planner**

Dear Sir,

**RE: Planning for Employment and Employment Conversions  
Response to Regional Recommendations on Employment Conversions  
163& 175 Bowes Road, Vaughan**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for the owner of the lands legally described as Part of Lot 21 Registered Plan 7925 City of Vaughan and Part of Lot 7 Concession 3 City of Vaughan (herein referred to as the 'subject lands'; see Appendix A). In our past correspondence related to the employment conversion for the subject lands, we have been supportive of the approach the Region has taken to provide partial support of our request. However, the intent of this letter is to express our opinion regarding Staff's most recent September 10, 2020 titled *Planning for Employment and Employment Conversions*.

## **Background**

As part of their Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), York Region is working to define Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) boundaries. The Region's preliminary analysis has identified a portion of the Concord GO Centre Secondary Plan area as within MTSA 15. Weston Consulting, on behalf of the landowner, submitted correspondence to the Region for employment conversion to support MTSA 15. We acknowledge that the Region has released a new MTSA report dated September 10, 2020 that will be discussed at Regional Council on September 24, 2020. Weston will provide separate correspondence as response to this report.

On May 20, 2020 the City of Vaughan Committee of the Whole reviewed the various employment conversion requests in the City. Committee ultimately provided recommendations to convert the entirety of subject lands, not just the land south of Oster Lane, to allow for non-employment uses. These recommendations were later approved by City Council on May 27, 2020 and forwarded to the Region for their evaluation of employment land conversion requests.

On September 10, 2020 York Region released a memorandum summarizing their recommendations on the active employment conversion requests, in advance of the September 17, 2020 Regional Council Meeting. The request for conversion of the subject lands maintains the

Region's position to convert the southern portion of the subject lands, south of Oster Lane. It is acknowledged that this recommendation is consistent with the proposed MTSA boundary. The recommended MTSA delineations, density targets and preliminary policy directions are expected to proceed for Regional Council endorsement at the September 24, 2020 Regional Council Meeting.

### **Planning Rationale**

Weston Consulting, on behalf of the owner, would like to state our concern with Regional Staff's recommendation to convert only a portion of the subject lands. Since the Region released its preliminary Recommendations in March, 2020, no proper rationale has been provided to support partial designation other than "*The lands north of Oster Lane to be designated as employment in the Regional Official Plan. Lands south of Oster Lane to be designated at the discretion of the Local Municipality*" [Source: March 12, 2020 Planning for Employment and Employment Conversions, Attachment 5].

While we appreciate that there are 70 employment conversion requests and detailed responses for each may not be possible, we believe a more fulsome response to our request is needed given the support for partial conversion. With the lack of rationale, we continue to request that the Region recommend conversion of the entirety of the subject lands for non-employment mixed-uses.

The MTSA mapping prepared by the Region illustrates a boundary that has limited redevelopment potential in some areas. Lands south of Highway 7 are encumbered by natural heritage features or are part of a stable residential neighbourhood. It is our opinion that significant intensification in these areas is not likely. The Provincial Growth Plan defines an MTSA as being with 500 metres to 800 metres of a transit station. The northern limit of the MTSA boundary is approximately 500 metres from the Bowes Rd./ Highway 7 intersection (Concord BRT Station). Extending this boundary an additional 300 metres would capture the portion of 175 Bowes Rd., which is presently excluded from the conversion. The Growth Plan directs the Region to achieve a growth target of 160 people and jobs per hectare for MTSAs served by light rail or bus rapid transit. Given the limited redevelopment opportunities south of the BRT corridor, it is our opinion that the remaining 175 Bowes Rd. lands should be converted to assist in achieving the growth targets.

We would also like to note that the conversion proposed by the Region would bisect 175 Bowes Rd., thereby creating two separate land use designations on a single property. It would be more appropriate, in our opinion, to maintain a single designation for comprehensive redevelopment. This rationale was accepted by City Council. While we understand that surrounding lands will maintain their employment uses, the hedgerow to the west and rail corridor to the east are natural transition features and would aid in mitigating impacts and disruption to existing employment operations in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please contact the undersigned at extension 241 or extension 266 should you have any questions regarding this submission.

Yours truly,  
**Weston Consulting**  
Per:



Martin Quarcoopome, BES, MCIP, RPP  
Associate

- c. Tel Matrundola, Laurentel Developments  
Paul Bottomley, York Region, Manager Policy, Research and Forecasting  
Sandra Malcic, Director, Long Range Planning, York Region

Appendix:

- A. Context Air Photo
- B. Proposed York Region Major Transit Station Area 15- Concord BRT Station
- C. Proposed ROP Employment Area Mapping and Conversion Requests

Appendix A



*Aerial Photograph of the Subject Lands*

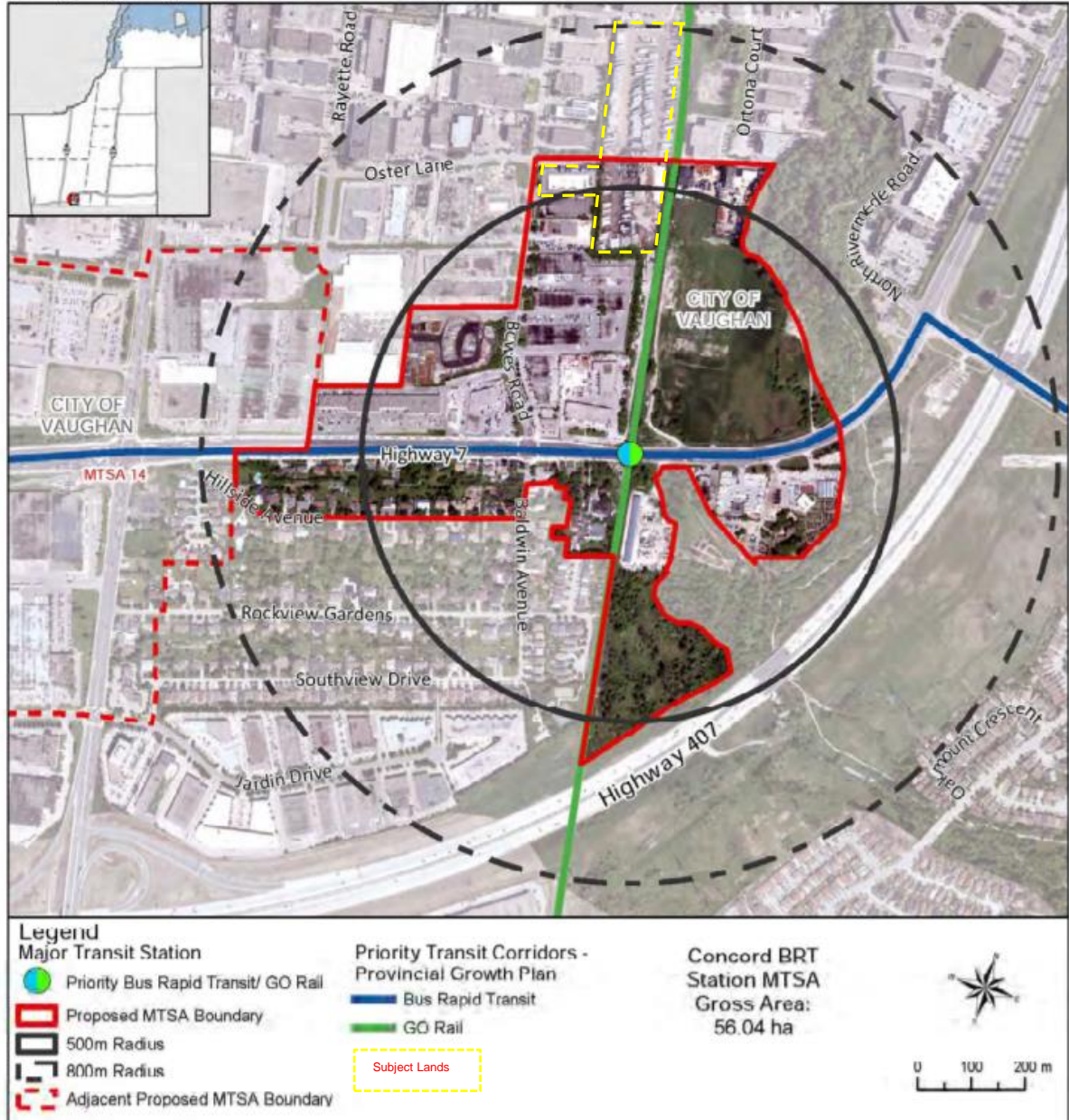


Appendix B

Concord BRT Station

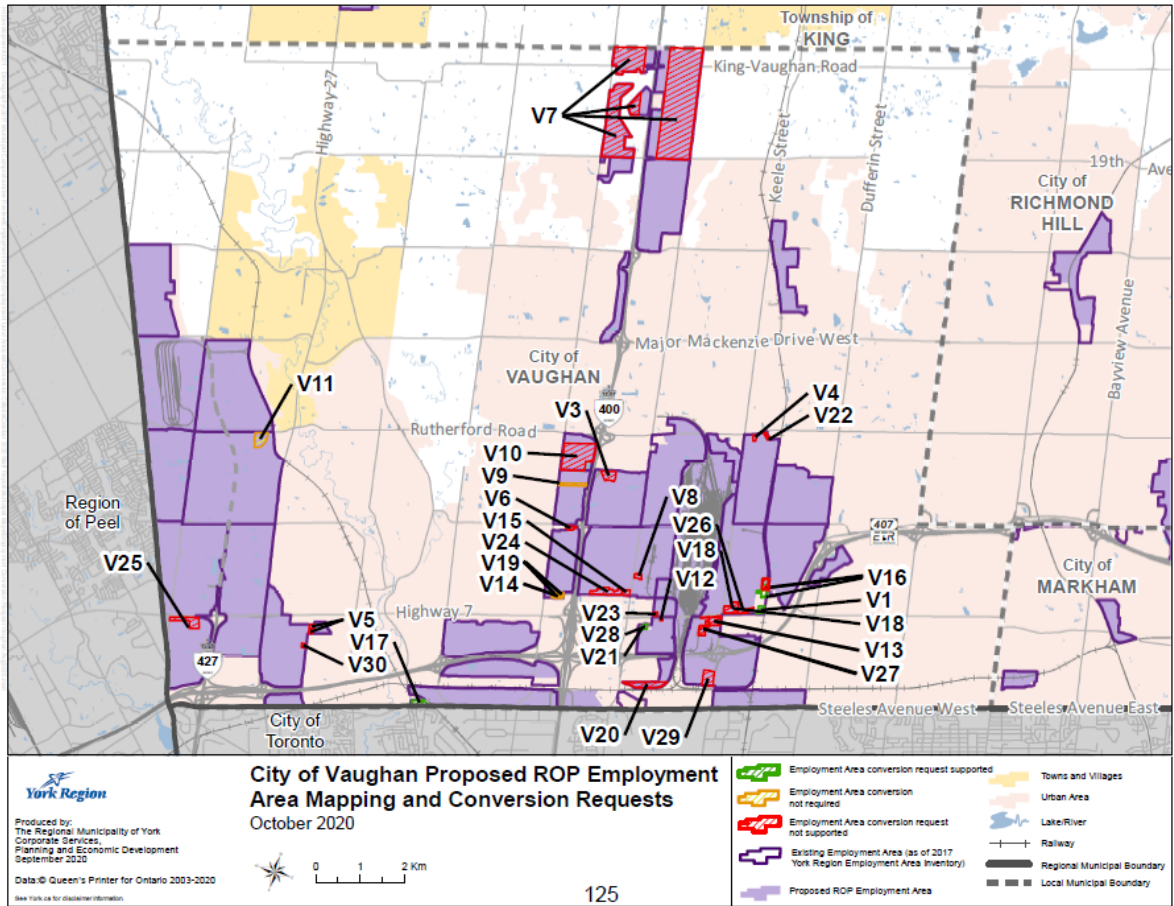
Along Highway 7 at Bowes Road/Baldwin Avenue

MTSA 15  
Vaughan



Proposed York Region Major Transit Station Area 15- Concord BRT Station

Appendix C



\* Note – Subject Lands are represented by V16

*Proposed ROY Employment Area Mapping and Conversion Requests in Vaughan*