

WESTON CONSULTING

planning + urban design

Regional Municipality of York
Planning and Economic Development
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September 23, 2020
File 8304-1

Attn: Paul Freeman, Chief Planner

**RE: Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) Process
4850 Highway 7 & 79 Arrowhead Drive, City of Vaughan
Major Transit Station Areas Endorsement Report (2020)**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for the registered owners of the lands municipally addressed as 4850 Highway 7 & 79 Arrowhead Drive, in the City of Vaughan (herein referred to as the 'subject lands'). Weston Consulting is actively engaged with the owners on planning matters, including the monitoring of York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process. This letter acknowledges York Region's stated position that the subject lands be included within the Wigwoss-Helen MTSA as per the Major Transit Station Areas Endorsement Report, ('the Report'), and is in agreement with the rationale that recommends their inclusion.

Project Background

Weston Consulting previously submitted a letter to Regional staff on November 25, 2019, in response to York Region's Planning for Intensification Background Report. This report highlighted the merits of including the subject lands within the MTSA boundary. Since that time, York Region has proposed new fixed limit boundaries, stemming from its *Draft Guidelines to Delineate and Set Density Targets for Major Transit Station Areas* ('Draft Guidelines'). The new MTSA's, proposed by York Regional Staff, more appropriately address local land use planning contexts and reflect the following criteria and principles established within the Draft Guidelines:

- *Reinforce the planned regional and local municipal urban structure;*
- *Support the opportunity to provide diversity, range and mix of land uses;*
- *Incorporate existing higher density land uses;*
- *Include areas that are anticipated or ideally situated to develop or redevelop to higher densities;*
- *Connect with adjacent MTSA's so that as much of the priority transit are included, as possible;*
- *Walkable communities;*
- *Collectively support the creation of complete communities for the broader community beyond the MTSA boundaries;*

- Collectively provide a range of amenities (e.g., parks, schools, cultural facilities, retail, etc.); and
- Collectively provide opportunities to live and work along the priority transit corridors.

As per the Draft Guidelines, draft MTSA targets are not meant to be applied on a site-by-site basis, rather, the forecasted rates are applicable to the area as a whole, as to not preclude high density targets as per the Growth Plan. This Report also notes that once delineations and minimum density targets are finalized through the York Region's Intensification Strategy, the lands within the *Wigwoss-Helen BRT MTSA*, inclusive of the subject lands, will be 'protected from land use planning appeals relating to height and density', as per Section 16 of the *Planning Act*.

Additionally, updates to the Growth Plan in May 2019 have resulted in a change to the definition of MTSAs. Rather than a 500-metre circular radius around the transit station, an MTSA is now defined as the area within a 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, which encompasses the subject lands. Policy 2.2.4.5, which previously allowed municipalities to average minimum density targets for MTSAs along the same Priority Transit Corridor, has also been removed as part of the latest updates to the Growth Plan.

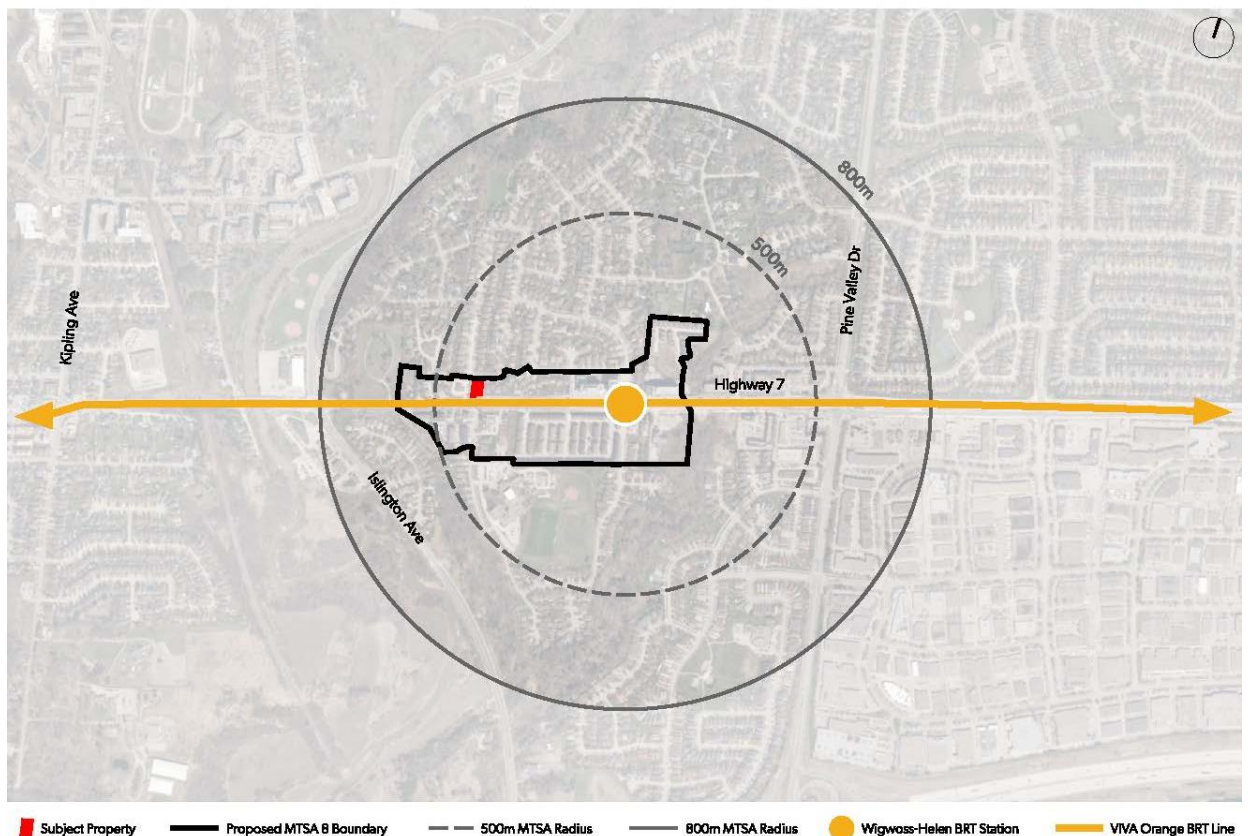


Figure 1 – Subject Lands and Proposed Wigwoss-Helen BRT Station MTSA

Region of York's Major Transit Station Areas Endorsement Report (2020)

The Region of York's Major Transit Station Areas Endorsement Report, dated September 10, 2020, references various updates to boundary delineations, minimum density targets, and policy direction for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs). After considering the density targets and other policy updates to the Growth Plan, Weston Consulting acknowledges that the subject lands have been correctly placed within the draft *Wigwoss-Helen BRT MTSA* given the Region's planning rationale outlined within the Report.

York Region anticipates increased levels of density to address a number of issues that are impacting the Region. A proposed development on the subject lands will directly address those concerns through intensification and growth. The envisioned high-density residential proposal will contribute to a more varied regional housing stock by providing a range of housing types, increasing access to affordable housing options, providing solutions to an aging population, reducing automobile dependency, and offering more transportation options that include and promote active transportation. Furthermore, the proposed development will aid the MTSA in achieving its new targeted density, as identified by York Regional Staff through the ongoing MCR process.

Weston Consulting acknowledges the decision by York Regional Staff to include the subject lands within the *Wigwoss-Helen BRT Station MTSA* and is in agreement with the prescribed planning rationale, as outlined within the Report.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact the undersigned at 320.

Yours truly,
Weston Consulting
Per:



Tara Connor, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner

- c. Raymond Nicolini, King Station Facility Inc.
Ryan Guetter, Weston Consulting