

**WESTON  
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planning + urban design

Regional Municipality of York  
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June 9, 2021  
File 5415

**Attn: Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP**

**RE: York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review  
11650 and 11700 Keele Street  
City of Vaughan**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for the owners of the lands located at 11650 and 11700 Keele Street in the City of Vaughan (herein referred to as the 'subject lands'). The subject lands have a combined total lot area of 6.1 hectares and are located on the west side of Keele Street, just north of Kirby Road, between Keele Street and the CN Rail line. Weston Consulting has been retained to monitor and advise on the Region of York's Municipal Comprehensive Review ('MCR') process.

We have reviewed the Staff Reports and associated attachments on the March 18, 2021 Regional Council agenda and Council's subsequent adoption of Staff's recommendations on the Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, and offer the following comments.

**Item F.1 - Proposed 2051 Forecast and Lands Needs Assessment**

We have reviewed the Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment and support the staff recommendations as shown on Map 2 in Attachment 4 (Figure 1). This mapping proposes that the subject lands be included within the Urban Boundary and be designated *Community Area*. The southerly portion of 11650 Keele Street is identified as *Greenbelt*.

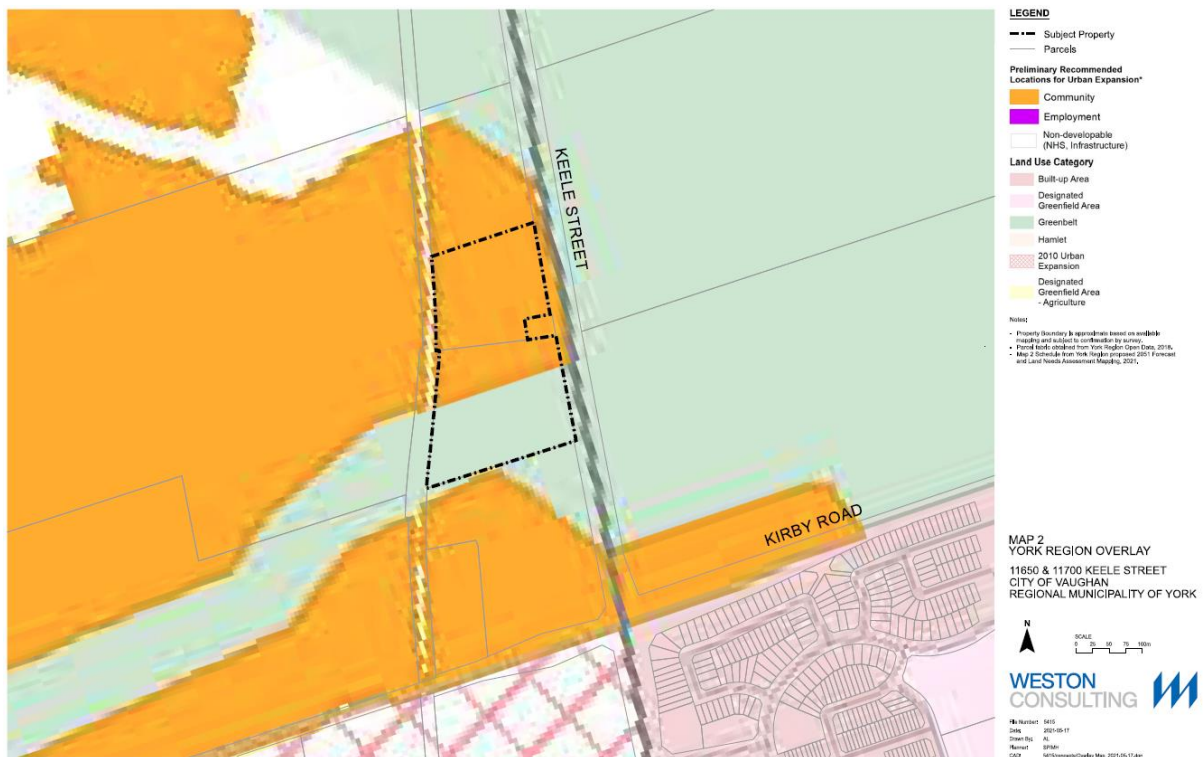


Figure 1 - Map 2 Extract - Preliminary Recommended Locations for Urban Expansion

It is noted that in 2011, these lands were subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment application (Z.11.035) and later appealed to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal ('LPAT') on the basis of a non-decision by the City. A decision from the LPAT was issued on January 3, 2019 (PL180330) which approved the site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment in principle. The issuance of the final order is being withheld until certain conditions have been satisfied. The Zoning By-law seeks to rezone the lands from "A" Agricultural Zone to "OS1" Open Space Conservation Zone and "A" Agricultural with site-specific provisions allowing for agriculture-related uses. The file for the subject lands Zoning By-law Amendment appeal is still open with the LPAT and the owners are in the process of addressing the conditions imposed by the decision. The extent of the development limit on 11650 Keele Street would ultimately be determined through the in-process planning applications, including the current active status of Site Development Applications (DA.17.031 and DA.17.032), and the LPAT approval granted in principle for a Zoning By-law Amendment application.

This Zoning By-law Amendment was sought on the basis that there are many considerations that hinder the potential of a successful farm or agricultural operation on the subject lands. With the fragmentation of the subject lands by the rail corridor, Greenbelt, existing non-agricultural uses in the surrounding area, small parcel size, and low capability for agriculture production, as well as their close proximity to urban development and the proposed Kirby Go Station located at the southwest corner of Keele Street and Kirby Road, the subject lands do not provide for a continuous, productive or permanent agricultural land base. Additionally, with the increased urbanization in the immediate vicinity, the viability of accessing these properties with large-scale farm equipment is significantly reduced, which further limits the ability to support agricultural uses.

As such, the subject lands should be included in the Urban Boundary as Community Area as contemplated by the Preliminary Recommended Locations for Urban Expansion mapping (Map 2, Attachment 4).

Through the in-process planning applications and LPAT approval granted in principle, it was established that the subject lands are situated within a local Special Policy Area, which recognizes that these lands are within an area which is physically separated from the larger, predominantly agricultural area to the west of the rail line, and the viability of field crop farming on the subject lands is reduced and is of low capability for agriculture production (Member Resolution, November 27, 2012 COW). OPA 600 identified an analysis required for this Special Policy Area; however, this analysis was never conducted at the time and was not carried over into VOP 2010. It is anticipated that when the subject lands are included within the Urban Boundary and designated Community Area, the local municipality would appropriately designate them through their Official Plan with the objective of developing complete communities and to make best use of Regional and local infrastructure and services, and investment in future transit projects.

Recognizing that the land forecast is to the year 2051 and that it is the first time that municipalities are required to plan for a 30-year planning horizon, it is our opinion that the proposed urban expansion area as depicted on Map 2, Attachment 4 is appropriate and that the development of these new urban areas can be adequately addressed through phasing. In considering areas for urban boundary expansion, we also believe it is important to consider the ability to provide for complete communities that offer a range of housing, employment and commercial uses that will meet the daily needs of new residents. The subject lands represent a key location for community development given the close proximity of existing residential uses and the proposed Kirby GO Station, which will require increased densities and wider range of uses to support the viability of this transit investment. Similarly, there is significant employment growth projected along the Highway 400 corridor in the northern end of Vaughan, and the subject lands provide an opportunity to locate additional housing opportunities to accommodate the increase in employees.

#### **Item F.2 - Regional Official Plan Update – Policy Directions II**

We have also reviewed the Region's preliminary background studies and evaluation of the Province's agricultural system. Based on the second Policy Directions report, it appears that the subject lands are still identified as within the *Agricultural Area* designation on Attachment 2, West Preliminary Agricultural Land Base Analysis mapping (Figure 2). In light of Staff's recommendation to include the subject lands as Community Area within the Urban Boundary, it is our opinion that the subject lands should be removed from the *Agricultural* designation on Map 8 to align with a designated Community Area intended to accommodate future growth and a greater variety of future residential, commercial and employment land uses, in close proximity to a future Go Station. This will allow for compatible additional urban land uses to be considered for these lands in the future.



Figure 2 – Attachment 2 Extract – West Preliminary Agricultural Land Base Analysis

### Item H.2.4 – Regional Official Plan Update – Policy Directions Report III

In addition to the above, we have also reviewed the third Policy Directions Report and associated attachments on the June 10, 2021 Regional Committee of the Whole agenda. We have reviewed the proposed Regional Official Plan mapping contained in Attachment 2 to the Report and offer the following comments as it relates to the subject lands.

The subject lands are to be located within the “Urban Area” in accordance with proposed Map 1 – Regional Structure. Additionally, the subject lands are to be designated “Community Area” in accordance with proposed Map 1A – Land Use Designations. The southerly portion of 11650 Keele Street corresponding with the Greenbelt designation is to be designated “Rural Area”. Given the above discussion, we are supportive of these designations as depicted on the proposed mapping.

Proposed Map 1B – Urban System proposes to designate the subject lands “Designated Greenfield Area” and “New Community Area”, which we support.

We look forward to continuing to work with Regional staff through the MCR process to ensure the evolving policy framework is flexible enough to accommodate the detailed technical studies and delineation of natural feature boundaries to accurately reflect the situation on the ground.

Please accept this correspondence as our client’s formal submission to the MCR process and part of the public record. We intend to continue to monitor the Region’s MCR process and request to

be notified of any future developments, including reports, meetings and decisions regarding this matter.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact the undersigned at ext. 245.

**Yours truly,  
Weston Consulting**



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