



WESTON CONSULTING

planning + urban design

Regional Municipality of York
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May 18, 2022
File 8784

Attn: Paul Freeman, Chief Planner and Members of Regional Council

**RE: York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – Draft Regional Official Plan
Southwest Quadrant of Martin Grove Road and Highway 7
City of Vaughan**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for various owners of properties, municipally known as 5731, 5657, 5781 Highway 7, 7700 Martin Grove Road, 5655 Highway 7 and 7714 Martin Grove (“the subject lands”). We have been monitoring York Region’s Municipal Comprehensive Review (“MCR”) process on behalf of the landowners as it relates to the subject lands. A letter was submitted to the Region on March 30, 2022 as part of the consultation process, to provide formal comments on the draft Regional Official Plan on behalf of the landowners of the subject lands. We would like to bring to your kind attention that the letter was not included in either Attachment 1 (Comments on the Draft York Region Official Plan) or Attachment 2 (Site Specific Requests on the Draft York Region Official Plan) of the Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner, dated May 5, 2022.

An Official Plan Amendment application was submitted to the City of Vaughan on April 29, 2022 to redevelop the subject lands with a phased high-rise mixed-use master plan consisting of 12 to 28 storey buildings. The development is proposed in three phases intended to gradually transform the existing low-rise commercial and retail blocks into a new compact community consisting of a new street network, parks, retail squares, and other amenities. In support of the proposed development of the subject lands, we are submitting this letter to reiterate our position on the draft YROP as provided in our previous letter and kindly request its consideration at the Statutory Public Meeting on May 19, 2022.

Description of Subject Lands

The subject lands are located on the southwest corner of Highway 7 and Martin Grove Road. The lands are currently occupied by low-density commercial/retail uses.

The subject lands are currently located outside of the West Vaughan Employment Area and are designated “Mid-Rise, Mixed-Use” in accordance with Schedule 13 – Land Use of the Vaughan Official Plan, 2010 (“VOP”).

Draft York Region Official Plan

We have reviewed the York Region Draft Regional Official Plan Track Changes Version May 2022 (ROP) and associated staff report and offer the following comments as it relates to the subject lands.

Based on our review of the draft mapping, we note that the subject lands are depicted within the “Community Area” designation in accordance with draft Map 1A – Land Use Designations, which is consistent with their location outside of the Employment Area. Additionally, the subject lands are located along a “Regional Corridor” in accordance with draft Map 1 – Regional Structure and a “Rapid Transit Corridor” in accordance with draft Map 10 – Rapid Transit Network.

As it relates to Regional Corridors and intensification, the draft ROP proposes the following direction:

1.2 PROVINCIAL POLICY DIRECTIONS

- *an intensification target of 50% phased to 55% that requires a minimum of 50% of residential development to occur annually within existing urban areas to 2041, and 55% from 2041 to 2051*

2.1.4.c Regional centres, the focus of the Region’s most intensive development connected by transit-supportive intensification corridors and Regional corridors;

2.2.5 That Regional infrastructure required to support growth to 2051 be phased based on the following principles:

- c. alignment with Regional intensification hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3;*

4.1.3 That the forecasts in Table 1 be used as the basis for planning and development primarily within the Urban System in accordance with the following per Section 2.2 of this Plan:

- a. strategic growth areas will attract the majority of development and contain a mix of uses, with densities (highest to lowest) based on the following hierarchy:

 - i. Regional Centres*
 - ii. Subway station major transit station areas*
 - iii. Other major transit station areas*
 - iv. Regional Corridors outside of major transit station areas*
 - v. Local centres and corridors outside of major transit areas;**
- b. the built-up area, outside of strategic growth areas, with small scale intensification and infill based on the local context;*

4.4.1 That intensification be directed in accordance with the Regional hierarchy outlined in policy 4.4.2

4.4.3 That a minimum of 50% of all residential development between 2021 to 2041, and 55% from 2041 to 2051 occur annually within the built-up area identified on Map 1B.

4.4.3 That strategic growth areas be the primary locations for concentrations of high density and mixed-use development in the Region.

4.4.4 To prioritize intensification in strategic growth areas and establish a scale of development that reflects the Regional intensification hierarchy as set out in policy 4.1.3 of this Plan as implemented through local official plans.

4.4.5 That local municipal official plans, secondary plans, or other comprehensive plans, and development contemplated within strategic growth areas shall plan for growth consistent with:

- a. the Regional intensification hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3;
- b. existing and/or planned transit identified on Map 10 of this Plan,
- c. water, water-wastewater and road infrastructure capacities;
- d. the provision of/access to local parks, schools, and other social, cultural, and commercial services.

4.4.6 That within the planned strategic growth areas, the minimum density targets may be achieved beyond the planning horizon of this Plan.

4.4.7 That the majority of residential intensification shall be directed to locations which provide access to human, educational, and social services, retail, employment, arts, culture, parks, recreational facilities and transit within a 15-minute walk and in a manner that is consistent with the policies in Section 2.3 this Plan.

4.4.8 That intensification shall include a variety of medium and high-density dwelling unit types and sizes to provide housing choice. Larger family type units shall be encouraged to accommodate the Region's forecast.

4.4.9 To direct a significant amount of mixed-uses, including street-related commercial, to strategic growth areas.

4.4.14 That development within strategic growth areas shall be prioritized along existing rapid transit corridors on Map 10 and in locations with existing water and wastewater capacity.

4.4.15 That rapid transit corridors identified in Map 10 be planned to support higher density development and improve access to multi-modal transit facilities over the long term.

4.4.16 That local municipalities shall, in consultation with the Region, identify locations along Regional arterial roads and other major streets where the missing middle can be accommodated.

4.4.17 To work with local municipalities to encourage integration of gentle density and a mix and range of housing options within the built boundary, where locally appropriate, through redevelopment of existing neighbourhoods.

4.4.27 That approval of secondary plans and/or development within strategic growth areas shall be contingent on the availability of existing or planned infrastructure and other services and be consistent with the Regional intensification hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3. The Region may require phasing of development on the basis of the capacity of water, wastewater and/or transportation and transit systems, and/or the timing of required infrastructure. The Region may also require the coordination of development applications to ensure an orderly, coordinated and phased approach to development and the provision of transportation, transit, water, wastewater and other infrastructure.

4.4.2.2 That Regional Corridors along transit routes function as urban mainstreets that have a compact, mixed-use, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive built form and allow for active transportation.

Comments

While Regional Centres and Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA) are the primary locations for intensification within the intensification hierarchy, we also support the direction for accommodating intensification outside of Regional Centres and MTSA's in other strategic growth areas such as Regional Corridors. We are generally supportive of the intensification policies contained in the draft ROP, particularly as it relates to Regional Corridors. Development along Regional Corridors outside of MTSA's and planned for Viva rapid transit are significant within the intensification hierarchy of strategic growth areas, as they aid in prioritizing funding to ultimately connect the Regional Centres and complete the Regional rapid transit network to provide necessary links and address interregional connections with provincial transit improvements.

We submit that the subject lands are appropriate for increased intensification given their location along a Regional Corridor, Rapid Transit Corridor, and in an area well-served by existing community services and amenities in accordance with the draft ROP policies. The proposed development, in our opinion is demonstrative of the type of development that is appropriate for Regional Corridors outside of an MTSA in consideration of the local and regional context, including existing community services and servicing and transit infrastructure. It provides a gradual intensification through phasing that generally aligns with the future servicing timeframe along Highway 7, as indicated in the 2022 Draft York Region Water and Wastewater Master Plan. The proposed development will also incentivize the higher-order transit infrastructure investments planned along Highway 7. Through careful consideration of the draft ROP policies, we are of the opinion that the proposed development is an appropriate form of development along a Regional Corridor with planned rapid transit, that will create a transit-oriented compact built form that will optimize the use of existing and planned transit and municipal infrastructure, create a complete

community, diversify housing stocks, and provide for convenient access to transit, active transportation facilities, community services, and amenities.

Please accept this correspondence as our client's formal submission as it relates to the draft ROP as 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please contact the undersigned at extension 245 should you have any questions regarding this submission.

Yours truly,

Weston Consulting

Per:



Sandra K. Patano, BES, MES, MCIP, RPP
Vice President

- c. Clients
 - Ryan Guetter, Weston Consulting
 - Paul Bottomley, York Region
 - Sandra Malcic, York Region