



**CITY OF VAUGHAN  
VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE  
AGENDA**

**If you wish to speak to an item listed on the Agenda, please pre-register by completing a Request to Speak Form online, emailing [clerks@vaughan.ca](mailto:clerks@vaughan.ca), or contacting Service Vaughan at 905-832-2281, by 12 noon on the last business day before the meeting.**

**Wednesday, February 19, 2025  
10:00 a.m.  
Online via Electronic Participation  
Vaughan City Hall**

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**Pages**

- 1. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**
- 2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**
- 3. COMMUNICATIONS**
- 4. DETERMINATION OF ITEMS REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION INCLUDING MEMBERS RESOLUTION(S)**
- 5. ADOPTION OF ITEMS NOT REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION**
- 6. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION**
  1. VMC TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE  
Presentation by WSP Canada
  2. VMC SECONDARY PLAN – PHASE IV UPDATE  
Report of the Interim Deputy City Manager, Planning, Growth Management and Housing Delivery, with respect to the above.
- 7. NEW BUSINESS**

**3**

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

ALL APPENDICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING WILL BE AUDIO RECORDED  
AND VIDEO BROADCAST

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## VMC Sub-Committee Report

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**DATE:** Wednesday, February 19, 2025

**WARD:** 4

**TITLE:** VMC SECONDARY PLAN – PHASE IV UPDATE

**FROM:**

Vince Musacchio, Interim Deputy City Manager, Planning, Growth Management and Housing Delivery

**ACTION:** FOR INFORMATION

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**Purpose**

To provide an update on the status of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan ('VMCSP') currently in Phase IV – Draft Secondary Plan, which involves the development of a draft Secondary Plan based on the Preferred Option endorsed by VMC Sub-committee in Phase III and updated based on VMC Sub-committee's direction to implement a new development framework that sets parameters for minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums.

**Report Highlights**

- The VMCSPP project is currently in Phase IV, which involves the development of a new draft Secondary Plan for the VMC
- The new VMCSPP will implement VMC Sub-committee's direction to set parameters for minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums
- Analyses have been undertaken to estimate the new total development capacity and build-out timeframes for the VMC
- The VMCSPP will be updated to reflect the new development capacity and build-out timeframe to ensure the overall goals of the VMC are achieved
- The VMCSPP schedules are being updated based on the new development framework and stakeholder feedback
- The VMCSPP will be brought to Statutory Public Meeting in April 2025

**Recommendation**

1. That the VMC SECONDARY PLAN – PHASE IV UPDATE report be received for information.

## **Background**

### ***The VMC is the City's emerging downtown and central business district***

The VMC, as shown on Attachment 1, is bounded by Highway 407 to the south, Highway 400 to the west, approximately one parcel north of Portage Parkway to the north, and Creditstone Road to the east. The VMC is poised to be the financial, innovation and cultural centre of the City, with a vibrant sense of place, a high-quality public realm and environmentally sustainable design practices. The VMC is envisioned to become a complete and balanced community encompassing different built form typologies, and a mix of uses that are transit supportive and pedestrian friendly.

The current and in-force VMCSPP provides a strong vision and policy foundation for the VMC and has helped guide development since its partial approval by the Ontario Land Tribunal ('OLT', formally the Ontario Municipal Board and Local Planning Appeal Tribunal) in 2015. Since this time, development interest in the VMC has exceeded expectations, resulting in an intensity of development that was not anticipated when the VMCSPP was initially developed.

The City is developing the new VMCSPP to address provincial and regional policy updates and to produce a renewed policy framework that supports the completion of a downtown and Central Business District ('CBD') as a complete community with a balance of uses that are well supported by municipal services and social infrastructure to 2051 and beyond.

The VMCSPP seeks to manage the current intense and heavy residential development trends through the promotion of a balanced delivery of mixed-use development through varied building typologies; as well as a recalibration of hard and soft infrastructure, including parks, community services and civic facilities, transportation, and municipal servicing systems in order to achieve a healthy, balanced, complete and successful community.

### ***VMC Sub-committee directed staff to proceed with making the required changes to the VMC Secondary Plan to set parameters for minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums***

In January 2024, staff were directed by Senior Leadership to explore the implementation of 'unlimited height and density' ('UHD') regimes within municipalities. Throughout Q1 of 2024, staff undertook consultation with municipalities that had implemented, or were exploring implementing, an UHD regime. Staff met with planning staff from Brampton, Mississauga, Toronto and Kitchener to gain insight on the UHD regimes implemented within these municipalities. These findings were summarized and presented to VMC Sub-committee on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024. At the June 26, 2024, VMC Sub-committee Meeting, staff were directed to proceed with updating the VMC Secondary Plan to set parameters for minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums.

***The VMCSPP is currently within the fourth of a five-phase project***

The VMCSPP was initiated in August 2020 and is being undertaken by the City’s Policy Planning and Special Programs Department supported by a consulting team that includes Gladki Planning Associates, DTAH, and Parcel Economics (the ‘consultant team’).

The VMCSPP is being undertaken in five phases, structured as follows:

- Phase I - Background and Issues
- Phase II - Prepare and Develop Land Use Options
- Phase III - Elaborate a Preferred Framework
- Phase IV – Draft Secondary Plan
- Phase V - Final Implementation of Secondary Plan Update

**Phase I - Background and Issues** was completed and presented to the VMC Sub-committee on March 2, 2021. Through Phase I, challenges, risks, and concerns for the VMC were identified by the public, landowners, and other stakeholders through an online survey and a comprehensive review of existing policies, initiatives, development studies and background reports. The project vision and guiding principles were established, which lay the foundation for the Phase II work.

**Phase II – Prepare and Develop Land Use Options** was presented to the VMC Sub-committee on June 21, 2022. It involved utilizing the key messages identified from Phase I to develop two preliminary land use options that addressed the challenges and constraints. The two land use options that were developed also took into consideration fixed and variable elements, such as approved and proposed development, the natural heritage network, roads and highways under the jurisdiction of other levels of government, etc., and balanced these with development interest to deliver on Council’s vision of a world class downtown and complete community. Land Use Option 1 maintained the intensity of development with a lens on achieving built form variety and supplying adequate social infrastructure. Land Use Option 2 recalibrated uses to deliver a thriving CBD, utilizing an Office Feasibility Assessment that was undertaken to improve the feasibility of development that delivered office and non-residential uses.

**Phase III - Elaborate a Preferred Framework** focused on developing the preferred option based on the feedback received through the Phase II consultation process, as well as the conclusions from the Office Feasibility Assessment. The approach behind the preferred option analysis and recommendation has always been to create a vibrant, diverse, thriving downtown and CBD, through a balanced and complete community that includes a mix of building typologies with unique residential, office and mixed-use development serviced with soft and hard infrastructure that supports the needs of a successful city centre.

The Preferred Framework also incorporated two new expansion areas. Expansion Area A extended the existing boundary east to Creditstone Road on the south side of Highway 7 following the existing Protected Major Transit Station Area (‘PMTSA’) 56 boundary, resulting in a continuous, linear east boundary line. Expansion Area B

extended the existing boundary north, incorporating the lots on the north side of Portage Parkway, the new boundary line would follow the existing PMTSA 54 and 67 boundaries respectively.

The Preferred Framework was endorsed by the VMC Sub-Committee at the October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Sub-Committee meeting, including Expansion Area A and B.

**Phase IV – Develop a new Secondary Plan for the VMC** involves the development of a draft Secondary Plan for the VMC, through consultation with key stakeholders. Secondary Plan policies are being developed to align the Plan with the Preferred Network developed through Phase IV, to address provincial and regional policy updates, and to implement a new development framework based on minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums.

**Phase V – Final Implementation** involves the implementation of the new VMCSPP and will involve presenting a final VMCSPP to the VMC Sub-Committee and the Committee of the Whole and Council for final approvals.

***Consultation continues to take place with the public, landowners, and other stakeholders.***

A strategy for public and landowner engagement has been implemented throughout the project to ensure that meaningful engagement is achieved during each phase of this project. Comprehensive engagement summaries have been prepared for Phase II and Phase III of the project, which can be found in Attachment 2. Consultation for Phase IV has mainly focused on meetings with key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, landowners, TRCA, CN Rail, York Region District School Board, and the York Catholic District School Board, and will also include consultation and feedback through the Statutory Public Meeting process.

***The new VMCSPP is being coordinated with other supporting studies***

The VMCSPP is being coordinated with concurrent projects in the VMC, including the [VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan](#) ('VMC PWMP'), the [VMC Transportation Master Plan](#) ('VMC TMP') Update, the [VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Report](#) ('VMC FSSR'), the City's [Community Spaces Plan](#) ('CSP'), and the City's [New Vaughan Official Plan 2025](#) ('VOP 2025'). To date, work from the now finalized VMC PWMP has been incorporated into the land use plan and has helped inform the parks strategy.

The VMC TMP is currently in Phase 2 (final phase) of the Study, where transportation solutions have been identified and assessed to support the recommended land use framework, and population and job projections developed as part of the VMCSPP. The Preferred Transportation Networks and Policy recommendations were presented to technical agencies, landowners and public in January 2025 for review and comment. The feedback received will be utilized to finalize the Preferred Transportation Networks (Active Transportation, Transit and Road), update of road cross-sections, and policy recommendations, develop an implementation plan and prepare the VMC TMP Report,

which will be presented to Council for approval (targeting May 2025). The Final VMC TMP Report will be filed for a 30-day public review period following Council approval.

The Functional Servicing Strategy Report for the study areas of the City of Vaughan's Integrated Urban Water Master Plan ('IUWMP'), which includes the VMC were finalized in 2024. The City issued the Notice of Completion with the required 30-day period in 2024, which follows the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process. The IUWMP and its FSSR were finalized in 2024 and submitted to MECP for approval.

The CSP is being undertaken to guide how City-owned community spaces and services are provided to Vaughan residents. To date, the CSP project team has completed research and an assessment review and is currently engaging stakeholders and the community. The CSP will identify current needs and future facility provision strategies, aligning with the City's commitment to safe, accessible, and community-responsive parks and facilities that serve diverse interests and abilities. The CSP will provide key inputs for the new VMCSPP, specifically addressing major community facility needs in the VMC area. A Facilities Plan, Implementation Strategy, and Final Report, along with a Risk Assessment, will be developed and presented to the Library Board and Vaughan Council in June 2025.

The City is in the process of developing a new Vaughan Official Plan (VOP) 2025. The new Draft VOP 2025 will be consistent with new Provincial policies, plan and growth targets for people and jobs. Once approved, the new VOP 2025 will implement the long-term vision for Vaughan, to the year 2051, through land use policies that direct density, housing supply, protection of environmental features and agricultural areas, to create a vibrant city for people to live, work and play. The VMCSPP has been coordinated with the new VOP 2025, to ensure consistency between the two plans.

Updates from these related studies, as well as work on VOP 2025, will continue to guide the policy framework and inform the final recommendations of the new VMCSPP.

### **Previous Reports/Authority**

The following are links to previous reports regarding the VMC Secondary Plan update:

1. [VMC Studies Update, November 10, 2020, VMC Sub-committee Report \(Report No. 2, Item 3\)](#)
2. [VMC Secondary Plan Update – Phase I, March 2, 2021, VMC Sub-committee Report \(Report No. 1, Item 1\)](#)
3. [VMC Secondary Plan Update – Phase 2 Approach, June 8, 2021, VMC Sub-committee \(Report No. 2, Item 1\)](#)
4. [VMC Secondary Plan Update: Phase 2 - Land Use Options, June 21, 2022, VMC Sub-committee \(Report No.2, Item 2\)](#)
5. [VMC Studies Update – April 2023, April 11, 2023, VMC Sub-committee \(Report No. 3, Item 4\)](#)
6. [VMC Secondary Plan Update: Phase IV – Recommendations, October 4, 2023, VMC Sub-committee \(Report No.1, Item 4\)](#)

## **Analysis and Options**

Phase IV of the new VMCSPP involves the development of a draft Secondary Plan, to align the new VMCSPP with the Preferred Framework developed in Phase III and refined through Phase IV, to address provincial and regional policy updates, and to implement a development framework based on minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums. Analyses have been undertaken to understand how the development framework of minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums will impact the VMC.

### **Analyses were undertaken to estimate the new total development capacity for the VMC**

The first step in understanding the implications of implementing a new development framework without prescribed height and density maximums, was to understand the changes to the development capacity within VMC. In order to forecast the potential development yield in the VMC without height or density limitations, a research exercise was undertaken to build a market-driven understanding of the development potential that could be realized within the VMC. This exercise, which was primarily based on precedent research and extrapolations specific to the VMC included, but was not limited to, the following steps:

- undertaking a review of the densities currently being achieved by completed, under construction, approved and proposed projects within the VMC, and identifying the average density (units per acre)
- identifying several completed, in-progress and proposed mixed-use developments which are introducing heights and densities that are greater than/higher than their surrounding contexts, reflecting an environment where market capacity and construction limitations are the primary determinant, rather than the land use policy framework;
- reviewing the scale of development contemplated at each project, collecting, where possible, information on the number of residential units proposed or in progress, property parcel size, number of storeys and height, and unit mix;
- estimating the population which will ultimately be supported at each project upon full build out, based on standard person per unit factors;
- calculating the number of residential units and population contemplated on a per acre basis for each of the projects proposed; and,
- based on the findings above, providing a range for the total population and number of units estimated at the VMCSPP at full build out.

In order to develop population forecasts in a scenario where the VMC has no height and density constraints, it was also important to identify and assess other limitations which ultimately could shape the scale of development in the area. Although such constraints may not be explicit, they nonetheless present considerations which developers must consider as plans are developed. These other market and economic constraints



included, but were not limited to, development feasibility, market demand, sales and leasing fluctuations, and provision of non-leasable space.

The purpose of this analysis was ultimately to provide a high-level estimation of the range of potential residential units and population which could be realized in the VMC absent height and density maximums, recognizing the challenges associated with the lack of limitations on this potential condition.

Through these analyses, the final development capacity identified for the VMC estimated a full buildout population of 194,700 residents and 27,700 jobs, for a total of 222,400 people and jobs. It should be noted that, without planning constraints, such as maximum heights and densities, these estimates are based on a series of assumptions regarding anticipated market conditions, development technologies, growth patterns and feasibility.

### **Full build-out timeframes were identified, based on the estimated total development capacity**

Based on the results of the total development capacity for the VMC, an exercise was undertaken to estimate how long the buildout of the highest density outcome could be, under current and potential future market and absorption conditions. This exercise focused on evaluating the rate of growth between 2025 and full build-out and involved the following approach:

- working within the prescribed start (2025) and modelling out a growth “arc” in order to achieve full build-out;
- determining a reasonable rate, or scale of construction activity, based on historical growth patterns, competitive realities, economic growth trends, immigration, as well as consideration of development nodes throughout Vaughan and competitive areas of the GTA; and,
- determining the quantum of space that currently exists and is under construction and estimating a market entry of that space.

In developing potential build-out timelines, the following general assumptions were made in establishing the population and employment forecasts for the VMC:

- projects currently under construction within the VMC are expected to be completed by 2031;
- the VMC’s current standing as the predominant high-rise development site in Vaughan, and one of select few current and planned subway-connected nodes in York Region will persist into the future;
- the VMC will continue to attract a significant share of the city of Vaughan’s high and mid-rise development activity as a result of strong locational attributes;
- Vaughan’s population and non-residential development growth, as with the rest of the Greater Toronto Area, will continue to rely significantly on federal immigration policy. It is assumed that over the long-term Canada’s annual immigration targets do not significantly deviate from historical trends;

- the VMC will continue to develop public and private amenities which ensure that it remains an attractive and desirable place for current and new residents, businesses and visitors; and,
- the relative cost / price of real estate at the VMC compared to other nodes in the Greater Toronto Area will remain generally consistent for the foreseeable future.

Based on approach and assumptions outlined above, three high level scenarios were developed to estimate how the VMC may grow to full build-out, as outlined below. For the purposes of these analyses, employment (non-residential) growth was assumed to grow at the same pace as residential growth.

**Scenario #1: Modest Growth** – The modest growth scenario assumes that completions at the VMC will reflect the historical ten-year trend, which has captured a wider range of market activity and fluctuation, including the most recent development momentum following the completion and opening of the subway station. Under this scenario, the VMC would achieve full buildout in about 120 years, shortly after 2146.

**Scenario #2: Baseline Growth** – The baseline scenario assumes that development momentum will average the VMC’s historical five-year unit completion trend for apartment dwellings. Under this scenario, full buildout is anticipated in just over 70 years, by approximately 2096. This essentially reflects a continuation of the overall pace of development that has occurred more recently at the VMC, commensurate with the continued advancement and availability of critical underlying infrastructure to enable such a growth trajectory relative to a decade ago (e.g., established road network, subway access, etc.).

**Scenario #3: High Growth** – The high growth scenario considers a situation in which average annual apartment dwelling completions at the VMC are equivalent to the number of apartment completions realized in 2023, which represents the highest number of completions in a given year since 2010 (approximately 2,800 units annually). Buildout is anticipated in about 30 years, by approximately 2056. It should be noted that achieving this level of sustained completion activity at the VMC is highly unrealistic.

With no prescribed maximum limits on height and density, the estimated development potential of the VMC is significant. Projected growth to full buildout is anticipated to exceed minimum density targets by a large margin. However, greater development potential lengthens the timeline to full buildout and increases the requirements of the hard and soft infrastructure necessary to support growth. Based on the analysis above, the growth scenario that most accurately reflects a realistic pace of development and achieves full build-out in a moderate timeline is Scenario #2 – Baseline Growth. This growth scenario will be used to establish the population and growth timelines for the VMCS.

**The VMCSPP will be updated to reflect the new development capacity and build-out timeframe to ensure the overall goals of the VMC are achieved**

Although the development framework for VMC has changed with the removal of height and density constraints, the overall goals of the VMCSPP remain the same. The VMC will become the City of Vaughan’s downtown, with the highest densities and widest mix of uses. A key objective of the VMCSPP will be to ensure the VMC develops as a complete community, with a balanced mix of uses to support the significant population growth.

Creating sufficient infrastructure and amenities will be necessary to support the development potential of the VMC. It is essential that development is paced to the provision of infrastructure, services and amenities, in terms of water, wastewater, stormwater and transportation systems, as well as parks and community services. The policies of the VMCSPP will be updated to ensure the provision of hard and soft infrastructure, services and amenities are paced with development to ensure the creation of a balanced community.

In addition, as the City’s goal is to achieve a CBD and true mixed-use downtown core that includes a significant proportion of office, retail and service commercial uses, the policies of the VMCSPP will be updated to ensure that non-residential development is also paced to match the residential growth, to ensure a balanced mix of people and jobs.

**The VMCSPP schedules are being updated based on the new development framework and stakeholder feedback**

Within Phase III of the project, a Preferred Framework was developed which included new schedules for the VMCSPP. This framework was endorsed by the VMC Sub-Committee at the October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Sub-Committee meeting, and included Expansion Area A and B. Since this time, further refinements have been made to the schedules through consultation with key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, landowners, TRCA, CN Rail, York Region District School Board, and the York Catholic District School Board. The schedules have continued to be refined since the Preferred Framework was endorsed in 2023, with the most-recent schedules being shared at the February 2024 VMC Sub-committee meeting. Refinements have been made to the following schedules as follows:

**Schedule A – Area Boundary:** A minor adjustment to the boundary of the VMCSPP area is proposed in the northeast quadrant, north of Portage Parkway. This adjustment has been made based on the refinement of the alignment of Portage Parkway, and to align the northern boundary with the boundary of PMTSA 56 – Creditstone BRT Station.

**Schedule D – Major Parks and Open Space:** This schedule has been further refined based on the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan, which was approved by Council in October 2024. Adjustments have been made to the parkland located within the southeast quadrant, with the intention of providing greater equity in the distribution of parkland in this quadrant. The parkland

located in the northeast quadrant, south of Portage Parkway, has been relocated to the southwest quadrant.

**Schedule F – Land Use:** Minor refinements have been made to the land uses through consultation with key stakeholders. Within the southeast quadrant, there have been adjustments made to the Neighbourhood and Park designations, between Doughton Road and Peelar Road. The intent of these changes is to provide greater equity in the distribution of parkland within this quadrant. A minor adjustment has also been made in the northeast quadrant, south of Portage Parkway, to re-designate these lands from Park to Mixed-Use Non-residential.

**Schedule H – Retail:** Minor adjustments have been made to reflect the previously mentioned land use changes in the southeast quadrant.

The VMCSPP schedules will continue to be refined based on the new development framework of minimum heights and densities without prescribed maximums. The schedules will be brought forward as part of the new VMCSPP.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial requirements for new funding associated with this report.

### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

Ongoing collaboration with key stakeholders continues, which is an important factor in realizing the success of the VMC. Through Phase IV, additional consultation will be undertaken with internal and external stakeholders, including, but not limited to, York Region, CN Rail, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the York Region District School Board, and the York Catholic District School Board. Key stakeholders will continue to be engaged as part of the subsequent phases of this project, and their feedback will be instrumental in advancing the VMCSPP.

### **Conclusion**

The VMC is continuing to transform into a vibrant, modern urban centre encompassing all amenities required for a healthy urban lifestyle, complete with residential and mixed-use development. With the implementation of a new development framework without prescribed height and density maximums, it is imperative that this residential density be supported by hard and soft infrastructure. The VMCSPP will deliver on Council's vision of a vibrant, diverse, thriving downtown and CBD that is a complete and balanced with unique residential, office and mixed-use development. It will be structured around a transit-oriented, fine-grain street network for all modes of transportation - including walking, driving and cycling – and plans for development linked by a network of high-quality parks, public squares, and open spaces.

**For more information,** please contact Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, Planning and Urban Design, VMC, Policy Planning and Special Programs Department, ext. 8266.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1 - Study Area Boundary

Attachment 2 – Engagement Summaries (Phases 2 & 3)

## **Prepared by**

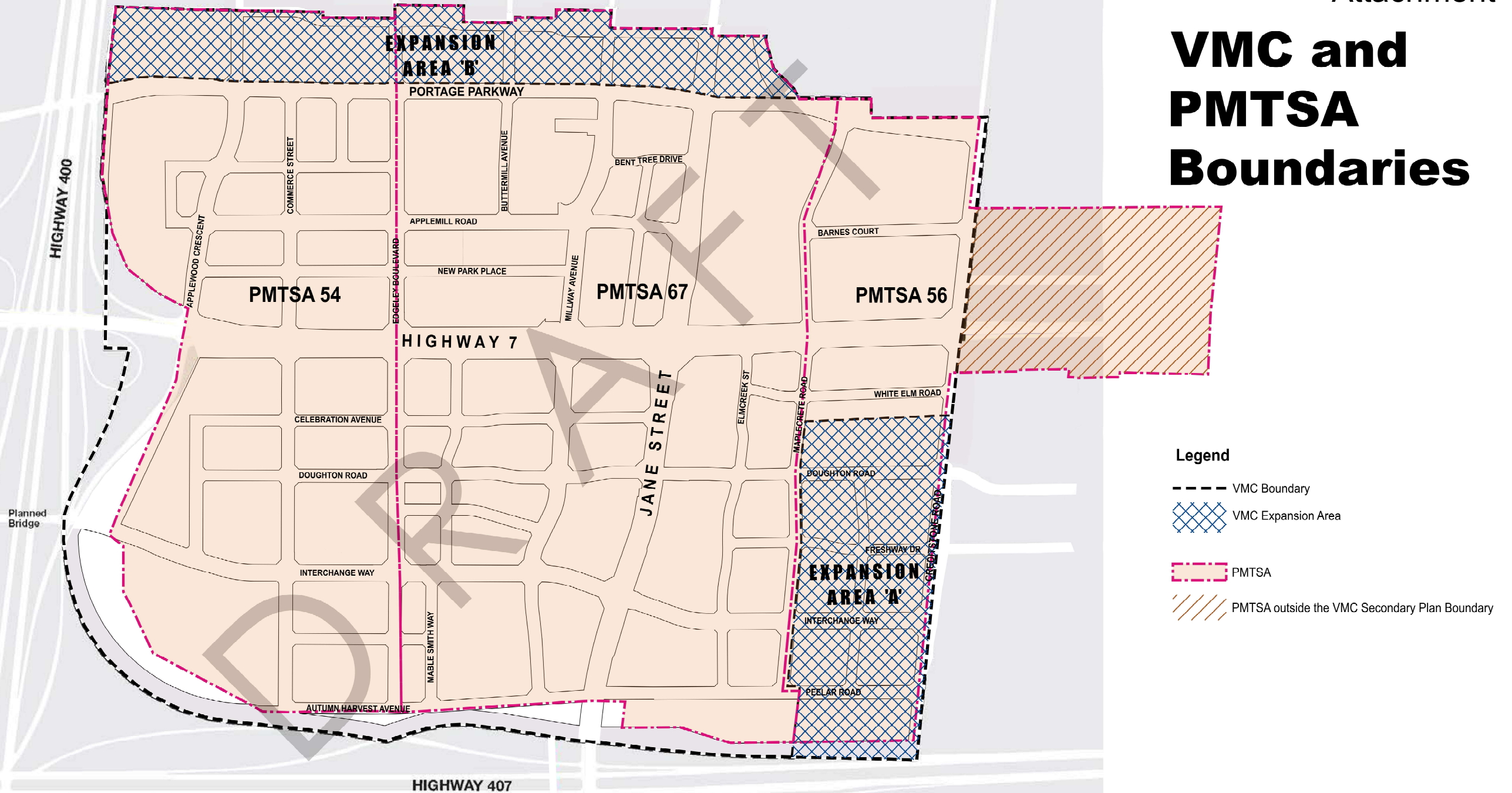
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# VMC and PMTSA Boundaries



### Legend

- VMC Boundary
- ▨ VMC Expansion Area
- ▭ PMTSA
- ▨ PMTSA outside the VMC Secondary Plan Boundary

# Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan Update

Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary

June 2022

# Overview

## VMC SECONDARY PLAN UPDATE

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is the City of **Vaughan's downtown core**, transforming into a transit-oriented community with unique residential, office, and mixed use areas, linked by a network of parks, public squares, open spaces, and a street grid for all types of transportation, including walking, driving, and cycling.

Due to rapid growth in the VMC and recent changes to provincial legislation and regional policy, the City initiated an update to the existing VMC Secondary Plan and retained a multi-disciplinary team led by Gladki Planning Associates, supported by DTAH, Greenberg Consultants, and Parcel Economics.

Work is being aligned and coordinated in conjunction with parallel studies being undertaken in the VMC, City of Vaughan, and York Region. Ultimately, this update will result in a revised secondary plan that supports the City's downtown as a **complete community** to 2051 and beyond.

## PROJECT PHASES AND CONSULTATION

The VMC Secondary Plan Update is a multi-year project with five phases:

1. Background and Issues
2. Options
3. Recommendations
4. Draft Secondary Plan
5. Final Implementation

A Public and Stakeholder Engagement Plan is guiding consultation to ensure diverse groups are involved throughout the project. Dedicated touchpoints at regular intervals will ensure work is continuously informed by their important perspectives.

Phase 2 focused on developing two different land use options. The land use options that were presented demonstrated the different ways the VMC could evolve over time based on different variables that include land use, building typologies, retail distribution and the allocation of community amenities, such as parks and civic facilities. The land use options evolved from the vision and principles established as part of Phase 1 of the project.

The objectives for this phase of engagement were to:

- introduce the options to stakeholders and the public;
- utilize a variety of engagement initiatives, including digital marketing, online engagement and landowner and community meetings to engage a diverse group of community members and stakeholders;
- demonstrate how key messages from engagement initiatives in Phase 1 have been included in potential land use options; and
- gather feedback from the public and stakeholders on opportunities and constraints for each option.

## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Public consultation activities in Phase 2 included an online form on "Have Your Say Vaughan" and a virtual community meeting. Activities were advertised on the City of Vaughan's social media channels. The feedback from the engagement activities will inform the next phase of work, which includes developing recommendations for a preferred option and framework for the VMC Secondary Plan Update.

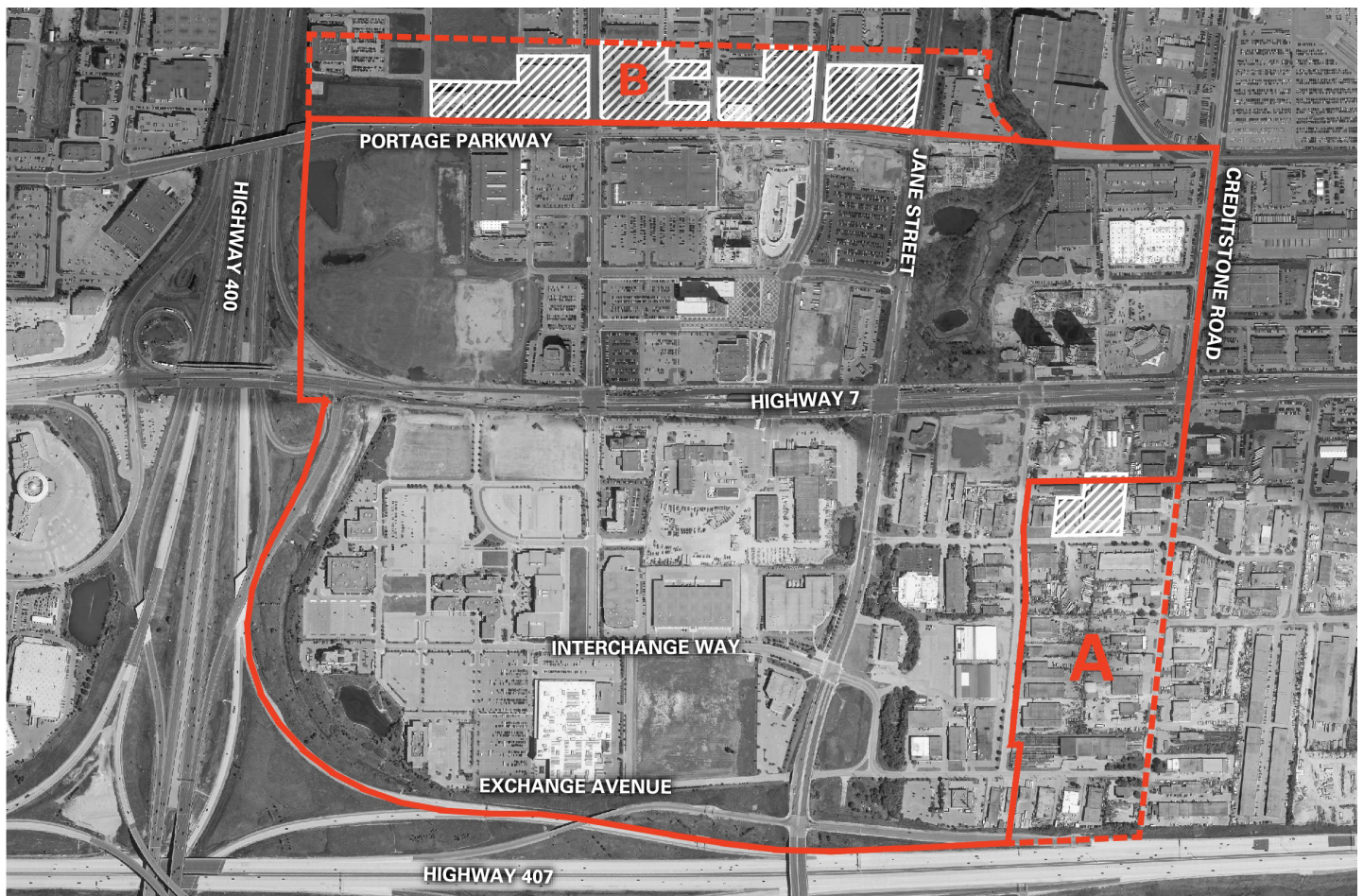
This document summarizes public feedback received during Phase 2.



## STUDY AREA

The VMC is bounded by Highway 407 to the south, Highway 400 to the west, Portage Parkway to the north, and Creditstone and Maplecrete Roads to the east. This project will also review and analyze **potential expansions to the VMC boundary**, which takes into consideration employment

lands to the north of Portage Parkway and east of Maplecrete Road to Creditstone Road. The current Secondary Plan boundaries and possible expansion areas are shown in Figure 1.



### LEGEND

- VMC Boundary
- - - Boundary Expansion Areas
- ▨ Approved Employment Conversion Areas

Figure 1 Vaughan Metropolitan Centre study area and potential expansion areas

## OPTIONS

Options 1 and 2 are briefly summarized below to provide context to the feedback received during Phase 2. For more detailed information on each of the options visit the VM CSP Update [study page](#) on the City of Vaughan website.

### Option 1

Option 1 would maintain the permitted intensity of development allowed in the current Secondary Plan and would recalibrate to achieve built form variety and adequate social infrastructure.

What does this mean?

- Option 1 would allow office development in much of the VMC, but require it as a part of new development in a limited area.
- Retail in Option 1 would be extended into the VMC’s neighbourhoods.
- Civic facilities in Option 1 would be concentrated along Millway Avenue.

Figure 2: Option 1 Land Use



### Option 2

Option 2 would recalibrate to achieve a balance of uses and deliver a true central business district.

What does this mean?

- Density permissions in Option 2 would be increased in exchange for significant office development.
- Retail in Option 2 would be concentrated along Millway Avenue and Highway 7.
- Civic facilities in Option 2 would be dispersed across the VMC.

Figure 3: Option 2 Land Use



# Virtual Community Meeting

**TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2022**

A live, virtual community meeting was held using the Zoom platform to seek feedback from citizens and stakeholders on the two options for the VMC. **68 people** registered for the meeting and **40 people** attended the meeting, representing a variety of people who have an interest in the VMC( as seen in figure 4). The meeting was advertised across the City’s social media networks, including Instagram and Twitter.

A presentation on the two options was delivered by Gladki Planning Associates. The presentation was followed by break-out room discussions. Participants were invited to comment on **land use, retail, and civic facilities**. The following questions were asked in the break-out rooms to generate conversation among participants:

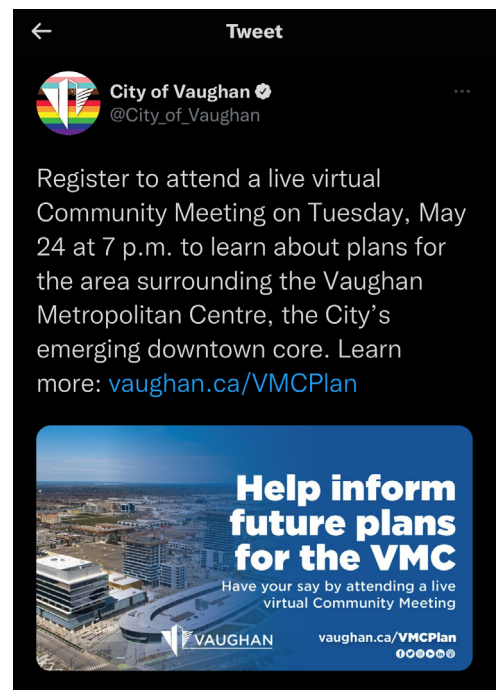
- To what degree should office development be required in the VMC?
- Where should retail be located within the VMC?
- What types of retail would you like to see in the VMC to promote vibrancy and convenience?
- Where should civic facilities be located in the VMC?
- Is it important to have a cultural destination in the VMC?
- What should the VMC look like in the future?

Highlights from the break-out rooms are summarized below. Detailed comments from the break-out rooms can be found in the following section. Comments have been edited for clarity.

Figure 4: What is Your Interest in the VMC?

n=18 responses

- I own a business in or near VMC
- I am (or represent) a developer or landowner in VMC
- I live or want to live in VMC
- I work in or near VMC;
- I am interested in learning how the VMC will become Vaughan's downtown



## Land Use

Given the intensity of residential development in the VMC, there should be a **focus on the development of other uses, particularly retail and offices**, to ensure that the VMC is something **more than a commuter community**. Community members shared that office development would help attract more retail to the area, and that retail would be well used by employees in new office developments.

## Retail

In downtown areas, retail should be everywhere and would help balance out other uses, such as residential. **Walkable** access to retail was identified as an important priority. There was a preference to have **retail in pedestrian-friendly areas**, and spilling onto the green spaces. There was consensus that **Highway 7 would not be an ideal** place to have retail because it is not a good place to be a pedestrian due to the wide roadway and heavy volume of traffic.

## Civic Facilities

Some community members thought it was preferable to have integrated and concentrated facilities due to the Canadian climate and to accommodate families with children. Other community members were okay with more dispersed facilities because it may motivate people to move through parks and open space to get to facilities. There was consensus that **civic facilities needed to be easy to access**. Some community members expressed that office and retail development are a more pressing concern.

## Miscellaneous

Community members shared a concern that currently the VMC is not tailored to family living. There is a desire for a **variety of building types** that are **family friendly** and for **more schools**. Additionally, traffic congestion was a concern shared among community members.

"Retail needs to be in walking distance in all four quadrants"

"There needs to be places for entertainment"

"Having a concentration of office space will benefit the VMC"

"Congestion is my biggest concern"

"I am excited about increasing density in the VMC and having a downtown"

"We need to prioritize the building of schools"

## LAND USE

- “Concern that if there is a lot of high-rise development, it will become a **commuter area and not a community.**”
- “As a resident, I would like to see a **variety of uses.**”
- “I support the idea of a **balanced** master planned community, however, there needs to be significant financial incentives to build something other than residential.”
- “Unfortunately, the area is still very car dependent which makes it difficult to predict what will work.”
- I am **excited about increasing the density** in the VMC and having a downtown.”
- “Important to **balance need for development and ensuring that there is enough parks, schools, and family-oriented housing.**”
- “**Parks need to be centrally located**, otherwise people will not visit them.”
- “I am concerned that industrial employment areas will interface with schools.”
- “I think that there is big benefit to having a **concentration of office space in the VMC.**”
- “Preference to have parks located towards the centre of the VMC with employment/commercial closer to the industrial zones, for examples on the north side of Portage Pkwy.”
- “I prefer option 2 because of the **dispersion of parks.**”
- “**Increasing the office space will help reduce traffic** because people won’t have to travel to and from other areas.”
- “I would like to have a **mix of development in the VMC.**”

## RETAIL

- “As a resident, I think that **Highway 7 is too busy for retail.** While there is a lot going on there which can be great, it can be difficult to get around.”
- “Most people do not live in walking distance to Highway 7. The Study Team should consider having additional, **dispersed areas to have retail.** This will be attractive for people looking to move to the area.”
- “There needs to be **places to entertain.** Retail needs to be in **walking distance** in all four quadrants.”
- “Millway as a central place for retail is appealing.”
- “Preference is for retail that you can walk to and is localized rather than dispersed. **Millway could have a mix of uses.**”
- “Highway 7 is a freeway and is not a good place for retail. It would be better to have retail areas proximal and **spilling into open space and parks.**”
- “Besides grocery stores it would not make sense for other kinds of retail to be located there [Highway 7] because it is not walkable at all.”
- “I would prefer to have **retail that you can walk to** and is localized rather than dispersed.”
- “Option 2 is more attractive and would provide more **balance between driving and walking.** Right now, people only see the VMC as a place to drive through.”
- “**Expand the retail** on to smaller roads and **establish pedestrian only streets for retail** so people do not need to worry about car traffic.”
- “Retail should be dispersed throughout the VMC, however, **Highway 7 would not be an ideal location for lots of retail because it is difficult to park there and it is not pedestrian friendly.**”

## CIVIC FACILITIES

- “Civic Facilities do not necessarily need to be close for me. Employment and retail are the priority.”
- “Access to these facilities needs to be **quick and easy, especially with kids**. More information on the demographics of the VMC is required to decide what kinds of facilities would be needed and where it would be best to have them located.”
- “Civic facilities should include parking.”
- “Given the weather in Canada, it would be best to have **concentrated and integrated** civic facilities.”

## MISCELLANEOUS

- “Planning does not work when developers have more say than the community.”
- “**Congestion is the biggest concern**, specifically driving along Highway 7.”
- “If **entertainment facilities** are located in the VMC there will need to be a **better way for people to get in and out of the area**.”
- “The **amount of traffic in the VMC is concerning**, especially given the number of condo buildings being constructed.”
- “To make the VMC more **family oriented**, it is important to prioritize the **building of schools**.”
- “The close proximity of York University on the subway is attractive to students.”
- “I would like more local transit in the area.”

# Online Engagement

**MAY 24, 2022 - JUNE 14, 2022**

An online forum was launched on “Have Your Say Vaughan” for community members to share their feedback on the two options for the VMC Secondary Plan Update. The online forum was advertised across the City’s social media networks, including on Instagram and Twitter. Community members engaged with one another using the discussion board feature, and shared their ideas on four topics:

- Office Development
- Civic Facilities
- Retail Environment
- The Future of the VMC

**Over 181** community members visited the online forum and over **20 contributors actively engaged** across the **4 discussion boards**. Contributors left over **52 comments** and **voted 27 times** on comments that they either agreed or disagreed with. A high-level summary of responses proceeds and is followed by a selection of direct quotes from the discussion boards. Comments have been edited for clarity.



## Office Development

Among those who participated in the discussion boards, there was clear consensus that office development was important to achieving a downtown in the VMC. Office development should be near transit hubs to reduce traffic, congestion, and long commutes for those living in the VMC. Participants also expressed a desire for office space that could be used for creative industries as well as “downtown-style” office space.

## Retail

As it relates to retail, Option 1 was the preference among respondents. Many of the of respondents agreed that retail needed to be easily accessed on foot and that Highway 7 would not be a good place to concentrate retail. There is a desire for pedestrian friendly retail strips that provide opportunities for local businesses and shops to open.

## Civic Facilities

Some community members favoured Option 1, while others favoured Option 2. Generally, respondents wanted the civic facilities to contribute to a “neighbourhood-feel” and shared a desire for civic facilities to be proximal to parks, open space, and libraries.

## VMC Future

Respondents used the terms family-friendly, green space, active transportation, and arts and culture to describe what they envisioned for the future of VMC. Respondants discussed their desires for a pedestrian and cycling friendly community with large park facilities.

“Jobs should be concentrated around transit hubs”

“There should be as much green space as possible”

“Active transportation paths that connect neighbourhoods”

“I want to see gallery spaces and places for creative industries”

“I would love to be able to work and live in Vaughan”

## TO WHAT DEGREE SHOULD OFFICE DEVELOPMENT BE A PRIORITY IN THE VMC?

- “Offices should be built in **mixed-use developments** rather than having smaller stand-alone buildings. I think that this is the most efficient use of resources. **Jobs should focus around transit hubs.** This will allow Vaughan to have a concentrated area that can truly be considered a **downtown**. Of course, traffic is an important aspect that the City should consider.”
- “Focus on bringing “downtown-style” office space in **close proximity to the subway station** and making VMC a true downtown. I prefer this over having a lot of residential towers where people have to commute elsewhere to work.”
- “Office space should definitely be a priority. In fact, if downtown Vaughan just becomes a bedroom-commuter city, years from now we will look back and lament how much space was wasted. **I want Vaughan to be somewhere you live, work and play.** Employment should be mixed-use. The City should also consider repurposing traditional office space into spaces that can be used to for **creative industries** such as film and music studios. Vaughan must be more than a vertical suburb where people go to sleep, it has to be a place where there is a lot of **unique retail and jobs. Balance is key for livability.**”
- “I prefer Option 2. I think that there is a lot of opportunity to have employers move their offices to Vaughan. **Reducing long commutes** would also help reduce carbon emissions in the long term.”
- “We need **new business and employment opportunities in order to sustain anticipated growth in Vaughan.** I’d love to be able to work and live in Vaughan. Additionally, I think it would be also great to **prioritize creative industries and entrepreneurship.**”



## WHERE SHOULD RETAIL BE LOCATED?

- “Option 1. Highway 7 is too busy to accommodate any more retail. Highway 7 is noisy and this will not make a good retail environment. There is also not a lot of parking. Having **retail on quieter streets** would be a more pleasant experience. This will bring life and activity to otherwise quiet streets. I would like to see a combination of restaurants, cafes, and shops. Something like the shops at Don Mills.”
- “I think that **Option 2 would be a suboptimal** choice given the heavy truck traffic in the area. I’d also like to see a more concentrated area in downtown Vaughan that offers a **wide variety of restaurants and bars** - similar to Toronto’s King street. Currently the only thing close to a “restaurant hub” is the area around Vaughan Mills, but it requires a car to get to and lacks density.
- “I agree that Option 1 makes the most sense. Retail should be spread out. The City should consider widening the sidewalks along Millway, adding Bike lanes and City-owned parking garages.”
- “Option 1 would be my choice.”
- “The more local retail that there is, the more of a **unique identity** that Vaughan can pride itself on. This would also change the feel from one of a sprawling suburb.”
- “Nightlife, bars, music venues, and clubs should be in employment / commercial areas, and local shops should be in more residential. I really want to see **gallery spaces and quirky local spots**. There is nothing unique and fun to do in Vaughan, there is no real ‘centre’. There should be an **arts district**. Downtown Vaughan is supposed to be the cultural hub of the city, so let’s make sure that there is artist spaces and nightlife that reflects the many **storytellers and artists that are proud to call Vaughan home.**”
- “Highway 7 is already too busy. There should be plazas and shopping centers dispersed throughout the area for **easy access**. We also need more parking.”

- “I like the idea that retail could be readily available within a **walkable** area.”
- I’m not in favour of having retail located to Highway 7.

## WHERE SHOULD CIVIC FACILITIES BE LOCATED?

- “Option 2 is the better idea. **More park space** should be included throughout the VMC. There should be spaces in civic buildings for lookouts and places to take selfies. I think it would also be great to have **somewhere to sit and enjoy the neighbourhood**. I fear that the VMC will become a transactional place where you are in and out. I think we should try and **create something that feels more like a true neighbourhood.**”
- “While I think the intention was to have amenities and shopping near the high-rise residential developments, this is not the case and people in the downtown area still require a car. For those living in high-rise residential towers, I think that **amenities should be clumped together.**”
- “I feel civic facilities should be close to **parks and recreation.**”
- “Option 2 would be more beneficial, as the buildings will be more accessible to all residents living in the 4 quarters of the downtown area.”
- “Why have everything concentrated on one street that is already busy and does not have great parking? **I enjoy having a library and park in my neighbourhood.**”
- I like Option 1 because it appears to be closer to public transit stops. This would allow for greater **pedestrian access**. Option 2 would make it harder to access community facilities unless you have a car.

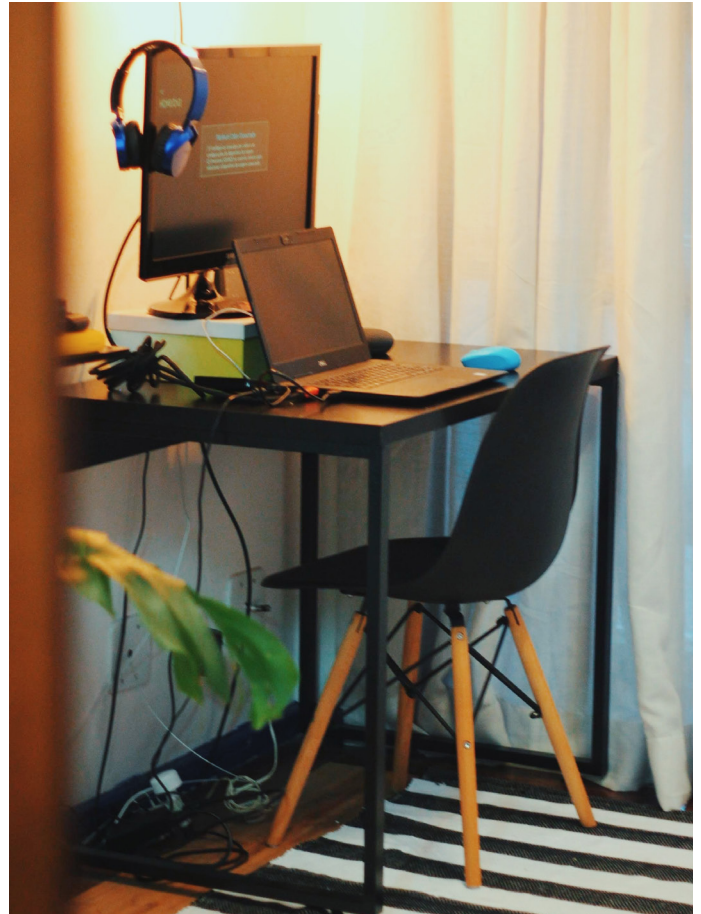
## WHAT SHOULD VMC LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

- “It would be wonderful to have facilities where **families** can go to **enjoy outdoor activities.**”
- I like the idea of a **giant park**, similar to what some other cities have. Additionally, along one, or both sides of the 400, there should be a huge **cycling / walking / active transportation path** that connects the east and west side of the 400. There should be an overpass for travel.
- I think there should be as much **green space** as possible, **free parking spaces**, and some **shops along cobblestone streets**. It would also be nice to have an arts and culture buildings. For example, an **art gallery and/or a theatre.**
- “Let’s aim to be the **most cycle and pedestrian-friendly city in Canada!** Let’s make sure new residents choose to bike to local errands and amenities over driving their cars”

## Next Steps

Public and stakeholder feedback is vital to the success of the VMC Secondary Plan Update. The project team will continue to seek input from citizens and stakeholders during the next phases to ensure work is **continuously informed** by the important perspectives of all community members.

**Phase 3** is the next stage of the project and will **recommend and present a preferred option and framework for the VMC**. Engagement with key stakeholders, including the public and landowners, will continue; the technical analysis will be shared to gather critiques, opinions, preferences on the preferred option, and capture interests that may have been previously missed on framework for the VMC. **Stay tuned!**



# Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan Update

## Phase 3 Public Engagement Summary

December 2023

# Overview

## VMC SECONDARY PLAN UPDATE

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is the City of Vaughan’s downtown core, transforming into a transit-oriented community with unique residential, office, and mixed use areas, linked by a network of parks, public squares, open spaces, and a street grid for all types of transportation, including walking, driving, and cycling.

Due to rapid growth in the VMC and recent changes to provincial legislation and regional policy, the City initiated an update to the existing VMC Secondary Plan and retained a multi-disciplinary team led by Gladki Planning Associates, supported by DTAH, Greenberg Consultants, and Parcel Economics.

Work is being aligned and coordinated in conjunction with parallel studies being undertaken in the VMC, City of Vaughan, and York Region. Ultimately, this update will result in a revised secondary plan that supports the City’s downtown as a complete community to 2051 and beyond.

## PHASE 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

The VMC Secondary Plan Update is a multi-year project with five phases:

1. Background and Issues
2. Options
3. Recommendations
4. Draft Secondary Plan
5. Final Implementation

Phase 3 - Recommend a Preferred Approach, focused on developing the preferred option to present a recommended plan and framework for the VMC. The preferred option is based on the vision and principles established as part of Phase 1 and feedback received through Phase 2. The goal of the preferred option is to create a vibrant, diverse, thriving downtown and central business district (CBD), through a

balanced and complete community.

The objectives for this phase of engagement were to:

- Introduce the preferred option to stakeholders and the public;
- Utilize a variety of engagement initiatives, including poster distribution, online engagement and landowner and community meetings to engage a diverse group of community members and stakeholders;
- Demonstrate how key messages from engagement initiatives in Phases 1 and 2 have been included in preferred option; and
- Gather feedback from the public and stakeholders on land use, density, retail, and civic facilities in the recommended plan and framework.

## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Public consultation activities in Phase 3 consisted of an in-person open house, comment forms and digital forums on the “Have Your Say Vaughan” webpage. Activities were advertised on the City of Vaughan’s social media channels and posters were distributed in public spaces around the VMC. The feedback from the engagement activities will inform the draft Secondary Plan as part of Phase 4 of the project.

This document summarizes public feedback received during Phase 3.

# Open House

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023**

The in-person open house was held at the David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community on Thursday, September 14, 2023. **38 people** registered for the meeting and **50 people** attended, representing a variety of people who have an interest in the VMC.

The in-person open house consisted of two segments and a presentation. The meeting began with a one-hour open house segment with information boards (see figure 1). City staff and project team members were available at the boards and discussed the preferred option with community members (see figure 2). The first open house segment was followed by a 30-minute presentation on the preferred option delivered by Gladki Planning Associates (See figure 3). Following the presentation, community members were invited to visit the information boards and ask City staff and project team members further questions and share thoughts.

Paper comment forms were available during the open house and **3** community members completed forms. People were asked to submit feedback, comments, and questions about **land use, density, retail, and civic facilities** identified in the preferred option.



**Figure 1:** Community members viewing the information boards at the open house held at the David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community.



**Figure 2:** City staff and consultant team discussing the preferred option with community members.



**Figure 3:** Andrew Davidge, Gladki Planning Associates, presented the preferred option to community members.

# Online Engagement

SEPTEMBER 14 - 27, 2023

## Online Forum “Have Your Say Vaughan”

An online forum was launched on “Have Your Say Vaughan” for community members to share their feedback on the preferred option (see figure 4). The online forum was advertised across the City’s social media networks (see figure 5). The following questions were asked in the online forum discussion boards to generate conversation among participants:

- What do you think of the land-use designation identified as the preferred option? (2 responses submitted)
- What do you think of the mixed-use non-residential requirement identified as the preferred option? (0 responses submitted)
- What do you think of the maximum density identified as the preferred option? (0 responses submitted)
- What do you think of the retail identified as the preferred option? (1 response submitted)
- What do you think of the civic facilities identified in the preferred option? (1 response submitted)

Over **161** community members viewed the project’s Have Your Say landing page **1,847** times and accessed the project’s online forum **171** times. **4** contributors actively engaged on the discussion boards. Contributors left **4** comments on the civic facilities and land use discussion boards. Overall, **32** community members visited the land use discussion board, **24** people visited the mixed use discussion board, **18** people visited the civic facilities discussion board, **17** people visited the retail discussion board, and **14** people visited the density discussion board.

## Online Information and Comment Form

Comment forms were also available digitally between September 14 and September 27, 2023. **8** community members completed forms. After the in-person open house on September 14, 2023, the information boards and presentation were available online.

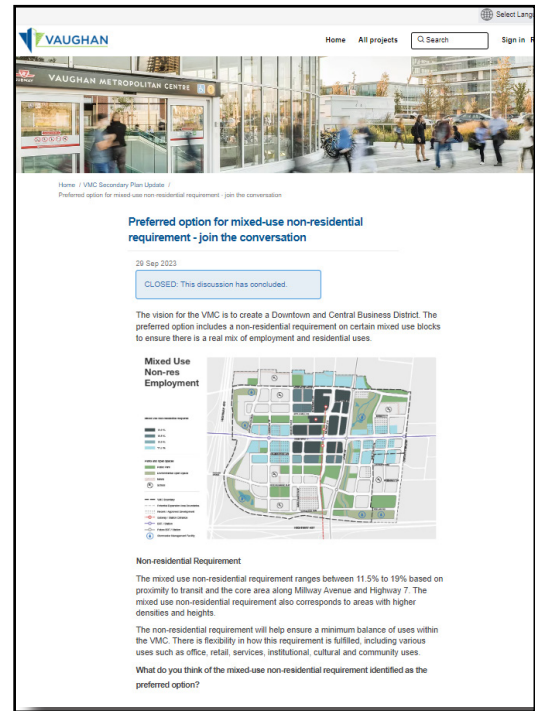


Figure 4: Forum discussion board

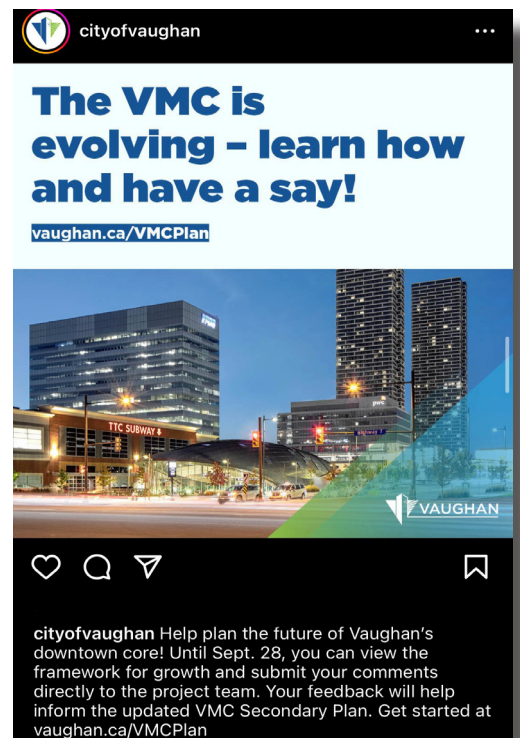


Figure 5: Instagram post

## What We Heard

Community members were asked to share their general feedback and comments on the **land use, density, retail, and civic facilities** identified in the preferred option. **11** community members completed paper and online comment forms and **4** community members contributed to the online forum. Highlights from the in-person and online engagement activities are summarized below. Detailed comments and direct quotes can be found in the following section. Comments have been edited for clarity.

### Density

A prominent and diverse skyline is important in the VMC. Some community members favour of a mix of building types and heights, and appropriate separation of tall buildings. Community members shared concerns that there are too many high rise buildings.

### Family-friendly

Some community members highlighted the importance of family-friendly housing. Community members preferred a variety of building types and unit sizes to accommodate families and young people. Some community members shared that a variety of civic facilities and outdoor amenities such as sports fields should be provided to service the area. Other community members indicated that school sites are ideal near the core and higher density areas.

### Transportation and Parking


Community members shared a concern about traffic congestion and road safety in the VMC. There is a desire for pedestrian friendly and walkable neighbourhoods with active transportation infrastructure. Some community members identified the need for visitor and commuter parking.

### Parks and Open Spaces


In residential and mixed use areas, parks and green open spaces should be located nearby and within walking distance. Community members favoured a diverse range of programming and uses in parks and open spaces.

### Retail and Placemaking


A vibrant public realm with retail, programming, and design elements is desired. Community members recommended elements including spaces for street festivals, green public spaces, places to sit and rest, and art installations. Community members acknowledged the importance of diverse retail for daily needs within walking distance. Some community members recommended that there should be less retail areas to improve traffic congestion. Overall, there is a desire for more mixed use areas with commercial and residential uses.




“We need places that can fit young families in bigger spaces so they can stay in the area longer.”




“Transportation inside and outside of the VMC will be a challenge.”



“Mixed use housing is the most affordable and efficient use of the space”



“There should be more green space surrounding neighbourhoods”



“Retail should be within walking distance”



## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE LAND-USE DESIGNATION IDENTIFIED AS THE PREFERRED OPTION?

- “There should be **more green space** surrounding neighbourhoods. If we are making housing available to people who cannot afford single homes, giving more green space surrounding these areas is important. People should be able to step out and touch some grass without walking through **dangerous** roads and parking lots. Green spaces need to be **more accessible.**”
- “**Mixed use** and **green public spaces** such as parks/ playgrounds, trails, dog parks, picnic areas.”
- “I think land use should **always incorporate parks and environmental open spaces.** Parks and open spaces should be calm spaces for **families to gather and enjoy time outdoors.**”
- “Residential and commercial”
- “Anything that doesn’t cause more traffic.”
- “**More mixed use zoning** would be nice.”
- “High rise buildings bring more traffic **congestion** and raise safety concerns. There should be less high rise buildings but more parks. **Retail and restaurants** would make the area **safer and environmental friendly.**”
- “The land use is great.”
- “I think the plan is well laid out. However, I am curious about the **parking** situation. The City of Vaughan is highly dependent on their vehicles due to the common long-distance travel. The current parking lots are not allocated in this map. Please distinguish the location of public vehicle and bike parking. Also, when building these condos, please do not make the sidewalks with only hardware materials. **Greenspace is important!** Shade from the trees during the hotter season will keep people outdoors longer. Trees are also a natural separation from vehicular traffic which creates a **better sense of safety.** **Entertainment** is extremely important in the VMC. Right now, the City only has Dave and Busters as a popular entertainment hub for

friends and family. There will be no form of enjoyable entertainment in the area if it is removed. Please ensure that the VMC will be a place **where residents can live, work, and play.**”

- “I think the plan is quite thorough and takes a lot of things into consideration. I appreciate that there is a priority regarding the **importance of neighbourhoods and parks** surrounded by the **busy high-rise buildings.** These parks and neighbourhoods are a **calm** place where people can go to escape from their busy lives. I also appreciate the mindfulness of incorporating **environmental open space** to incorporate natural land.”

## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE DENSITY IDENTIFIED AS THE PREFERRED OPTION?

- “**Mixed use housing** is the most affordable and efficient use of the space. There is no point in making condos that are only 500 square feet that can fit as many people as possible in them. To help with the housing crisis, we need places that can fit **young families** in bigger spaces so they can stay in the area longer. For example, making **medium sized apartment buildings.** An 8 story apartment building that is at least 1500 square feet will be more accommodating for **young professionals and families .**They can stay long-term and have a **better quality of life.** This will decrease demand for single family homes. The VMC area has enough space and time to implement [mixed use housing and medium sized apartments] and other places in the city can as well. ”
- “We don’t want **too many massive towers** with more people in an area. Roads and traffic **congestion** are already a major issue in the VMC. The Floor Space Index (FSI) of 9.0 is way too high considering the amount of roads, there’s already enough congestion on Highway 7. We need to provide incentives for people to use public transit or other forms of transportation.”
- “Keep sight lines of downtown for **taller buildings.**”
- “Less is more.”
- “The FSI of 7.5 and greater would be ideal.”

- **“Height is not good.** High rise buildings are close to existing apartments and are lowering [property] value. [High rise buildings] should be **arranged with this consideration** and not blocking each other.”
- “Reducing the resident population and retail shoppers will better to manage transportation. **Transportation is a challenge in the VMC.**”

## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE RETAIL IDENTIFIED AS THE PREFERRED OPTION?

- “Retail looks good”
- “I think **too much retail can cause the area to become too congested.** Perhaps there should be a **moderate** amount of retail. Only having retail in required areas, not in recommended.”
- “Grocery stores, coffee shops, convenience stores and restaurants.”
- “Less is more.”
- “The existing commercial plan looks good.”
- “Retail should be within **walking distance** inside and outside the VMC.”
- “The retail plan looks great.”
- **“Affordable** grocery stores, coffee shops (not franchises), convenient stores, wine rack, barber/ hair dresser, boutiques high and low end, thrift store, dry cleaner, shoe maker, electronic repair store, local bakeries and specialty goods (gluten free, vegan, dairy free etc.), street/sidewalk vendors.”

## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE CIVIC FACILITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE PREFERRED OPTION?

- “Civic facilities in the plan are good.”
- “Libraries, community centres - outdoor space, soccer fields, baseball fields, ice rink, school.”
- “Commuter parking is needed in the VMC.”
- “More civic facilities are needed in the area.”
- “Looks like a good amount of community services in the plan. If more people live in the dense areas, maybe **move the schools closer to the denser areas?**”
- **“Schools are needed close by.** Currently, there is library and YMCA but no school.”
- “The civic facilities plan looks great.”
- “The boards on display mention that elementary school sites are centrally located and away from 400 series highways. However, the city and landowners are asking the school boards to relocate S4 to the TRCA lands at the corner of 400 & 407. Are you now saying you support the S4 site as noted?”
- **“Students are one of the largest demographics that use transit and will be in and out of VMC often.** I’d like to see more public amenities, retail and commercial, and civic facilities such as: workspaces (WeWork or some type of group/individual pod); another library or incorporate a study/work space in commercial space; public washrooms; walk in clinic/ pharmacy; a movie theatre; water bottle filling stations; a service Ontario office; a post office; and religious facilities (including art is an important expression of community and diversity). There should be crossing guards on the nearby streets on the schools.”

## ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD CONSIDER, OR YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

- “I would like to push for **larger units**. A lot of these condos are very small and expensive for what they are. More units need to be in the 700-1000 square foot range. I know the city has no control over private businesses, but there should be a mandate that they have to include a minimum requirement for how many units have to be over 700 square feet. Another suggestion I have is limiting cars and roads in the area. **Making a more pedestrian friendly space will increase safety and aid in pollution reduction**. Take Yonge and Dundas square. Making larger city blocks that block cars should be increased to increase air quality and efficiency for people living in those buildings. Living so close to the subway should mean an easy commute, and making this more pedestrian friendly will encourage residents and the surrounding communities to reduce their reliance on cars, increase bike usage overall reducing traffic in this area. **Putting in more bike lanes that are SAFE and VIABLE** for the community. This means putting in place BARRIERS between the bike lane and cars so that it is **safe to commute to the subway by bike**.”
  - “Again more specific details on the **uses of the green space** and community areas. Picnics, trails, gardens, off leash dog parks are needed.”
  - “It is common for a condo development to include a small plaza (walking/ gathering space) so they can add more floors. However, much of the time, developers pave the ground and leave the space completely open, thus **missing an opportunity to create usable spaces for people in the city**. Encourage seating that people can actually relax on (backrest), add water features, create a pollinator garden, designate it as a spot for musicians, negotiate a sidewalk vendor (coffee vendor) near commercial buildings. As the population of Vaughan becomes more culturally diverse, the best way to represent all these cultures is through art and food. VMC can host international food festivals or temporary art popups. Get the creatives involved; have them create a mural, acknowledge the lands we’re on. **VMC is supposed to be a glimpse of what Vaughan can be**. Make it equitable.
- Add an employment centre, a food bank, non-for-profit organizations. Hope this sparks inspiration!”
  - “Thanks for taking my feedback. It’s nice to see the city listening to us.”
  - **“High rise buildings should be family friendly and safe for all residents**. Higher population density may raise safety concerns. Focus should be on mid rise buildings for residence or office. Also, more entertainment, parks for kids and school age children.”
  - **“My biggest concern is the amount of commuters** in the area as the population is expected to be 93k. Transportation inside and outside of VMC will be a challenge.”
  - “Parking permits for restaurants and parking safety.”

## Next Steps

Public and stakeholder feedback is vital to the success of the VMC Secondary Plan Update. The project team will continue to seek input from citizens and stakeholders during Phase 4 to ensure work is continuously informed by the important perspectives of all community members.

**Phase 4** is the next stage of the project and **a draft of an updated Secondary Plan for the VMC will be developed.** Engagement with key stakeholders, including the public and landowners, will continue; the draft Secondary Plan will be shared to gather critiques, opinions, preferences, and capture interests that may have been previously missed. Stay tuned!



Transit Square and Centre of the VMC. Source: City of Vaughan