



**SMARTCENTRES®**

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COMMUNICATION  
CW (WS) - June 5/2019  
ITEM - 1

June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Office of the City Clerk

City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, Ontario  
L6A 1T1

Dear City Clerk:

**RE: WESTON RD AND HWY 7 SECONDARY PLAN STUDY – PHASE 1 STATUS UPDATE (FILE 26.2)  
COMMENT LETTER – SMARTCENTRES**

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As you are aware, Calloway REIT (Westridge) Inc. & Calloway REIT (400 & 7 Inc.) ("SmartCentres") owns approximately 23.1 ha (57.14 ac) within the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area (approximately 18% of the study area). SmartCentres has actively participated in all Secondary Plan public working sessions regarding its Phase 1 status update and have met with staff and the consulting team on numerous occasions to discuss the parameters of the Secondary Plan and our vision for our lands. We also discussed significant technical concerns that we believe must be considered in the early phase of the Secondary Plan process. These concerns include road network and access issues as they relate to Ministry of Transportation ("MTO") and York Region.

From the onset we expressed a desire to work with the City to advance a dynamic, mixed used community and to build on our wealth of experience with the City of Vaughan through our Vaughan Metropolitan Centre ("VMC") work. As you are aware, SmartCentres, in partnership with others, owns over 100 acres of land within the VMC and has worked closely with the City of Vaughan, York Region, the MTO and all other government agencies over the last decade on the development of the VMC Secondary Plan and the advancement of over 3 million SF of active development in the VMC. Through our work in the VMC and in collaboration with the City of Vaughan, we have advanced two class A office buildings, a YMCA, City Library, City Square, significant road infrastructure, the facilitation of a Regional Bus Terminal and significant residential developments and open spaces. It has been our hope to bring forward similar high-quality mixed-use developments in the Weston 7 area. It was extremely discouraging and disappointing to see the early options prepared by your consulting team whereby

large portions of our lands were recommended to be homogenous commercial zones. This is not in keeping with the mixed-use intensified vision discussed throughout this process.

A large portion of our landholding in the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area are in close proximity to the vast array of amenities in the VMC and are connected via the Portage Overpass and through Viva on Highway 7. We believe the City is missing a tremendous opportunity by proceeding with an overly prescriptive and restrictive land use plan for the Weston 7 Secondary Plan.

We have reviewed the background material produced to date which depicted three draft scenarios for the Weston and Highway 7 Secondary Plan area and we provided written comments in March 2019. We have also had the chance to review the Phase 1 report prepared by Urban Strategies. We are very concerned that the options prepared to date take a homogenous approach to portions of the lands and fail to allow for creative, flexible urban development. Based on these concerns we do not believe these options should be used as the basis of any phase 2 works. We respectfully ask that Council confirm that the Phase 1 options are only for information and that they will not be used as a starting point for phase 2 study. Our detailed comments are as follows:

1. We are significantly disappointed that the City has taken an approach to divide land uses into different categories (i.e. High-Rise Mixed Use, Mid-Rise Mixed Use, Community Commercial) in all the scenarios. While we understand that the basis for these designations was the 2010 Vaughan Official Plan ("2010 VOP"), the three scenarios fail to re-evaluate the land use designations in recognition that significant provincial policy changes have occurred since adoption, including the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement and the 2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It is noted that Policy 10.1.1.3 speaks to, amongst other matters, that land use designations will be examined. To this extent we believe that the City and their consultants should have evaluated first and foremost whether the current land use designations in 2010 VOP were still relevant given provincial policy objectives, rather than using the current land use designations as a basis for preparation of scenarios.

We do not, for example, accept that our lands located adjacent to Highway 400 should remain as "community commercial" in all of the scenarios. Furthermore, we do not believe that identifying specific land use areas, such as the "retail focus" or "retail node" should be included in a Secondary Plan schedule.

Based on the above and our experience in the VMC, we believe that a full mix of uses should be provided throughout the Secondary Plan, with policies being utilized to encourage and provide guidance for specific policy goals which the City and landowners wish to achieve in this area. **We therefore request that the City place one, mixed use designation on the lands as a starting point, with refinements and guidance to specific policy goals being established in the policies.**

2. To ensure that this area redevelops to its full potential, flexibility in land use permissions must occur. We remind the City that the VMC Secondary Plan was originally written very prescriptively and would not have provided sufficient flexibility to allow for creative architecture and design to occur. The VMC Secondary Plan policies were significantly revised through extensive mediation and are generally working to achieve the desired built form and policy objectives. **We therefore recommend that the City and their consultants review the VMC Secondary Plan, as revised through mediation as a basis for the policy framework.**

3. While we understand that the VMC should remain as the primary intensification area in the City, the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area has tremendous connectivity to the subway station and VIVA bus terminal. In addition, there are two Major Transit Station Areas (“MTSAs”) located in the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area. It is estimated by York Region that both of these MTSAs have an estimated persons and jobs per hectare of 65 and are targeted for 250 persons and jobs per hectare (per York Region Planning for Intensification report, March 2019). We agree with York Region’s assessment that these attributes are to be recognized and appropriate land use permissions, height and density need to be provided for to achieve (at a minimum) this target. **We therefore request that development permissions within the Weston and Highway 7 Secondary Plan area should be such as to optimize these infrastructure investments as directed by provincial policy.**
4. There are a number of park locations and a community hub / school identified on all of the scenarios. We believe it is premature to identify these community facilities at this time until other component pieces of the Secondary Plan are established. We do note that while some community facilities to be located in the VMC Secondary Plan area were identified in the Community Services Facility, such as the new Library under construction, others, such as the parkland to be provided, was not. **Given that it is acknowledged that these facilities can draw from a wider area than just the Weston 7 Secondary Plan, we believe that revised analysis may need to occur.**
5. It appears that underlying the three scenarios, new road fabric has been identified. This is despite the statement on the slides that these will be analyzed in Phase 2 of the study. It is unclear where these new roads originate from and the analysis which supports their location, size, etc. Through our discussions with staff and the consulting team we expressed serious concerns about the complexity of the road network issues and access approvals from the MTO and Region of York. Even though we have yet to advance any redevelopment of our lands we have spent many years working with the agencies to resolve issues related to adjacent development applications. The absolute critical need to resolve basic road network issues is essential in the early stages of the Secondary Plan work. It is not clear to us what work has been done, what discussions have been advanced with the agencies and what the overall technical strategy is. **We therefore request additional information on transportation matters and consultation as to the impacts these roads on our various properties.**

While we appreciate the work completed to date, we feel that the process has not been sufficiently interactive with landowners in the Secondary Plan area. The vast majority of ideas and discussion had with the consulting team seem to have been completely disregarded. Additional, meaningful consultation, with sufficient notice, needs to occur. We are encouraged that the City is contemplating proceeding to Phase 2 of the study work but we strongly object to the options in Phase 1 being considered a starting point for Phase 2. The options should have no formal status moving forward.

We have a history of working well with City staff, creating exciting and beautiful city building projects. We believe we have a tremendous amount of experience which we can provide to the City through thoughtful dialogue, which we feel has not occurred through the study process to date. **We would therefore be pleased to meet with City staff on an ongoing basis to help bring forward this Secondary Plan.**

Thank you.

Yours truly,



Paula Bustard M.PL, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Vice President, Development