

Attachment #1

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

Parks & Wayfinding Master Plan

Parks Master Plan

October 30, 2024



Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

Parks & Wayfinding Master Plan

Parks Master Plan

Prepared for the City of Vaughan, 2024

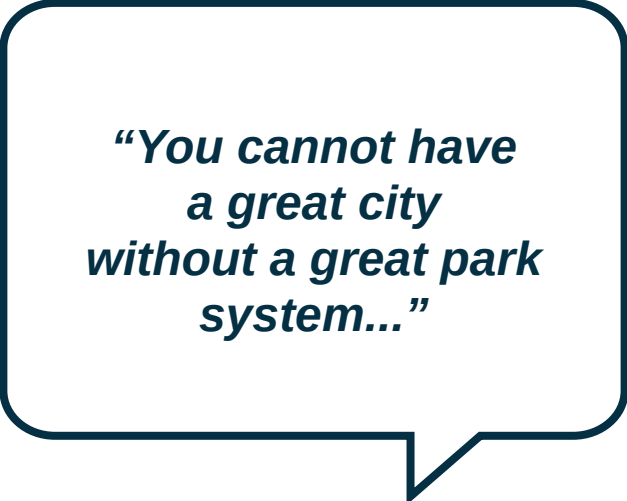


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***“You cannot have
a great city
without a great park
system...”***

Mitchell Silver, Former NYC
Parks Commissioner, Untapped
New York, 2019



Park Place Condos, SmartCentres

A Once in a Generation Opportunity

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is emerging as the City of Vaughan's new downtown, providing a once in a generation opportunity to create a world class network of parks and open space for current and future residents to enjoy.

The continuing transformation of the VMC's urban landscape reflects the City's planned growth. As the downtown grows, the demands on the quantity, quality, and connectivity of the parks and open space become more pronounced.

The VMC Parks & Wayfinding Master Plan provides clear direction on how parks and open space can work with development to enhance the vitality and quality of life of residents, workers, and visitors of the VMC.

This Master Plan has been prepared to further advance the design and details of parks within the VMC, as originally set out in the VMC Secondary Plan. It has been developed to achieve the City's vision of creating "a diverse, multi-functional, and seamlessly interconnected parks and open space network", and it offers opportunities to draw upon both urban and natural features to produce a clear identity for the VMC's public realm.

This Master Plan, which can be implemented over time in a measured response to development, will create a compact, balanced, and meaningful parks and open space network within the VMC boundary, with access to larger sporting facilities, trails, and green space nearby, while providing the City with options for service level delivery.

This Master Plan will ultimately contribute to the downtown's continuing development as a complete and balanced community that is transit supportive and pedestrian friendly, with a vibrant sense of place, a high-quality public realm, and environmentally sustainable design approaches.

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Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction



Figure 1 - Downtown Vaughan Metropolitan Centre - City of Vaughan

In the most memorable neighbourhoods and cities, the quality of the public realm is directly tied to the identity of the place. With the VMC now undergoing dramatic change, from a commercial and industrial zone to an urban destination, planning for growth must be aligned with a comprehensive vision for its parks and open space. This Master Plan provides this focus, enabling the VMC to develop a memorable identity that builds upon the qualities of its urban form, natural features, and cultural heritage. With thousands of new residents on their way, providing accessible, meaningful, and active parkland within the VMC is critical.

Parks, open spaces, and the facilities that activate them, are critical threads in the social fabric of a city. Parks provide places for people to gather, play, exercise, and engage with each other and their environment. Since March of 2020, the need for open spaces in our cities has become more apparent than ever before, when we looked to local outdoor spaces for places to gather in the face of COVID-19 restrictions. The pandemic made it abundantly clear that parks and open spaces, especially those in dense, urban communities, are a critical component of our cities. In tower-dominant neighbourhoods, where private open spaces are limited or non-existent, the need for public parks is even greater.

This report is the culmination of over two years of research and analysis, focused on understanding the existing context of the VMC, what its future population will look like, and what the parkland and open space needs of future residents will be.

This report is preceded and supported by the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan Assessment Report (the Assessment Report), which was delivered to the City of Vaughan in October 2022. The Assessment Report provides an analysis of the current state of the VMC parks and open space network against the goals of the planning framework, while considering the pace of growth in the VMC, as it exceeds original estimates.

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan (PWMP or the Master Plan) builds on the findings of the Assessment Report and outlines a comprehensive system of parks, open spaces, and facilities, to be developed incrementally over time. This system is designed to meet the City's planning goals and, most importantly, the needs of current and future residents, workers, and visitors in the VMC.

Drawing upon extensive stakeholder engagement and detailed observations by the consultant team, the Master Plan provides a vision for the VMC's parks and open spaces that balances urban vitality with natural preservation. It includes a thorough assessment of the planning context, existing and identified parks, and a variety of open space typologies.

The Master Plan prioritizes connectivity and accessibility, envisioning an interconnected system of parks and open spaces that are readily available to residents and visitors. This approach integrates the VMC's existing and proposed parks and ecological assets, such as the Black Creek and surrounding environmental open spaces, into a cohesive urban fabric. By connecting parks and green corridors and incorporating active transportation links, the plan enhances the overall urban ecosystem and facilitates movement throughout the city.

Accessibility is a key focus, with an emphasis on equitable distribution of parks and facilities throughout the VMC and a commitment to walkability.

The goal of the Master Plan is to create a sustainable, livable downtown where residents can easily access green spaces within a short walk from their homes or workplaces. This network not only maximizes the benefits of individual parks but also promotes a more vibrant and interconnected urban environment, fostering active lifestyles and community engagement.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of urban environments, the Master Plan incorporates programmatic flexibility. It includes clear language about designing adaptable spaces that can evolve over time with changing community needs. This approach ensures the long-term sustainability and relevance of urban parks, allowing them to serve multiple functions and accommodate diverse activities as the population grows and changes.

Time is a major factor in this study and in the realization of the Master Plan. The Master Plan vision's success hinges on its ability to capitalize on both private development and public initiatives. As residential growth in the VMC accelerates, the PWMP principles become increasingly crucial in establishing a high-quality open space network for current and future residents. The goal is to craft a safe, inspiring, and meaningful parks and open space framework that will contribute to the identity and quality of life which will make the VMC one of the most unique and desirable communities in the GTA.

The study vision takes form in an illustrative VMC Parks Master Plan that incorporates the report's analysis and public feedback. The study was well-received at the Vaughan Design Review Panel in September 2021, with subsequent feedback integrated into the final Master Plan document.

The VMC PWMP provides a comprehensive roadmap for acquisition, expansion, and improvements to parkland in the VMC, addressing population and employment growth projections to 2051. It sets out to achieve a bold and lasting legacy for future generations in an intensifying Downtown, creating a green, connected, and resilient urban core that adapts to the challenges of the 21st century while preserving the natural features of the area.

1.2 Objectives

- 
- 1 Assess the Parks and Open Space Proposed for The VMC.
 - 2 Identify Public Realm Strategies that Respond to the Increased Density in The VMC.
 - 3 Define The Character, Program, and Design of the Parks and Open Space Proposed for The VMC.
 - 4 Create a Phasing and Implementation Plan for the Parks and Open Space Proposed for The VMC.

Figure 2 - VMC PWMP Objectives

How can we meet service levels amid the VMC's current explosion of growth? Vaughan's downtown is increasingly defined by the vertical nature of development and its growing skyline. A key challenge in the VMC will be how to accommodate anticipated growth while providing enough high-quality parkland and open space to meet the needs of its residents. The Master Plan examines the need for parkland and seeks to ensure its provision is calibrated to growth, and specifically looks at park facilities and their population driven demand.

The VMC PWMP has been shaped by four objectives, listed above. These objectives have provided the roadmap for the Master Plan and were instrumental in guiding the assessment of VMC parks and

open spaces. All four objectives work collectively to establish an understanding of what the future population of the VMC will look like. By understanding the projected population size and demographics, parkland and facility needs can be extrapolated.

The projected population for the VMC was used to inform the specific character, program, facilities, and ultimately, the designs for parks and open spaces in the VMC. The process of moving from development trends to parkland and facility needs is outlined in the following sections of this report. Section 5 of this report explores options and recommendations for implementing and phasing parks and open space in a manner which will allow for this Master Plan to be realized.

1.3 Key Findings

- 
- 1 Development Trends Suggest The VMC Will Become One of the Most Dense Areas in North America.
 - 2 It is Critical to Provide Additional Parkland In or Near The VMC.
 - 3 Providing Required Recreational Facilities Demands Careful Planning.
 - 4 Connecting The VMC to Open Space South of Highway 407 Is Important.
 - 5 Development of Parks And Open Spaces Must Continue to Reflect Planning Goals.

Figure 3 - VMC PWMP Assessment Phase Key Findings

Rigorous background analysis, consolidated and presented in the full Assessment Report (available from the City of Vaughan), has revealed five key findings that significantly impact parks planning and development in the VMC.

The first key finding, that the VMC will become **one of the most densely populated areas in North America**, forms the cornerstone of this Master Plan. This critical insight establishes a crucial framework for all aspects of parks and open space planning. It underscores the imperative for thoughtful space allocation and the implementation of best practices in urban design and city building. This key finding not only provides essential context for the entire Master Plan but also shapes and informs all subsequent findings, ensuring a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to

parks planning in the face of unprecedented density. This extreme density forecast underscores the second key finding: the urgent **need to acquire and protect additional parkland, both within and around the VMC**, exceeding the allocations prescribed in the current VMC Secondary Plan. As urban development accelerates, securing more green space becomes essential to meet the growing population's diverse recreational needs. These expanded areas will provide ample room for both active and passive pursuits while ensuring all VMC residents have equitable access to parks and open spaces in their community. This proactive approach to parkland acquisition is fundamental in ensuring that green spaces keep pace with urban growth and density, preserving quality of life as the community expands.

The third finding illustrates the **importance of careful planning in providing the specific facilities required by the growing population**. When selecting and designing the parkland, open space, and facility distribution, it is essential to consider not only current demographics but also anticipate future community needs. This approach necessitates the incorporation of programmatic flexibility into the design process, creating adaptable spaces that can evolve over time.

Given the limited supply of land and increasing competition for development sites, all parks and open spaces must be designed to maximize their programmatic value to the community. This involves a holistic approach to facility provision across the entire VMC, ensuring an appropriate mix and distribution of amenities. By prioritizing flexible design, these urban parks can readily adapt to changing demographics and evolving recreational trends, thereby enhancing their long-term sustainability and relevance. This adaptability is key to creating resilient urban spaces that continue to serve the community effectively for years to come.

Key finding four emphasizes the importance of **enhancing access to open spaces south of Highway 407**, unlocking opportunities to connect to significant greenspaces and extensive trail networks. Notable opportunities include the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) lands, South York Greenway connection, and connection to the Toronto Northwest Cultural Trail network. The TRCA lands present more immediate potential for parkland development. These areas could be transformed to offer unique amenities and facilities that respond to the historical context of the lands while catering to contemporary community needs.

Improving access south of Highway 407 would also connect the VMC to the South York Greenway, a major planned trail network designed to link multiple communities, parks, transit hubs, and key destinations. Improved accessibility south of the 407 would pave the way for integrating these southern lands into the broader VMC park system, significantly improving connectivity both within and beyond the VMC.

Lastly, key finding five recognizes that the **design and programming of all parks and open spaces must work to achieve planning goals**. The VMC is built on a wealth of ideas, plans and studies, and it is critical that plans for parks and open spaces meet the goals set out in both those existing plans and in this Master Plan.

The key findings discussed above, combined with the Objectives discussed in Section 1.2, provide a lens through which this Master Plan can be assessed and evaluated. Achieving the objectives, while addressing the key findings, was critical in shaping the final recommendations of this report.

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1.4 Conclusion

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is set to become one of North America's most densely populated urban areas, creating both challenges and opportunities for parkland development. Even if growth slows and population reaches only the minimum projected levels, the currently planned parkland will fall short of meeting residents' needs. This situation underscores the need to secure and develop additional parkland, as recommended in this Master Plan document.

As the VMC evolves, it is anticipated that it will draw a unique demographic unlike that of traditional Vaughan neighbourhoods. This future population is likely to resemble those in other dense, high-rise communities across the Greater Toronto Area. Their parkland and recreational needs are expected to differ markedly from those in typical low-density Vaughan areas. To meet these unique demands and accommodate the anticipated intensive use of urban parks, it is recommended that **the City must implement innovative, flexible, and adaptive park and open space planning strategies.**

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan (PWMP) establishes a vision and framework for a connected parks and public realm network within the VMC's planned urban fabric. This interconnected system aims to support future growth through sustainable and resilient park design, ensuring sufficient access to diverse recreational opportunities. To safeguard livability, infrastructure must keep pace with growth. Recognizing parks and open spaces as crucial social infrastructure in complete communities, the plan emphasizes equitable access to parkland, particularly vital in high-growth, high-density areas like the VMC.

Recognizing the rapid pace of urban development and changing community needs, the plan incorporates flexibility and adaptability as core principles. This approach allows for the evolution of park spaces over time in line with development, ensuring they remain relevant and responsive to the community's shifting demographics and preferences, making the VMC an enduringly attractive place to live, work, and visit.

Building on the findings of the Assessment Report and public engagement process, draft design principles and facility fit study, the VMC PWMP has developed an ultimate VMC Master Plan supported by a phasing and implementation strategy outlining short-to-long term parkland targets for the VMC. The Master Plan identifies up to 28.1 hectares of Public Squares and Urban Parks within the VMC, and up to 22.9 hectares outside of it, some of which may be shared with other intensification areas. This parkland can be implemented over time in a measured response to development and will provide the City with options for service level delivery.

Meeting service levels will always be challenging in urban environments like the VMC where the intensity and rate of vertical growth generates parkland demand where it is difficult and costly to acquire land. The VMC requires creative approaches to deliver an adequate supply of parkland to provide the full range of park experiences enjoyed elsewhere in Vaughan.

The Master Plan creates compact, balanced, and meaningful parks and open spaces within the VMC boundary, while recognizing a need, shared with Vaughan's other intensification areas, to access larger sporting facilities, trails, and green space outside of its boundary. It has identified the necessity for a robust active transportation network, in order to seamlessly connect parks and open space within the VMC and across the City.

The creation and realization of parkland must be prioritized for the VMC in order for it to develop its character and enhance livability. As the VMC's built environment continues to intensify and as more and more people live, work, and visit the downtown, the demand and need for parkland will continue to grow. It is expected that the VMC's parks will be some of the most iconic, beloved, and heavily used destinations in the City.

The variety of planned parks and open spaces offer unique experiences and a range of necessary facilities that are fundamental to the city's identity and to the livability of the VMC. These spaces bring people



Figure 4 - Downtown Vaughan Metropolitan Centre - City of Vaughan

together, create social bonds, and set the stage for civic life. They provide places for celebration, recreation, relaxation, mobility, and experiencing nature in the City. Easy and equitable access to high quality public spaces promotes mental and physical health and contributes to social cohesion in our City.

In order to establish, run and support the future parks within and adjacent to the VMC, this Master Plan proposes a number of innovative and flexible governance models. These models set out the framework for how parks may be managed, ranging from fully City-Led to fully Independent Entities. The range of governance models and approaches that are presented in Section 6.0 and Appendix 5.0 of this report are designed to *“guide and define conversations about relevant and best-serving park governance models, but it is not meant as a prescriptive tool”*. The framework is intended to assist the City in determining which models can best serve each individual park planned for the VMC.

In conclusion, this Master Plan provides a comprehensive framework for creating a diverse, connected, and adaptable park system that will be instrumental in shaping the VMC’s identity and enhancing its livability. As the downtown core continues to intensify, these parks and open spaces will become increasingly vital, serving as beloved destinations and the heart of civic life in Vaughan. By prioritizing the creation and realization of these spaces, the City of Vaughan is investing in the long-term success and sustainability of the VMC, ensuring it becomes a thriving, healthy, and attractive urban center for generations to come.

This Master Plan is one of many tools that aim to support the planning and realization of these parks and open spaces.



Background Analysis

2.1 Planning Context

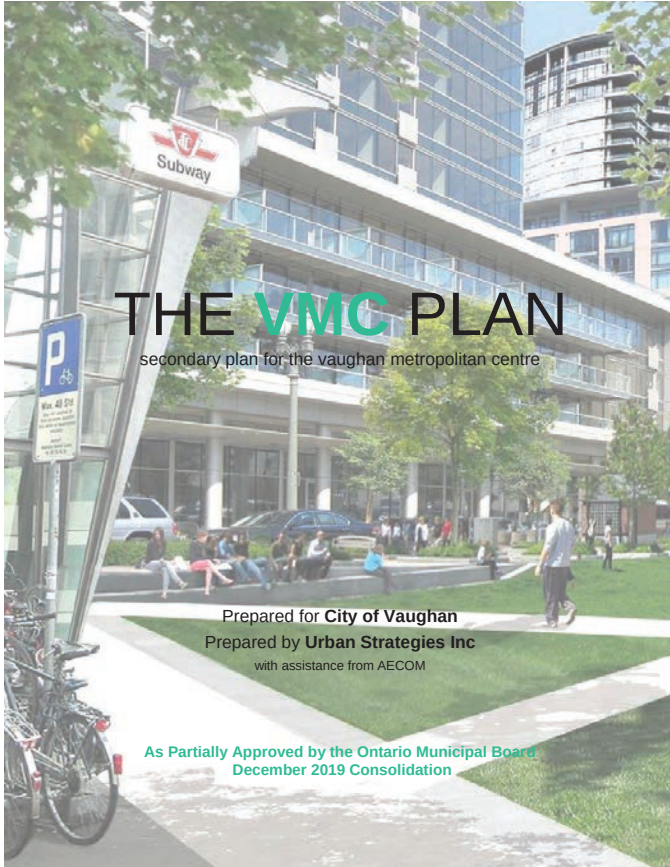


Figure 5 - VMC Secondary Plan (2019)

The planning of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) has been an ongoing process for over two decades, beginning with its designation as a centre for growth in the City of Vaughan's Official Plan in 1998.

More than thirty-five planning documents have guided and shaped the future of the VMC, informing both the background analysis and decision-making process of this Master Plan. These include key documents such as the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan, the VMC Urban Design Guidelines, the Active Together Master Plan, the Black Creek Renewal Study, and the VMC Servicing Master Plan. Among these, the VMC Secondary Plan stands out as the main document upon which the VMC PWMP is based. This comprehensive plan, which forms

part of Vaughan's Official Plan, sets out a series of plans and guidelines that cover all aspects of land use and development within the VMC. It includes specific policies and goals concerning the quantity, location, function, and character of parks and open spaces within the VMC, providing a holistic approach to guide both public and private development in the area.

Notably, the VMC Secondary Plan relied on significantly lower population projections than current trends suggest. This discrepancy has initiated a VMC Secondary Plan update, with which the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan (PWMP) has coordinated closely. During the Secondary Plan update process, council supported the expansion of the VMC boundaries to align with the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) boundaries, extending the VMC boundary along Portage Parkway approximately 150 meters to the north and incorporating the area between Creditstone Road and Peelar Road to the east. The enlarged boundary encompassed areas with significant development and growth potential, forecasting a substantial increase in the VMC's residential population. These revised population projections and expanded area have been fully integrated into the parkland provision calculations throughout the PWMP report, ensuring that the plan accurately reflects the anticipated growth and development of the expanded VMC area.

As part of the background analysis for this Master Plan, the Assessment Report evaluated how fully the current state of parks and open spaces in the VMC proper, and its newly expanded boundaries, meets the policies and goals of the original VMC Secondary Plan. The Assessment Report also considered whether the proposed parks would be sufficient to support the newly anticipated population size and demographics within the VMC.

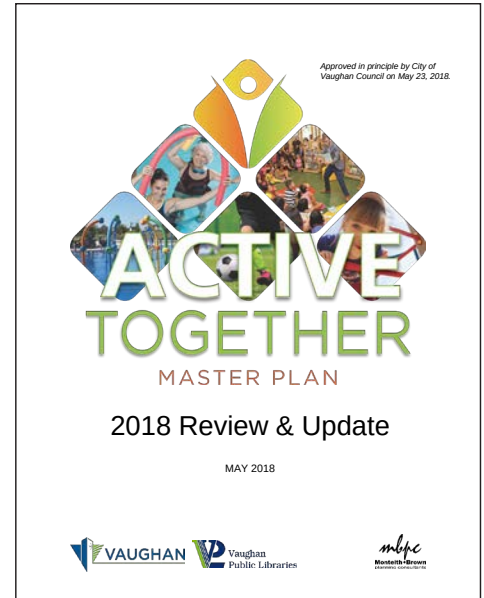
The findings of the Assessment Report were revealing. It concluded that **the VMC is on track to provide substantially less parkland on a per resident basis than was originally envisioned**



VMC Urban Design Guidelines (2016)



VMC Streetscape And Open Space Plan (2018)



Active Together Master Plan (2018)

Figure 6 - Key VMC Planning and Policy Documents

in the VMC Secondary Plan. Additionally, the Assessment Report found that **the VMC is projected to provide less Active Parkland per resident than the citywide average.** These key findings, stemming from the recognition of outdated population projections, were instrumental in shaping the recommendations in this Master Plan and informing the ongoing VMC Secondary Plan update.

It is important to note that the PWMP was developed within a dynamic policy landscape, with several key documents undergoing concurrent updates or revisions. These include the update of the VMC Secondary Plan, the revision of the Active Together Master Plan (now known as “Growing Together: Vaughan Community Spaces Plan”), and the ongoing update to the Vaughan Official Plan. Additionally, a new Greenspace Strategic Plan (GSP) has been launched to assess the current state of Vaughan’s parks and greenspaces and guide future planning, design, and management strategies for the City as a whole.

The ongoing updates to various planning documents reflect the City’s commitment to aligning its strategies with revised population projections and the evolving needs of Vaughan residents. While the PWMP study, which focused specifically on the VMC and its immediate surroundings, was coordinated with these concurrent updates, some discrepancies may emerge as other studies continue to progress. This discrepancy underscores the dynamic nature of urban planning and highlights the requirement for future refinement of policies and guidelines.

Ultimately, the PWMP, in conjunction with the updated policy and guiding documents, will form a comprehensive framework for assessing and shaping the future of the VMC’s parks and open spaces, ensuring they meet the needs of a growing and changing community.

2.2 Policy Framework

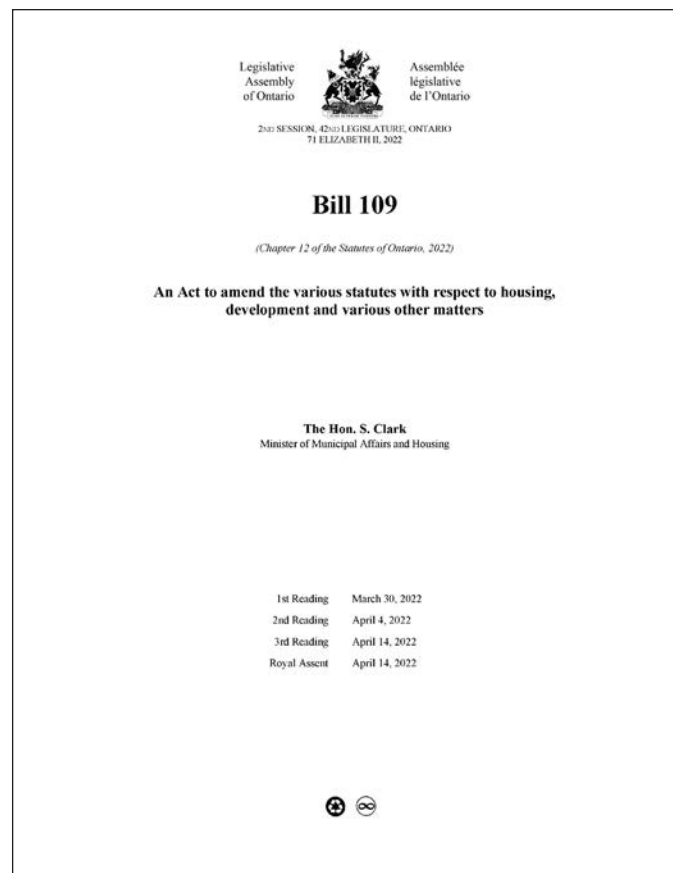
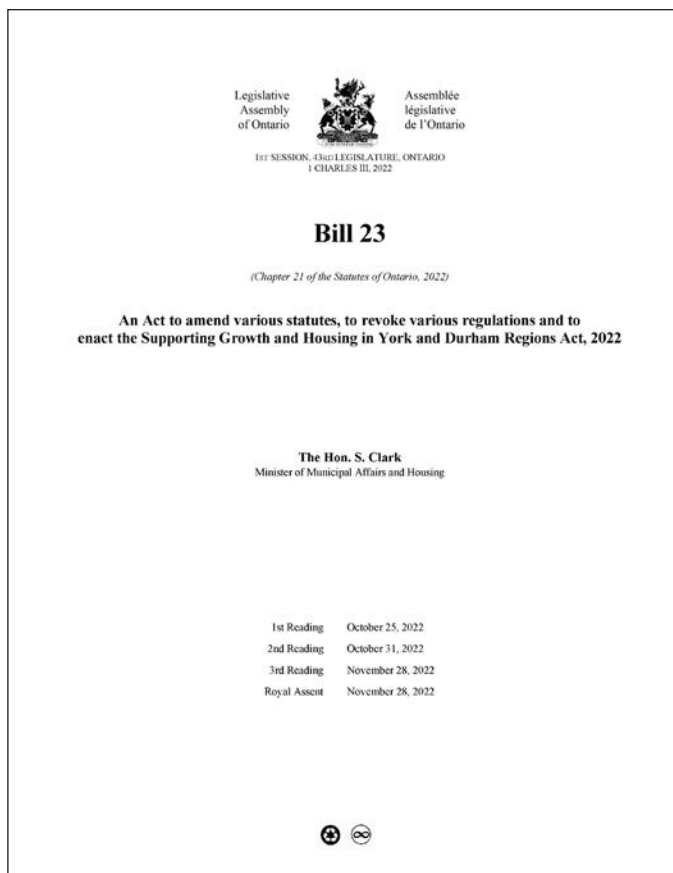


Figure 7 - Key documents for policy framework

The development of the Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan coincided with significant policy changes that had a profound impact on parkland dedication and the city's ability to acquire new parkland. Most notably, a series of bills introduced by the Province reshaped the landscape of parks planning and development, with far-reaching consequences for the VMC's future parks.

Bill 23

Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, introduced several changes to the growth funding tools available to municipalities, affecting community benefits charges and parkland dedication. Notably, Bill 23 imposed caps on parkland dedication rates, reducing the City's ability to secure parkland or receive payment-in-lieu (PIL) of parkland through development applications. This limits the City's capacity to acquire and develop new greenspaces in the VMC, impacting plans for parks and facility allocation for the growing VMC population.

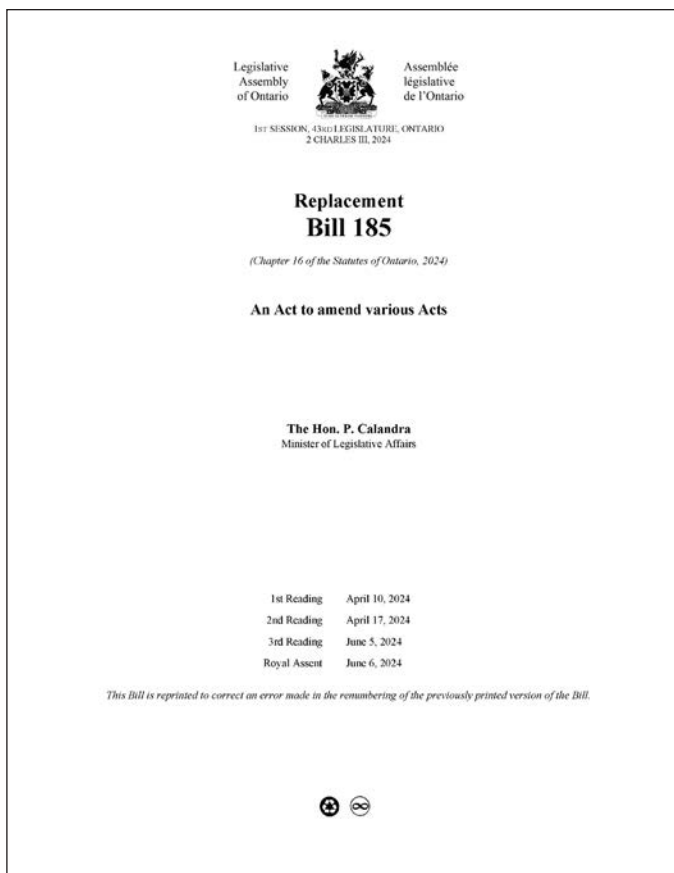


Figure 8 - Key document for policy framework

Bill 109

Bill 109, the More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022, introduced modifications to the parkland dedication legislative framework within the Planning Act, affecting transit-oriented communities, like the VMC.

Bill 109 capped parkland dedication based on the size of development site. This cap system uses land area instead of vertical density, where 20-story and 40 -story towers, on similar plots of land, provide equal parkland contributions. This creates an imbalance between population density and parkland allocation where the influx of residents into the VMC outpaces the provision of adequate parkland.

Additionally, Bill 109 required municipalities to accept encumbered (or stratified) parkland for dedication requirements. These parks often sit above parking garage structures, limiting their design potential while increasing construction costs.

Bill 185

Bill 185, known as the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024, introduced several significant changes that could impact parkland dedication and development patterns. The bill proposed a “use it or lose it” provision, granting municipal authorities the power to attach lapsing provisions to approved site plans and draft plans of subdivision. This measure aimed to accelerate the transition from approved development applications to building permit applications, potentially affecting the timing of parkland dedications associated with new developments.

Furthermore, Bill 185 sought to reduce parking requirements, particularly in transit-oriented areas like the VMC, by restricting the ability of Official Plans and Zoning By-Laws to mandate parking facilities. This reduction in required parking provisions could potentially remove the justification for strata parks, as parking structures frequently function as the primary encumbrances beneath proposed strata parks.

2.3 Public Engagement Approach

984+

Total number of
engaged individuals
and stakeholders

528

Survey respondents

23

Focus group
participants

309

Visitors to the “Have
Your Say” page

124

Attendees in the
stakeholder meetings

Figure 9 - Public Engagement - Respondent Summary

Public consultation and engagement was essential to assessing the desires, needs and opinions of current and future residents, visitors, employees and employers in the VMC. In total, over 984 people provided their views and comments via the online survey, focus groups, the “Have Your Say” webpage, and stakeholder meetings. Noted above are the numbers of participants engaged in public and stakeholder engagement. The results of the public engagement process, presented in Appendices 6.0 and 7.0, have helped to shape and refine the Master Plan that is presented in this report.

Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, all public engagement was conducted virtually. While the virtual nature of the engagement did pose challenges, the overall level of engagement and the feedback received guided the direction and ultimate outcome of this Master Plan in meaningful and impactful ways.

During the Assessment Phase of the VMC PWMP, online surveys, live, virtual presentations and feedback sessions were used to gain an understanding of how people hope to use parks and

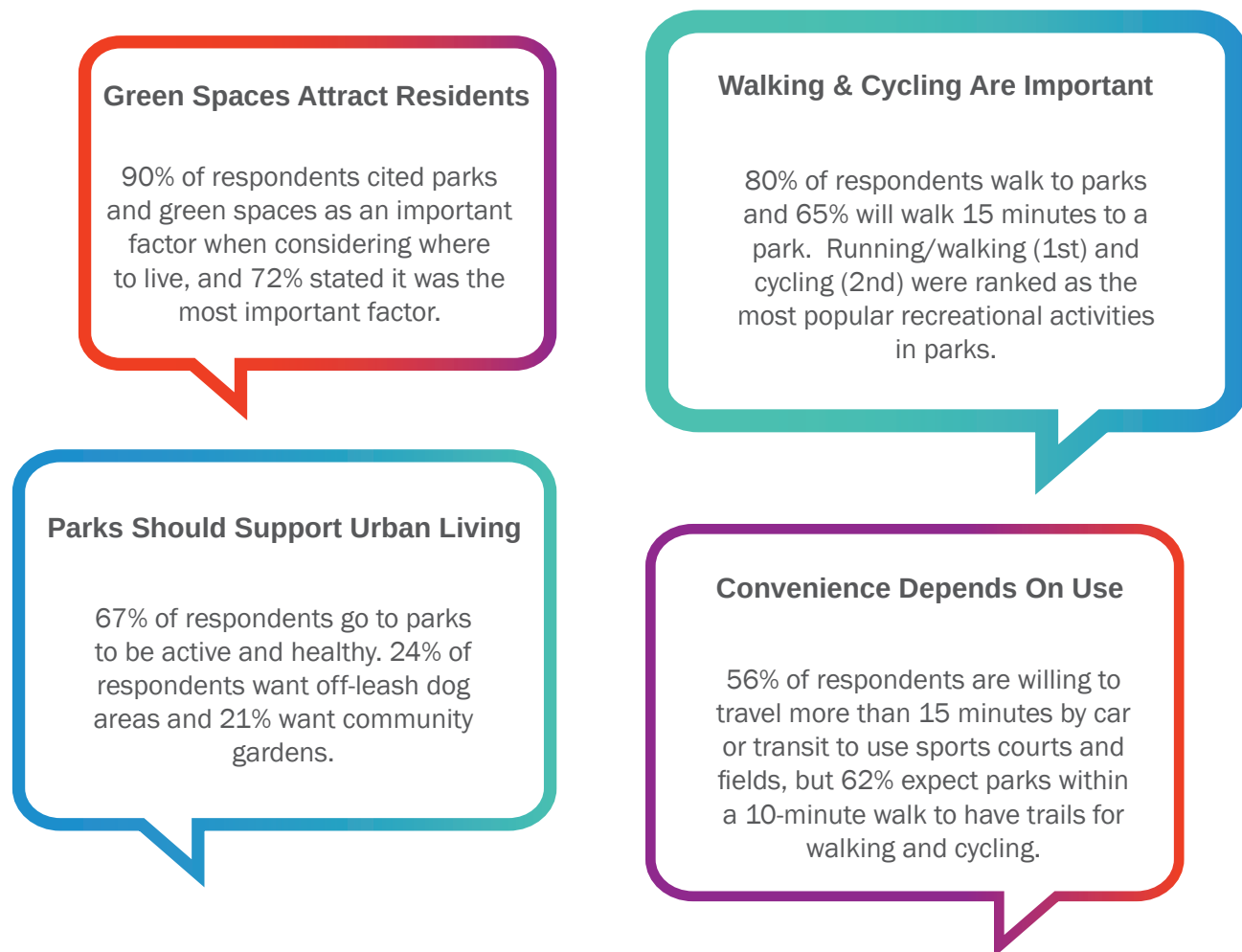


Figure 10 - Public Engagement - Survey Results

open spaces in the VMC. Feedback was instrumental in helping to define and refine the character of parks and open spaces in the Master Plan.

The survey, which was critical in providing clear, measurable responses, was open from October 16 to November 30, 2020, and was completed by 528 respondents. It posed a variety of questions regarding use, access and character of VMC parks and open spaces.

The VMC Engagement Summary Report, available in Appendix 7.0 and prepared by Bespoke Cultural Collective, concluded that *“the following five themes resonated most strongly across all touchpoints in the engagement plan: (1) parks and green spaces, (2) walking and cycling, (3) connectivity, (4) flexible spaces, and (5) health and well-being.”* Reaching over 984 individuals and stakeholders, the collected data and findings, as summarized in this report, have been a substantive resource in the development of the Master Plan.



VMC Parks Analysis

3.1 Assessing Parks & Open Space Provision

Conducting a thorough examination of parks and open space provisions in existing planning documents is a critical first step before drawing conclusions or formulating strategies regarding future parkland allocations and recommendations for the VMC. Building on the background analysis of the planning context described in Section 2.0 of this report, the VMC Secondary Plan and the Streetscape and Open Space Plan were specifically referenced to identify the parks and open spaces proposed for the VMC in these key planning documents.

A crucial step in the cataloging process involved creating a scaled drawing of all existing and proposed parks and open spaces in the VMC, aligned with current street and block plans. This visual representation, illustrated in Figure 11 of the report, provides a clear overview of the parkland distribution within the VMC, enabling a quantitative assessment of the total parkland and open space areas designated for the VMC in existing planning documents. The inventory categorizes these spaces into two main types: “**Active Parkland**” and “**Open space lands**” (also referred to as Environmental Open Space or EOS).

Following definitions established in the City of Vaughan planning documents, Active Parkland typically consists of tableland suitable for built recreational facilities, is owned, leased and/or managed by the City, and may include natural features. Open Space Lands, on the other hand, are primarily used for environmental purposes but may include trails or facilities for passive recreation. The combination of these two categories is referred to as “**Total parks and open space.**”

Quantitative analysis of the Active Parkland provisions revealed a significant discrepancy between existing and proposed parkland and the requirements set forth in the VMC Secondary Plan. The quantitative assessment of existing and proposed parkland shows only 17.6 hectares of Active Parkland, identified in Schedule D of the VMC Secondary Plan, falling short of the 20-hectare minimum stipulated in the VMC Secondary Plan policy. This shortfall raises concerns

about the adequacy of parkland provisions in the rapidly developing urban centre.

When considering the projected population growth, further explored in subsequent sections of this report, the disparity becomes even more apparent. Based on current plans and a projected population of 128,000 at full build-out, the rate of Active Parkland provision is estimated to be approximately 0.14 hectares per 1,000 people. This is substantially lower than the original vision outlined in the VMC Secondary Plan, which proposed a provision rate ranging from 0.8 to 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people, based on a minimum population of 25,000 and a maximum of 50,000.

Furthermore, the projected parkland provision in the VMC falls significantly below the citywide average of 1.86 hectares per 1,000 people, as reported in the 2018 Active Together Master Plan. While it is important to note that this citywide average benefits from less dense, more suburban areas across Vaughan, the stark contrast highlights the challenges of providing adequate green spaces in a dense urban center like the VMC.

When including Environmental Open Space, the total parks and open space provision in the VMC increases to 0.27 hectares per 1,000 people. This rate is bolstered by 17.2 hectares of Environmental Open Space, which aligns with the areas identified in the VMC Secondary Plan, despite no specific area target being specified for this category.

Given the evident shortfall in Active Parkland within the VMC, the focus of the study shifted to areas outside the VMC’s immediate boundaries. This expanded scope explored parkland opportunities that could complement existing and planned green spaces and address the deficit in the VMC urban centre.



Figure 11 - Inventory of VMC Parks & Open Spaces

3.2 VMC Growth Centre Context

Following the inventory of existing and proposed parks and open spaces within the VMC, the study expanded to examine parkland in the surrounding area. For this study, a radius of 5km, measured from the current boundaries of the VMC, was used to define the project extents. This expanded inventory included all existing built parks and open spaces that are fully or partially accessible to the public for active or passive recreation.

While this broader inventory provided valuable insights into the location and quantity of parkland in the vicinity, two critical findings emerged. First, the majority of parks and open spaces outside the VMC are not located within a comfortable walking or cycling distance. Second, any available greenspaces must also serve the future and current residents of four additional strategic growth areas - Weston 7, Steeles/ Keele, Concord, and Vaughan Mills. Furthermore, the mapping process revealed that most parks and environmental open spaces are located outside and away from these future growth areas in the City of Vaughan.

Given that the inventoried parkland outside the VMC is largely inaccessible without a car and is shared with a significant future combined population of multiple growth centres, a core finding of this Master Plan is that **“It Is Critical To Provide Additional Parkland In Or Near The VMC.”**

With growth within the VMC outpacing original estimates established in the Secondary Plan and little to no additional space for parkland within its original boundaries, the demand on available parkland will be very high. This will result in a park network that is unable to meet the anticipated demand for facilities and open space.

Due to space constraints within the VMC, **securing additional parkland within walking and cycling distance of its current boundaries is recommended.** While this approach will alleviate pressure on existing VMC lands, it is important to note that these future parks will not be exclusive to VMC inhabitants.

Instead, they will be shared spaces, benefiting populations beyond the VMC community.

With much of the VMC being landlocked by the Weston 7 growth centre to the west and industrial lands to the north and east, the most viable option for parkland outside of the current VMC boundaries lies to the south of Highway 407. This area contains significant open spaces with the potential to support a large amount of Active Parkland and park facilities.

Given this opportunity and the constraints elsewhere around the VMC, a key finding of this Master Plan is that **“Connecting the VMC to open space south of Highway 407 is important.”** These lands are among the few within close walking or cycling distance that have the potential to be converted into Active Parkland, making them crucial for addressing the parkland deficit in the VMC.

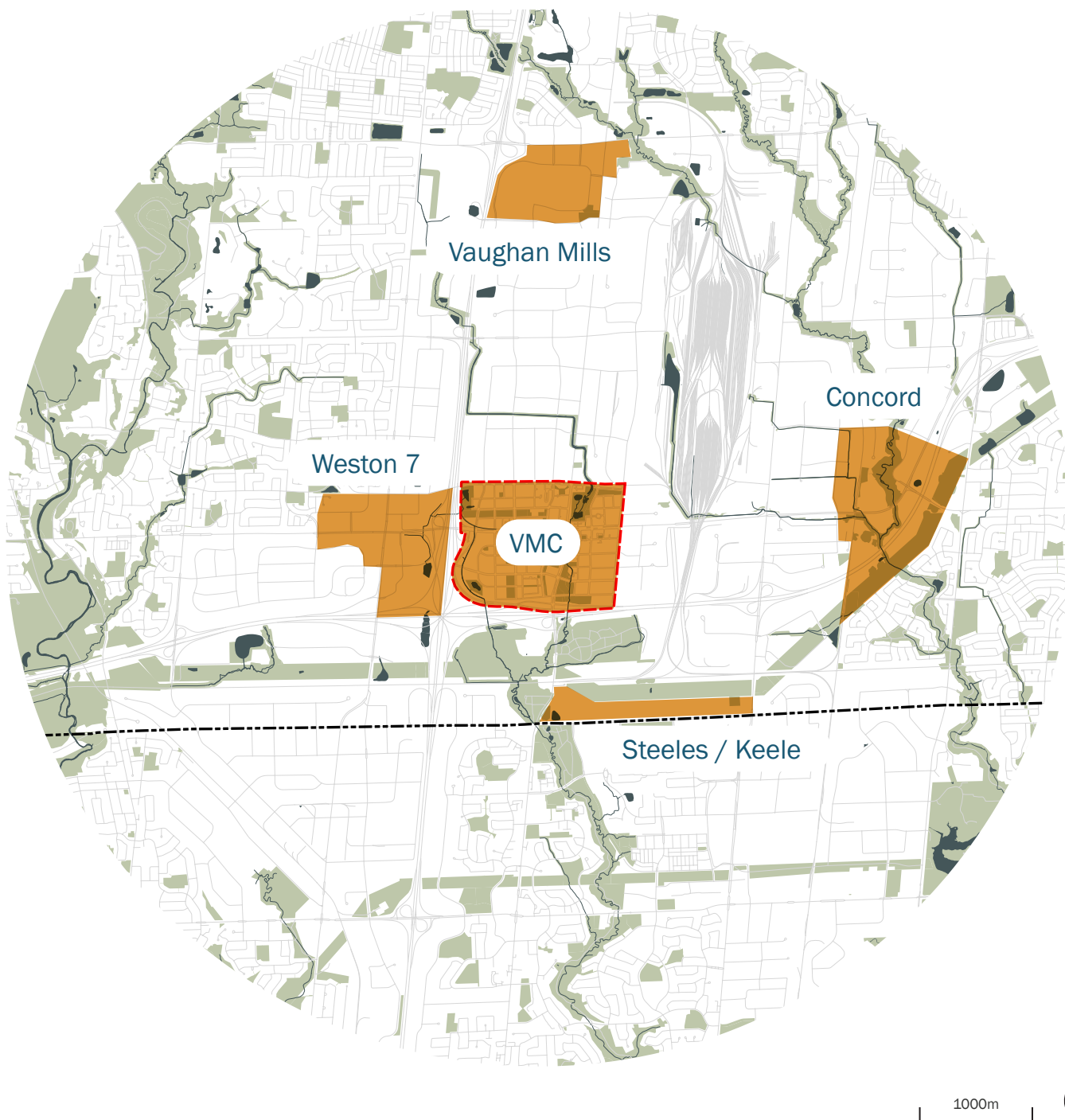


Figure 12 - Inventory of Parks & Open Spaces within 5km of VMC

3.3 Projecting Future Population Numbers

3.3.1 Growth in the VMC

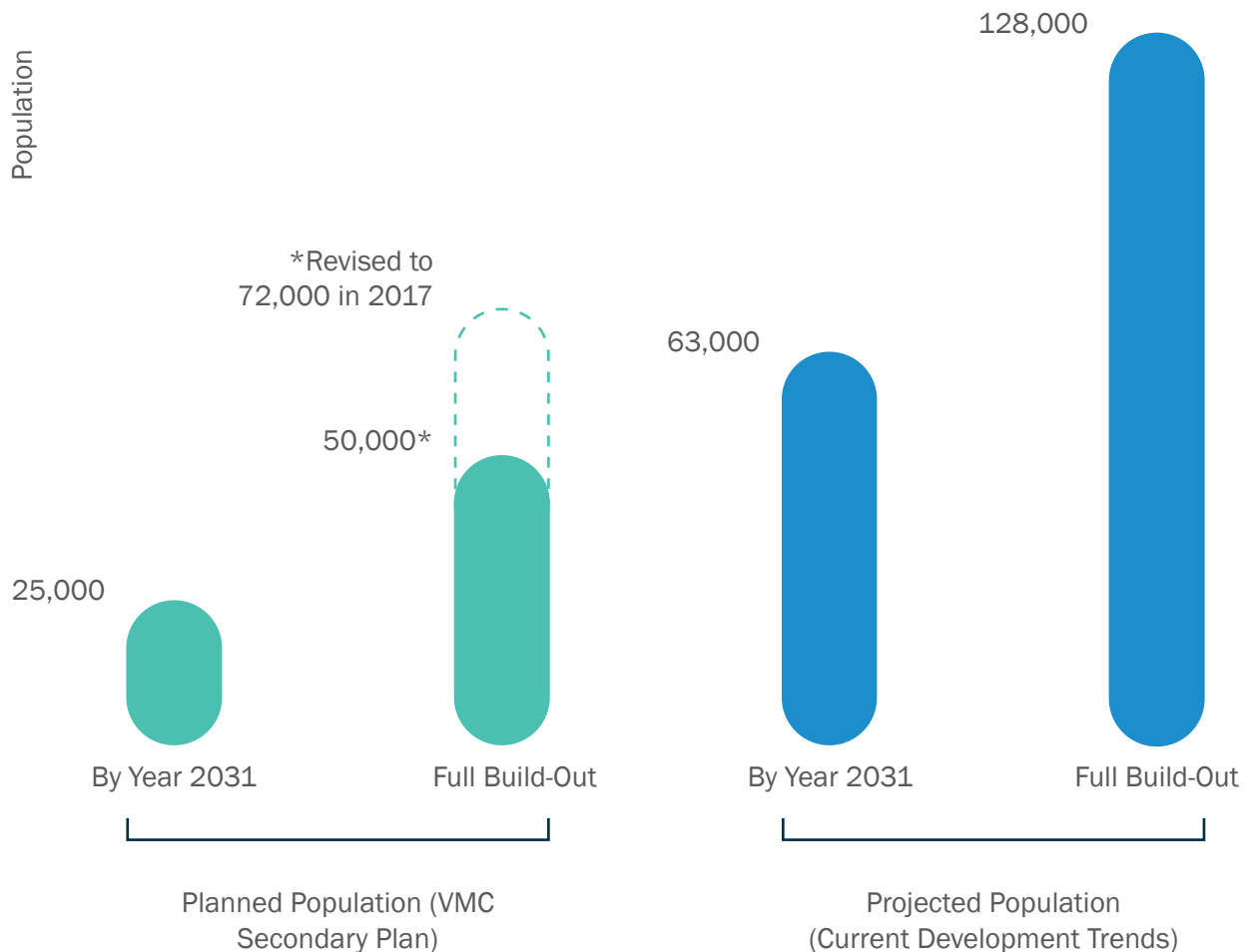


Figure 13 - VMC Resident Population Projections

Growth in the VMC is far outpacing original targets and estimates. The VMC Secondary Plan established a population target of 25,000 residents and 11,500 jobs by 2031, with a maximum population of approximately 50,000 residents at full build-out. Following the 2017 board-approved, mediated settlement, the adjusted as-of-right population grew to 72,000 people at full build-out, using the Region's population per unit assumption.

The figure above further illustrates that actual growth, based on current development trends, far exceeds the VMC's designated population targets. At the time

of writing this report, development applications had been received for over 32,000 units on only 43% of the VMC's land area. This development represents a 2031 residential population of approximately 63,000 people. **If this pace of development continues, the VMC's population at full build-out may be between 117,000 and 138,000, representing a 161% increase in approved density.**

In order to assess current and future parkland levels of service, the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan uses a projected population of 128,000 at full build-out (netting out employment areas).

3.3.2 VMC vs. Dense, North American Neighbourhoods

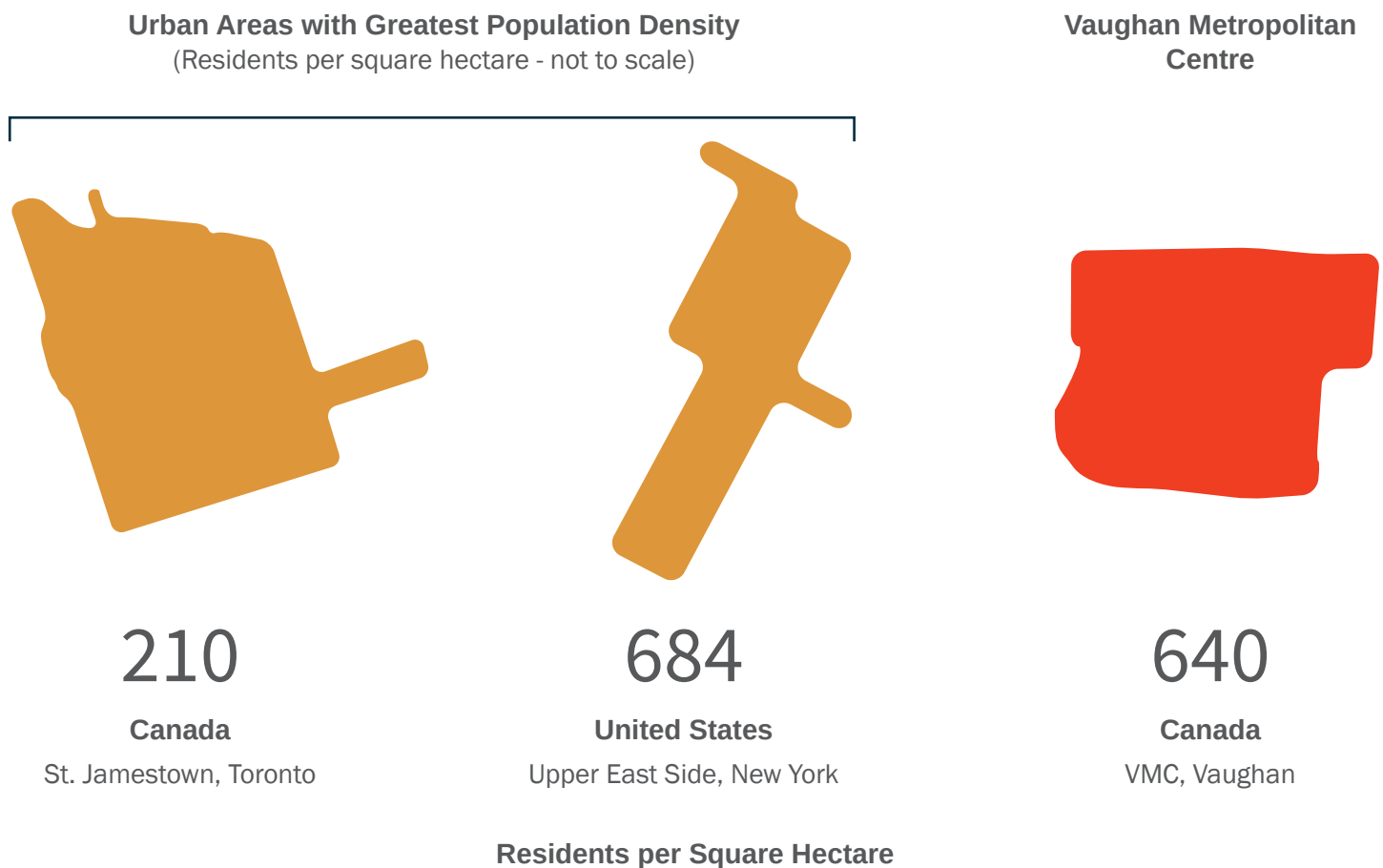


Figure 14 - Potential Density of VMC Compared to North American Precedents

The scale of growth and population density that is projected for the VMC is made clear when comparing the VMC to other well known, dense areas in large cities around the world. If development continues at the current pace and reaches an estimated population of 128,000, **the VMC is likely to become the most densely populated area in Canada**, surpassing the St. Jamestown neighbourhood in Toronto. Additionally, **the VMC will be one of the most densely populated areas in North America**, comparable to the Upper East Side in New York City.

While this density is unprecedented in Canada and is only rivaled in a handful of other cities around the world, with proper planning and the provision of a robust, extensive network of parks and open spaces, the vision for a new downtown, as set out in the original VMC Secondary Plan, may still be achievable.

3.3.3 Parks & Open Space Benchmarking

In order to assess whether the parks and open spaces planned for the VMC will be sufficient in accommodating the increased projected population, the park areas were benchmarked against park provision in other dense urban areas. This process involved comparing the total area of planned parks and open space in the VMC at full build-out, as per the VMC Secondary Plan, to total park areas in the three largest cities in Canada and the United States. In each city, the most dense areas (“City Cores”), characterized by populations over 100,000, were studied.

The results of this study, shown in Figure 15 on the following page and further discussed in Section 5 of the Assessment Report, show that the supply of Active Parkland in the VMC at full build-out, measured as hectares per 1000 residents, falls below that of every city core studied, with the exception of New York City. It is worth noting that these comparisons focus on the most densely populated urban centres within the referenced cities. When open space is considered in addition to Active Parkland, the supply of total parks and open space in the VMC at full build-out shows a slight improvement, surpassing the most dense areas of New York City and Los Angeles. However, it still remains below the levels observed in the urban cores of the other cities examined in this study.

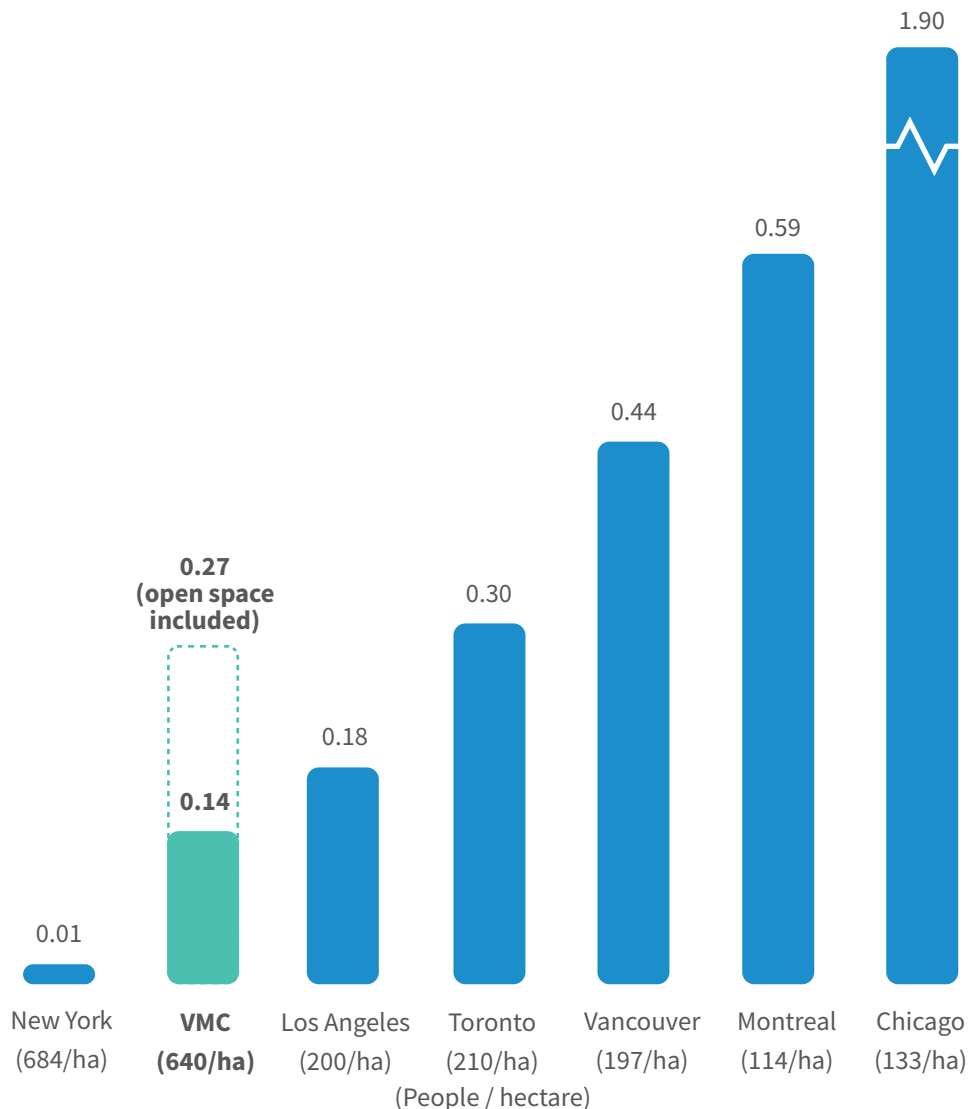
It is important to note that many of the cities currently providing more parks and open space than the VMC, including Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, have carried out similar reviews of park provision rates. In these studies, each of the cities has characterized park provision in their city cores as inadequate. This finding supports the conclusion that the parks and open space currently proposed for the VMC will not be sufficient to meet the demands of future populations.

With many cities now finding that their park provision is insufficient, new, innovative and typically expensive solutions are being pursued in areas where space is limited and land is valuable. One of the major challenges to providing new parks in existing urban

areas is that the land is largely built out, driving up the cost of land acquisition and park construction.

Some examples of new parks being proposed in existing urban areas include the new 0.32-hectare Smithe and Richards Park in Vancouver, the proposed 1,600-hectare Grand parc de l’Ouest in Montreal (an expensive solution located outside downtown), and the proposed 8.5-hectare Rail Deck Park in Toronto.

At this time, the VMC has an advantage over other cities and urban areas in that the downtown area is not yet built out and there is still some flexibility in what the ultimate land uses will be. Given the challenges and costs that other cities are facing when it comes to adding parkland “after the fact”, it is a key recommendation of this Master Plan that **the City of Vaughan should take a proactive approach toward securing additional parkland in order to meet the needs of future residents.** In addition to meeting the original targets for parkland provision set out in the VMC Secondary Plan, additional parkland will be needed to meet the demands of the much larger population that is projected.



Active Parkland in City Cores
(Hectares per 1000 residents)

Notes:

1. City cores comprise adjacent census areas with the greatest population density which total approximately 100,000. The VMC is the area defined by the VMC Secondary Plan.
2. 'Active parkland' is per the City of Vaughan definition, which includes public parks and squares, but excludes other types of open space such as Environmental Open Space.
3. For the VMC, Active Parkland includes those parks currently existing or proposed in publicly-available development proposals or planning documents.
4. The VMC population is based on the projected resident population of 128,000 upon full build-out. Resident population for cities is based on 2016 census data.
5. Figures below city names show population density (resident population per hectare). The VMC figure is based on a projected population of 128,000 upon full build-out.

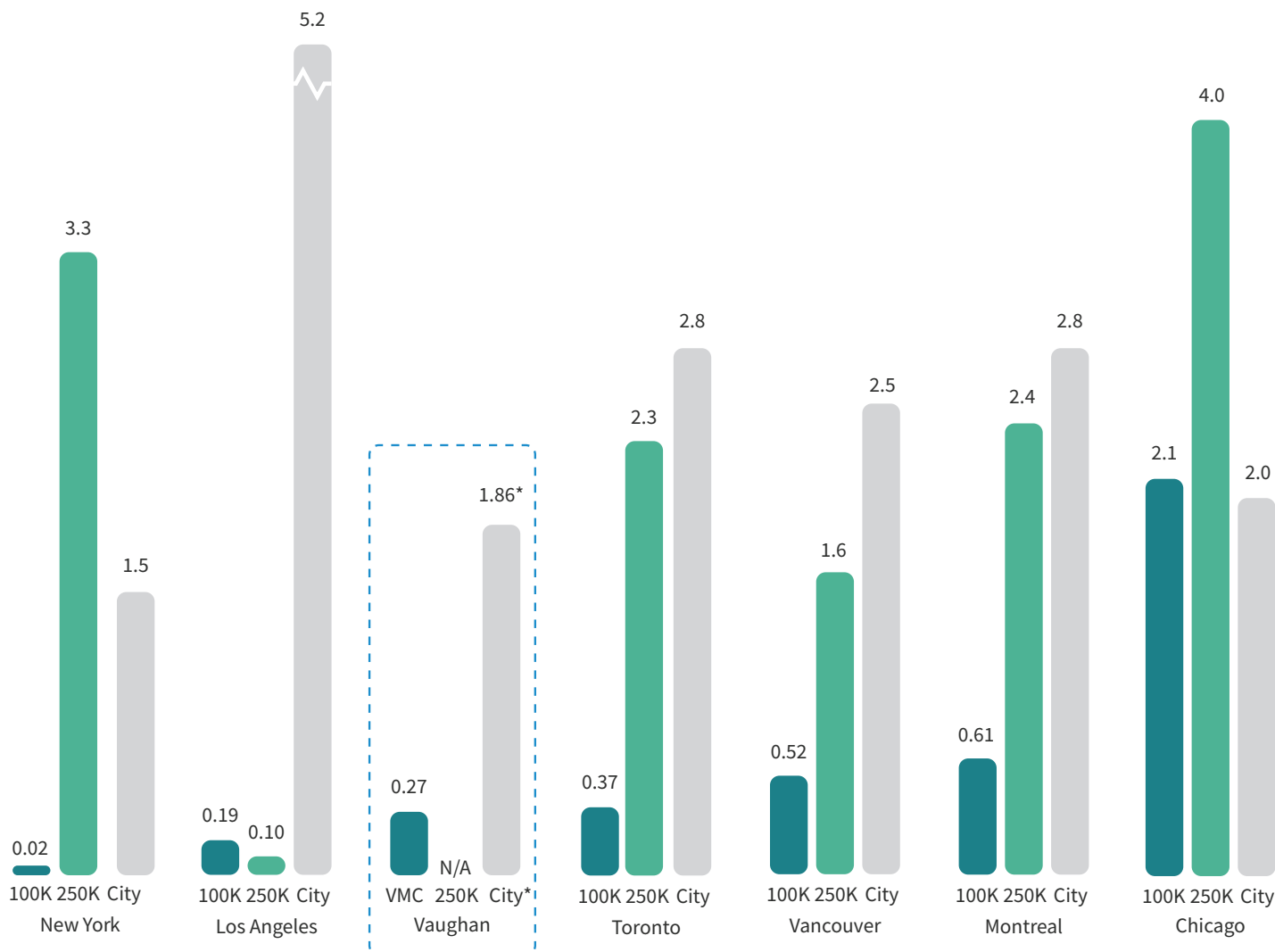
Figure 15 - Active Parkland in City Cores

While the previous analysis focused on areas of 100,000 residents for the purposes of benchmarking parkland provision in the VMC, a similar study by the City of Toronto in 2017 examined the provision of total parks and open space in areas of 250,000 people. The results of this study are included in Figure 16 on the following page.

Of interest is the significant increase in the area of total parks and open space when the study area is expanded to include over 250,000 people. This analysis suggests that there are large areas of park or open space just outside the most densely populated areas of the studied cities. While this parkland and open space is not as immediately accessible to every resident, the relative proximity to the dense urban cores ensures that the parks and open space in this expanded area can be seen as an asset and amenity for those populations.

Examples of large parks and open spaces outside of, but in close proximity to urban cores, include Central Park in New York City, the ravine system of the Don and Humber Rivers in Toronto, Mont Royal in Montreal and Stanley Park in Vancouver. It should be emphasized that these open spaces vary significantly in their recreational offerings and accessibility. While some provide extensive opportunities for passive recreation, others face constraints. The Toronto ravine system, for example, encompasses non-programmable areas like ravines and natural heritage sites, which may have limited accessibility and are often unsuitable for active recreational use. This variability underscores the importance of evaluating open spaces not solely by their acreage, but also by their accessibility, programmability, and capacity to meet diverse recreational needs when considering their value to urban communities.

It is therefore the recommendation of this report that lands that are adjacent and accessible to the VMC Secondary Plan area be assessed for their potential to provide the active parks and open spaces that would be beneficial and conducive to the needs of the future population of the VMC. The role of adjacent lands in addressing the parkland requirements of the VMC is explored further in Section 3.6 of this report.



Total Parks & Open Space in City Cores and Adjacent Lands (Hectares per 1000 residents)

Notes:

1. City cores comprise adjacent census areas with the greatest population density which total approximately 100,000 or 250,000, as indicated. The methodology for calculating park and open space lands differs in some respects for city cores of 100,000 versus those of 250,000, as a result of differing sources. See Appendix B of the Assessment Report for more details. The VMC is the area defined by the VMC Secondary Plan.
2. Total parks and open space comprise 'Active Parkland' and 'open space lands' per the City of Vaughan definition, which includes parks, squares, and environmental open spaces.
3. For the VMC, total parks and open space include parks and open space currently existing or proposed in publicly-available development proposals or planning documents.
4. The VMC population is based on the projected resident population of 128,000 upon full build-out. Resident population for cities and city cores is based on 2016 census data.
5. 1.86 ha/1000 is based on the 2018 ATMP, which **excludes** "open space" lands such as green space, woodlots, conservation lands and other lands outside of municipal control.

Figure 16 - Total Parks & Open Space in City Cores and Adjacent Lands

3.4 Anticipated Facility Demand

3.4.1 Benchmark Demographics

Planning parks and facilities for a future community and a downtown in its infancy presents numerous challenges. One of the primary difficulties lies in projecting the need for parks and open spaces, as well as determining which specific facilities will be required to support the growing population. While the City of Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan has been a valuable tool for understanding recommended and actual facility usage by age or user group across the city, its applicability to the VMC may be limited.

Historically, Vaughan has been characterized by suburban, low-rise developments and car-dominated modes of transportation. Although recent years have seen some changes in development trends, the city remains largely low-density and car-oriented. The VMC, however, represents a drastically different built form and community typology compared to the rest of the City of Vaughan. As such, **it would be inappropriate to assume that the future VMC population will have the same demands or demographics as the rest of the City.**

Given that the VMC is essentially being built from the ground up, a significant challenge of this Master Plan was determining the future demographics of the VMC. To address this, key characteristics of active and projected developments in the VMC were identified and compared to other areas of high intensification within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). These characteristics included tower height, unit size, and bedroom count. Another factor considered was the pace of development, recognizing that the VMC is experiencing rapid growth over a relatively short time span.

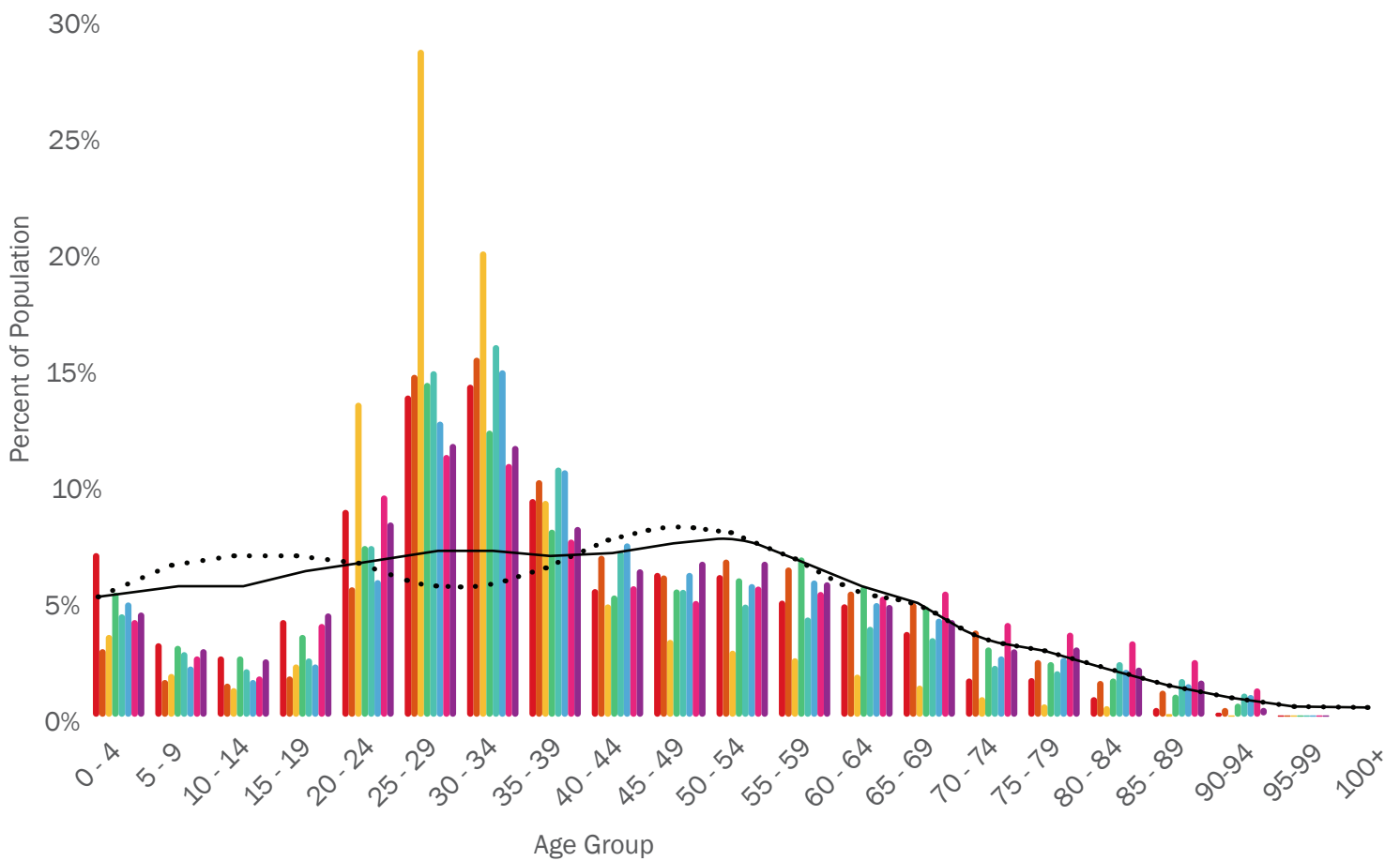
A detailed analysis of all active development proposals in the VMC revealed that the built form will be characterized by smaller units, primarily one or two bedrooms, typically in large-scale residential buildings. This differs greatly from other areas of Vaughan, where detached, single-family dwellings with private yards are common. To find suitable comparisons, it was necessary to study other GTA neighbourhoods

with similar characteristics (smaller, 1- or 2-bedroom units in high-rise developments, built in a relatively short amount of time).

While the VMC's pace and potential scale of development are unique, many GTA neighborhoods have experienced, and continue to experience, similar types of growth. Using aerial imagery and mapping along with census data from Statistics Canada, areas of density and tower development were identified as benchmarks for projecting the VMC's future population. These growth centers were further refined by selecting only those that experienced growth outpacing their city-wide average over a short period (2011-2016) and were characterized by having 80% of their dwelling units in buildings over five stories, thereby limiting or eliminating low-rise developments from the study.

The study of these comparable areas revealed a unique age profile emerging in these intensification zones when compared to citywide averages. Statistics Canada data showed that differences in housing type not only correlate with demographic differences, but these differences tend to be similar and potentially predictable across various intensification areas.

The most striking differences, which significantly impacted the recommendations in this report, were that areas with similar profiles to the VMC have considerably smaller populations of children and notably higher populations of young adults. This demographic shift, which is depicted in Figure 17 on the following page, is critical for understanding and planning appropriate parks and facilities that will meet the needs of the VMC's future residents and align with the anticipated demographic profile.



· City of Vaughan 2016 Population Age Profile (Statistics Canada)

· City of Toronto 2016 CMA Population Age Profile (Statistics Canada)

Study Areas	Highway 401 and Kennedy Road (North East Corner)	Sheppard Ave E, between Leslie Street and Bayview Ave & HWY 401
	Humber Bay Shores	Kipling and Dundas (South West Corner)
	City Place	Yonge and Finch (South East Corner)
	Downtown Markham	Yonge and Sheppard (North East Corner)

Figure 17 - Age Profile in Areas of High Intensification vs. City Averages

3.4.2 Anticipated Demographics of the VMC

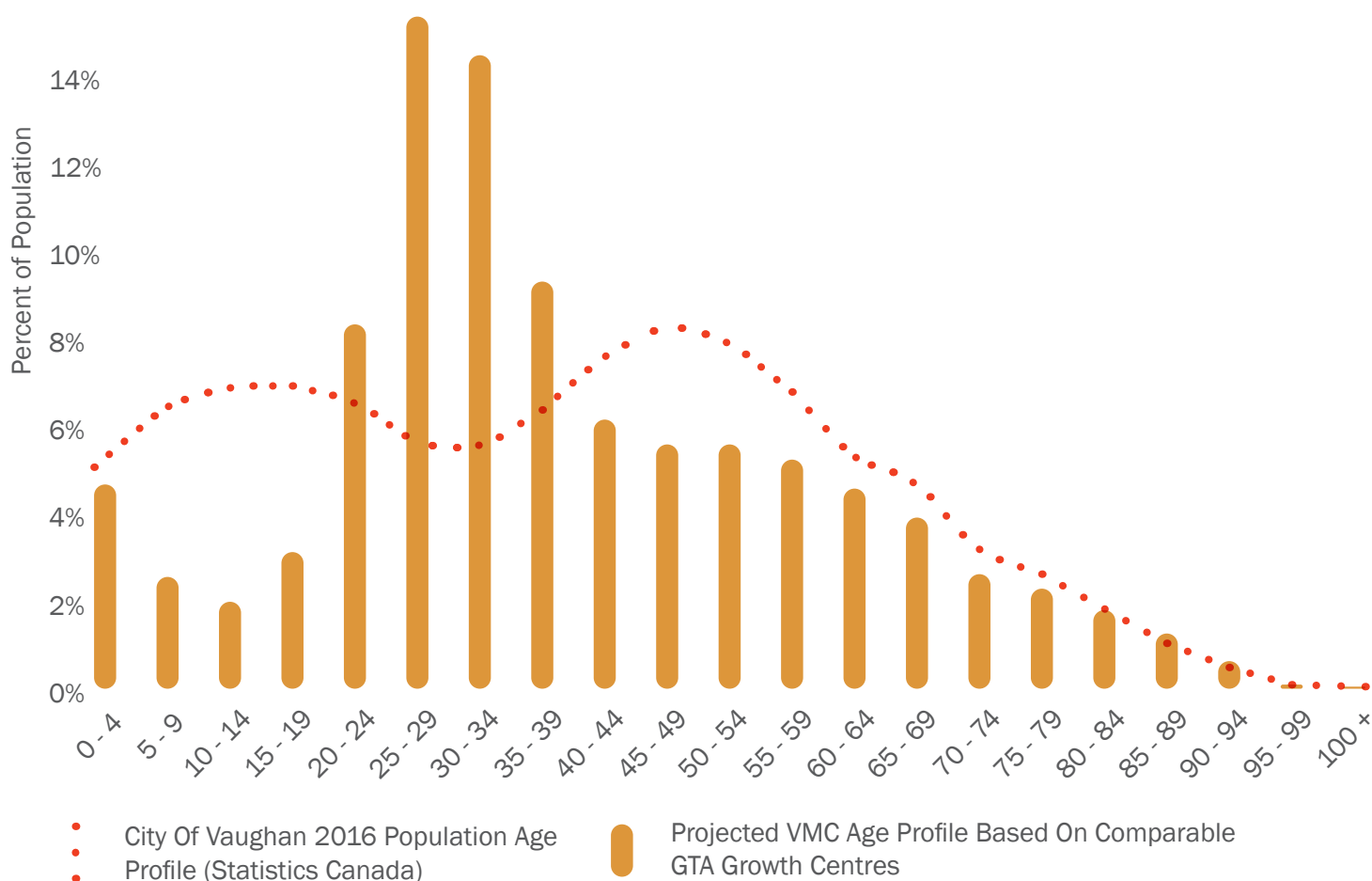


Figure 18 - Anticipated VMC Age Profile vs. City of Vaughan

Based on the demographic study described on the previous page, and using the typical demographics of the studied growth centres as a guide, an average, projected population profile for the VMC was established. As shown in the figure above, this study suggests key differences in the anticipated demographics of the VMC as compared to the City of Vaughan as a whole.

The key takeaways indicate that **the VMC is expected to attract more young adults and adults in the 20 to 39 age bracket, with fewer children and middle-aged residents.** Specifically, there will be

approximately one-half as many children and teens between 4 and 19 years of age, many more young adults (especially in the 25-34 age range), and fewer middle-aged adults. Interestingly, within the younger age cohorts, there will be an equally large proportion of children in the newborn to toddler age group, followed by a decline after age 5-9.

This demographic profile has significant implications for park planning, particularly in terms of recreational facilities. The lower proportion of school-aged children and youth (5 to 18) suggests a reduced demand for large format sports facilities such as soccer fields

and ball diamonds, which are typically driven by this age cohort. Young adults generally have different recreational preferences, often favoring more flexible, multi-use spaces.

While not shown in Figure 18, it was also observed that the selected growth areas have, on average, 7% more recent immigrants than the City of Vaughan average. While this finding may influence specific facility demands over time, its significance at the Master Plan level is uncertain given the unpredictability of future immigration trends.

This projected population and its associated age profile were used to inform the projected facility demand for the VMC, which is detailed in the following subsections of this report.

A recommendation of this report is that the City of Vaughan consider the different demographics that are projected for the VMC when making decisions related to facility demand, funding, and planning.

Following from these demographic findings, it is prudent to ensure that parkland facility provisions account for the higher proportion of young adults and very young children, focusing more on amenities suitable for these groups. However, to maintain diversity in recreational offerings, it may be appropriate to provide a limited number of large format facilities within an acceptable travel distance outside the VMC.

This approach ensures that parks and amenities remain relevant to the changing population profile, addressing the needs of various age and user groups. By incorporating demographic insights into the planning process, the VMC can build flexibility into its studies and development plans, allowing for adaptable spaces that can evolve with the community's changing composition and preferences over time.

3.4.3 Outdoor Recreation Facility & Land Requirements

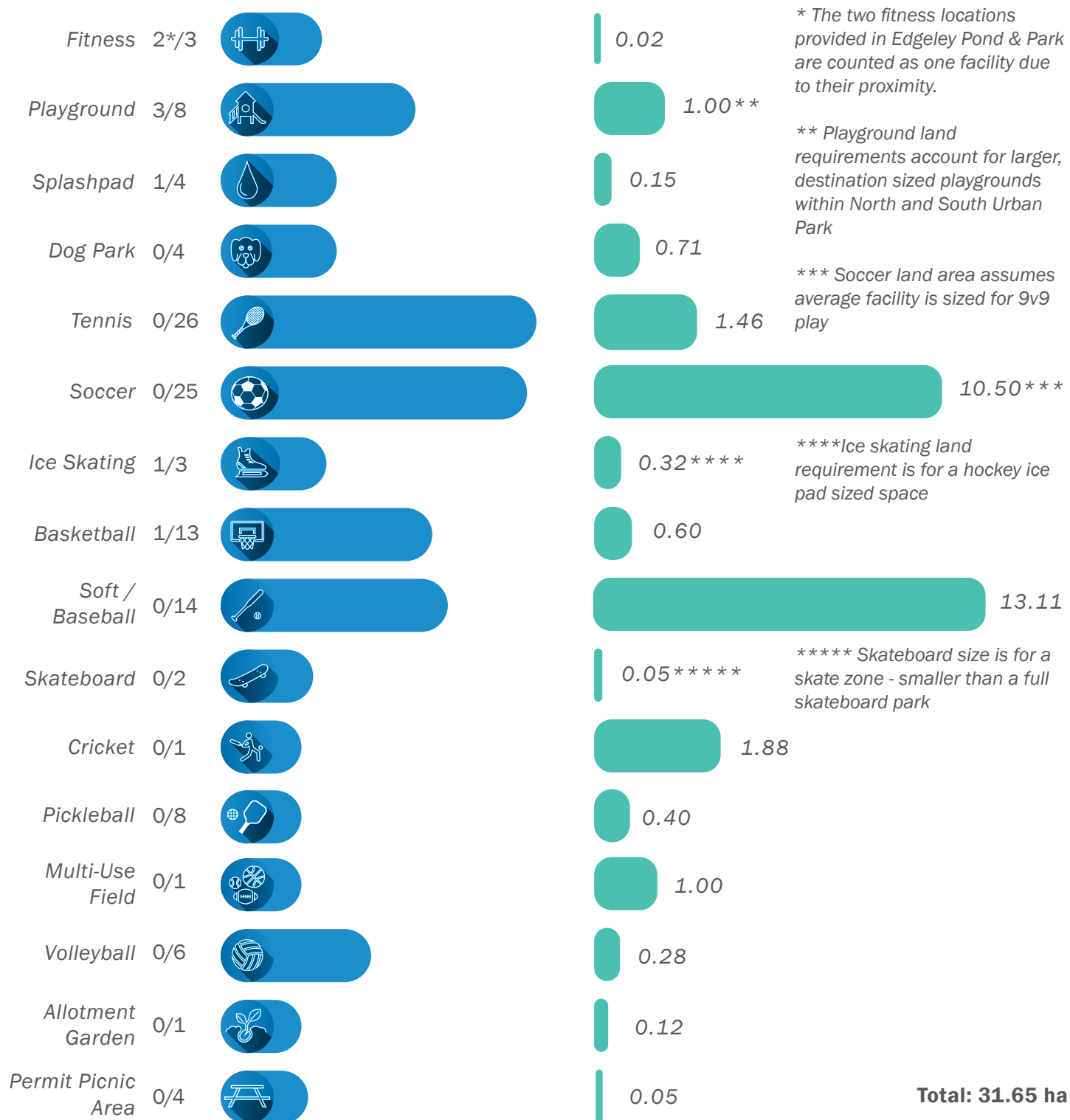


Figure 19 - Facility Provision VS. Anticipated Demand

Figure 20 - Projected Facility Land Requirement to Accommodate Non-Designed Facilities (ha)

The City of Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan (ATMP) is a comprehensive document that establishes provision rates for outdoor recreation facilities across Vaughan, including the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. However, it is important to note that the ATMP, written in 2018, does not fully account for the rate and type of growth now projected for the VMC. To address this discrepancy and determine the specific facilities required to meet the VMC's unique growth and demographic patterns, a thorough analysis was conducted under the following assumptions:

- Facility provision rates in the ATMP were applied to the projected demographics and population of 128,000 in the VMC at full build-out, as discussed in Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2;
- Provision rates were adjusted for the anticipated differences in the demographics of the VMC as compared to the rest of Vaughan. Where possible, age-based provision rates or approaches set out in the ATMP were used; and,
- Consideration was given to facilities that were not included in the ATMP, but were deemed likely to be in demand given the lack of access to private outdoor space in the VMC. These include allotment gardens and permit picnic areas, which provide urban residents with opportunities for gardening and outdoor dining, activities that would traditionally be done in private yards.

Figure 19 provides a comparative analysis of the recreational facilities currently planned for the VMC (including those built, under construction, or tendered) against the anticipated number of required facilities based on a full build-out population of 128,000. These projections take into account the expected demographics of the VMC, ensuring a more accurate representation of future needs.

Beyond facility count, Figure 20 illustrates the relative land area required to accommodate all outstanding facilities not accounted for in current

Current plans for parks and open space do not provide the full range or quantity of outdoor recreation facilities that future residents of the VMC are anticipated to need.

Total Active Parkland Required To Support Outstanding, Non-Designed Facility Demand: 31.65 Ha

Additional Active Parkland Required In or Adjacent to VMC To Meet Anticipated Facility Demand: 26.75 Ha

park plans. The analysis reveals that a total of 31.65 hectares of Active Parkland is necessary to meet the facility demands of the future VMC population. However, with only 4.9 hectares of undeveloped city-owned parkland currently available in the VMC, there is a significant shortfall of Active Parkland, requiring an additional 26.75 hectares of land to meet the facility demands of the future population of the VMC.

3.4.4 Facilities Requiring Special Consideration

While ATMP provision rates can be used for assessing most facility requirements, provision rates for some facilities are either not appropriate to apply to an urban area, or, the facility type is simply not considered within the current ATMP report. Facilities requiring special consideration include playgrounds, dog parks and community allotment gardens.

In general, provision strategies for playgrounds in the rest of Vaughan do not work well in the dense, urban context of the VMC. The ATMP states that the city-wide goal for playground provision is a playground within 500 metres of all residential areas. This strategy equates to one playground for every 221 children aged 0-9 across the city of Vaughan. In the VMC, the 500-metre rule would require only four playgrounds, or one for every 2,048 children. Providing one playground per 221 children is also problematic, as it would require 37 playgrounds in the VMC. Instead, a multi-faceted approach is suggested: 27 public playgrounds are proposed, situated to meet the 500-metre rule. These playgrounds should be larger than the Vaughan average to accommodate more children.

Private developers of large-scale residential buildings with family-sized units should also be required to include playground facilities in private shared amenity space.

Dogs are another critical consideration in planning parks and open spaces in the VMC. In the City of Toronto, the presence of dogs in dense urban areas is an acknowledged problem that is being addressed by better public dog facilities and by asking developers to include dog facilities in large-scale residential projects. Four off-leash dog areas are proposed for the VMC, which is in line with provision levels in cities with the most dog facilities. **These public off-leash areas should be supplemented by private facilities.** In doing so, they can alleviate pressure on public parks, provide interim relief areas for dogs while the planned parks with off-leash zones are being developed,

and offer convenient and immediate alternatives for residents.

Community allotment gardens and urban agriculture are gaining importance in dense urban areas with limited private garden access. However, integrating these spaces presents challenges due to competing demands for recreational facilities in parks, especially in intensification areas. Issues such as size requirements, seasonal appearance, potential conflicts with animals, and exposure to high traffic volumes may make allotment gardens incompatible with public squares and urban parks located in strategic growth areas.

To address this, suitable locations in close proximity to urban centers must be identified. Although benchmarking information is limited, the City of Toronto suggests that one 10'x20' allotment garden should be provided per 1,900 residents, suggesting a minimum of 67 plots over 0.12 Ha of land would be required to accommodate the VMC's projected population. One such location, in proximity to the VMC, has been identified by the PWMP.

Encouraging community gardens in private outdoor amenity spaces, including rooftops, can provide additional urban agriculture opportunities. This approach distributes gardening spaces throughout the urban fabric, reducing pressure on public parks while improving access to food and enhancing community well-being and social interaction.

Soccer, softball/baseball and cricket fields, and to a lesser extent, tennis courts, are facilities that people will travel to use. While these facilities are numerous in parks within a convenient drive of the VMC, there are few that can be easily accessed by walking, cycling or taking transit (see "Parks & Open Space Inventory - Outside the VMC" in the Assessment Report), and their frequent use by VMC residents may create capacity issues. Sports fields may be appropriate to locate immediately outside the VMC, provided they can be conveniently

accessed by all forms of transportation. As discussed in Section 3.2 and later Section 3.6 of this report, the lands directly south of the VMC, south of Highway 407, should be considered as a potential location for Active Parkland. The size of this area would be appropriate for hosting a number of the larger sports facilities described above.

As the City of Vaughan and the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre continue to grow and evolve, **it is crucial for the City to actively monitor and project facility usage and needs.** While the 2018 Active Together Master Plan has guided facility selection, its ongoing update into the Vaughan Community Spaces Plan acknowledges the need to capture current trends more effectively. Despite this transition, the facilities proposed in this Master Plan have been carefully identified and adjusted to align with the most recent VMC demographics, population projections, and best practices available.

The inclusion of pickleball in the PWMP serves as a prime example of this responsiveness to emerging trends. Initially noted as an emerging sport of interest in the 2018 ATMP, pickleball's growing popularity has prompted its incorporation into this Master Plan and the allocation of facilities within VMC parkland. This adaptability underscores the importance of continually studying and integrating new sports and activities into future park plans and designs. By doing so, the City of Vaughan ensures that its parks remain relevant, well-utilized, and responsive to the evolving needs of its residents.

3.5 Gap Analysis

Current policies and plans for parks and open space within the VMC are comprehensive in their scope, however, there is a growing gap between the originally projected population and the scenario that is playing out on the ground today. This growing gap is emphasized by the fact that the amount of parkland and available land for parks has not increased in parallel with population growth. The amount of parkland required by the original Secondary Plan was appropriate for serving a much smaller population than what is now projected in the VMC and, as such, the current level of parkland is insufficient.

This gap is made more clear by the anticipated facility demand study that was presented in the section 3.4.3, where it is revealed that an additional 26.75 hectares of yet-to-be-identified land will be required to meet the facility demand of future residents.

The additional land required to meet the anticipated facility demand is larger than the total amount of Active Parkland (20 hectares) proposed in the existing VMC Secondary Plan.

Given the above, it is a key finding of this report that **the land required to meet the anticipated facility and parkland requirements of the VMC is larger than the available or planned parkland within the current VMC Secondary Plan Area.** In order to meet anticipated facility requirements and provide additional parkland for future residents, **it is recommended that the City of Vaughan prioritize the acquisition of additional land outside, but accessible to, the VMC.**

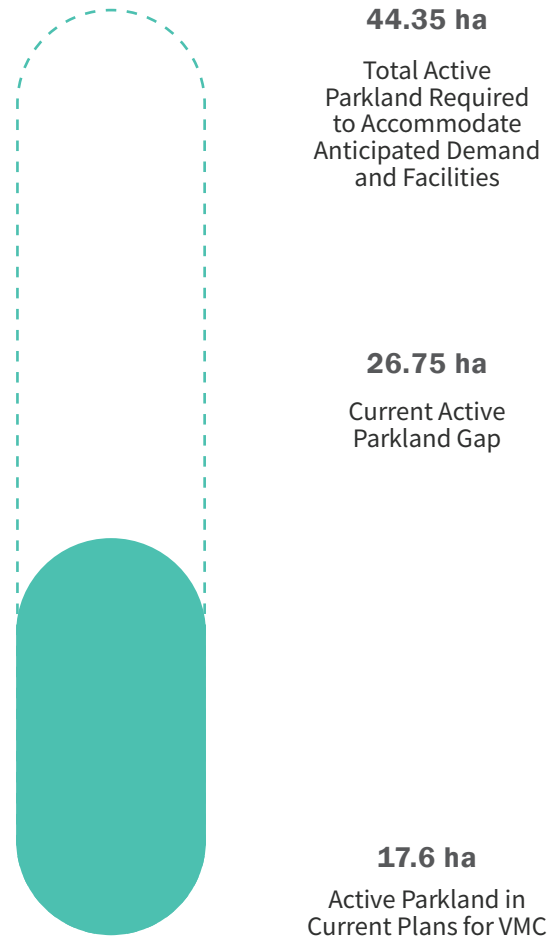


Figure 21 - Active Parkland Gap

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3.6 Opportunities Beyond VMC

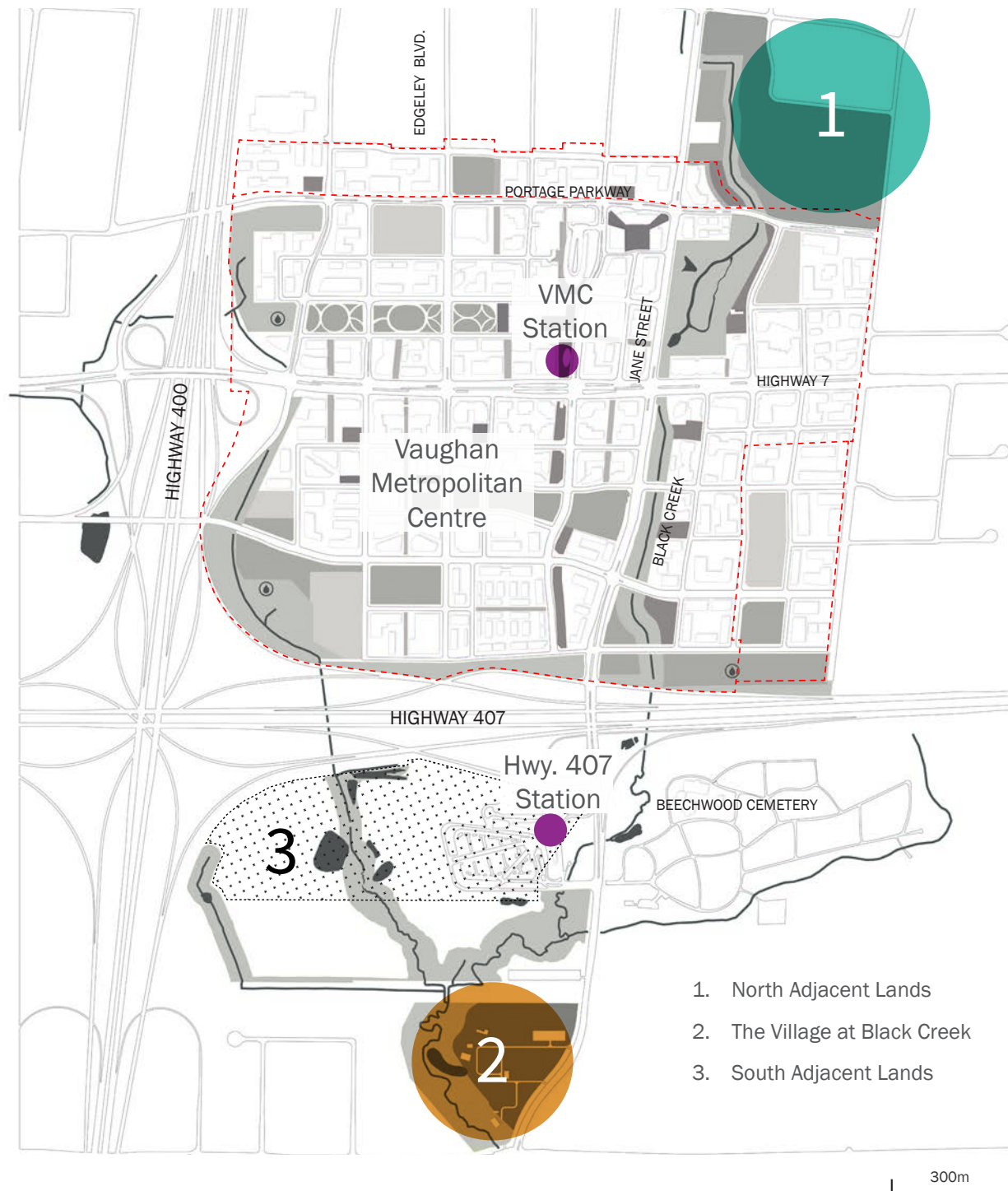


Figure 22 - Opportunities to the North and South

As is noted in Section 3.2 and 3.4, there is both a need and an opportunity to look at lands outside of the VMC for additional parkland. While lands to the south of Highway 407 are considered to be suitable for a large scale park, the City of Vaughan should not discount other lands to the north of the VMC. While lands to the north are currently occupied by industrial and commercial uses, they should be considered as potential parkland in any long term strategic land use plans and studies.

Lands that this study has deemed as opportunities for parkland outside of the VMC are shown in Figure 22 on the previous page. Among the spaces adjacent to VMC that are considered candidates for parkland are: (1) North Adjacent Lands, (2) The Village at Black Creek, and (3) South Adjacent Lands.

North Adjacent Lands:

Situated within walking and cycling distance of the VMC, the North Adjacent Lands offer an exciting opportunity for parkland development. At their southern edge, the North Adjacent Lands seamlessly connect to Edgeley Pond & Park, an Environmental Open Space designed for passive recreation. This natural feature provides a further connection to Edgeley Park, one of the first parks in the VMC. Together, these elements create a cohesive network of outdoor amenities, enriching the lives of VMC residents and visitors alike..

North Adjacent Lands are considered to be a long term opportunity for parkland as the lands are currently and actively being used for industrial and commercial business. While the current land use is a potential barrier, the size, and proximity of these lands makes them a critical part of long term parks plans for the VMC. The size of the North Adjacent Lands makes them suitable to host a major sports and recreation area, where access to large fields for sports such as soccer, cricket, and baseball will otherwise be very limited.

The Village at Black Creek:

Further south and away from the dense urban centre of the VMC and its busy highway network, The

Village at Black Creek has the potential to provide a more tranquil atmosphere for natural programs and activities, such as allotment gardens, agricultural demonstration gardens, and a destination natural playground. There is also a fantastic opportunity for the City of Vaughan to work with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to develop alternative recreational experiences that support and build off of the strong heritage setting of The Village at Black Creek creating a unique Destination Park experience.

While there may be opportunities for traditional Active Parkland uses on some portions of The Village at Black Creek, **it is recommended that all parkland and facilities in The Village Park are designed and selected to offer unique experiences that differ from those in other district or urban parks. A connection to the existing heritage landscape should be maintained and existing heritage buildings should be adaptively reused when possible to create enriching experiences.**

While The Village at Black Creek is located in close proximity to the VMC, the current crossing opportunities over Highway 407 are limited and are not conducive to walking and cycling. Given these potential barriers to access, **it is recommended that pedestrian and cyclist connections between the VMC and The Village at Black Creek be improved** in order to unlock the full potential of these lands.

South Adjacent Lands:

The South Adjacent Lands are lands within the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) realty portfolio with a planned maintenance yard and an EA-approved MTO transit way alignment.

Should these lands be deemed surplus at a future date or the existing and/or proposed uses reevaluated by the Province, the lands should be considered for alternative uses due to their recreational potential and proximity to the VMC.



VMC Parks Master Plan

4.1 Park Type Design Statements

The following Park Type Design Statements are listed and described in order to define the broad range of parks that may be developed in the VMC. These statements provide an understanding of the character, intent, usage and suitability of each park type in providing parkland within the VMC. These park types provide an overarching framework, under which specific Park Typologies, outlined in Section 4.3, may be used.

Existing Parks

- Existing (approved) parks offer little opportunity for changes in design, however, there are opportunities to ensure that planned and proposed parks build off of the successes of existing parks
- Existing parks should be connected into the broader parks and open space network of VMC through the creation of trails, green streets and green ribbons/corridors
- The programs offered in existing parks should be monitored for usage in order to gauge the effectiveness of their design and their necessity / demand in the VMC. If certain amenities are being over-used, they should be considered for inclusion in planned and proposed parks. If, on the other hand, there are underused amenities, the design and need of that type of facility should be reviewed and reconsidered

Planned Parks

- The amenities within planned parks should be shaped by the needs and gap analysis presented in both this Master Plan and the preceding Assessment Report
- It is critical that planned parkland is developed in accordance with the principles and plans contained in existing documents such as the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan

Proposed New Parks

- Proposed parkland, as identified in this Master Plan, may include and require the acquisition of privately owned land
- The City of Vaughan should begin conversations with landowners well in advance of the time that parkland needs to come online
- It is critical that additional parkland be secured in advance of the full build out of the VMC in order to ensure that residents have access to the required amount of parkland

Expansion to Existing Parks

- While the expansion of existing parks is largely limited given proposed development lots, there remains an opportunity to expand certain existing and planned parks beyond what is currently called for in the Secondary Plan
- With large areas of land owned by single entities, there are opportunities to have discussions with landowners about increasing parkland in certain areas as a trade off for increased development in other areas
- Given the challenges that may be faced, expanding existing and planned parkland is not a reliable means of providing the additional parkland required by VMC residents

Strategic Park Improvements

- With little to no parkland existing in the VMC today, there are no strategic improvements that can be made to existing parkland; however, planned parkland can be refined and better defined, as noted in the Master Plan, to incorporate certain amenities, connections and characteristics that are deemed essential for the success of the park
- Improvements may include better defined facility and amenity provisions and provision rates, additional or better defined connections to other open spaces, and additional or better connections to trail systems

Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS)

- Due to the negative impact of POPS on the City's ability to fund public parkland, POPS are generally not desired open spaces in the VMC
- The City should only accept POPS where there is an overwhelming benefit to the City, as determined by staff
- Should the City accept a POPS, it should be under the condition that the POPS:
 - is designed, developed and maintained to City Standards;
 - has a 50% public street frontage;
 - is open and accessible to the public at all times;
 - meets any further applicable criteria in the City's Official Plan, Secondary Plan, and the City-Wide Standards and Guideline for POPS guiding document, and,
 - includes necessary active park facilities, as determined by staff
- Before new POPS are considered or approved, opportunities for traditional parkland should be explored
- Approval of POPS spaces should require that they can demonstrate improvements to, and connectivity with, the broader public realm. Inward facing POPS should be avoided
- The City is currently undertaking a study to develop city-wide standards and guidelines for privately owned publicly accessible spaces, setting expectations regarding planning, design, maintenance and operation of POPS

Non-Park Open Spaces

- It is acknowledged that the acquisition of the parkland outlined in this report, necessary to meet the needs of current and future residents of the VMC, will be challenging for the City of Vaughan
- It is recommended that the City explore opportunities to contribute to and support traditional parkland in the VMC with non-park open spaces
- Non-Park Open Spaces may include flex streets, midblock connections, cemetery grounds, and schoolyards
- While non-park open spaces do not replace the need for traditional parkland, they provide further, flexible opportunities to support park-like uses, functions and facilities

Temporary Parks

- It is recommended that the City encourage temporary park facilities wherever possible
- Temporary parks can transform vacant or underutilized parking lots into versatile community spaces including farmers markets, food truck gatherings, temporary sports courts, community gardens, places for festivals, and art exhibitions
- Recent examples, such as Assembly Park, are an indication of what is possible within temporary park spaces

4.2 Design Strategies

The design strategies presented in Figure 23 on the following page and described below are intended to build off of the objectives and key findings presented at the beginning of this report. The design strategies form the foundation on which parks and open spaces within and adjacent to the VMC should be developed in order to achieve a robust public realm, given current development trends.

Park Provision

The core strategy for addressing residents' needs in the VMC centers on the fundamental goal of providing more parkland. As the population grows, securing additional green spaces both within and adjacent to the VMC becomes crucial to meet diverse recreational needs. While specific parkland layouts, locations, and typologies outlined in this report should be implemented, the primary focus remains on increasing overall parkland availability and ensuring equitable access for all VMC residents.

This proactive approach to parkland acquisition is essential for maintaining pace with urban growth and density, thereby preserving quality of life as the community expands. By strategically focusing on lands adjacent to Black Creek and existing Environmental Open Spaces, and aligning park development with urban growth, a robust park and open space network can be established.

Park Character

Following the simple provision of parkland, it is the character of the parks that will shape the final form and design of the spaces. While parks can provide a diversity of experiences, it is critical that the parks in and adjacent to the VMC emphasize and build on natural features, create unique and engaging experiences and provide spaces that are convenient, accessible and useful in meeting the passive and active facility requirements of residents and visitors.

Additionally, parks in the VMC must be built for resilience, using durable materials to withstand

intense use. This approach will ensure these vital spaces remain functional, safe, and attractive under increasing population demands.

Facilities

Facilities within parks and open spaces will provide a framework and basis for activation and programming. These facilities, as defined and illustrated in Section 4.6 of this report, should be organized based on how, when, and for what purpose the spaces are being used. They should also be thoughtfully executed and located to reflect the unique urban character of the VMC.

In intensification areas, where space is at a premium, prioritizing versatile facilities or co-locating complementary facilities, that can serve multiple purposes or age and user groups, is paramount for enhancing user experience and increasing overall park utilization.

For example, locating splashpads adjacent to playgrounds not only serves similar demographics but also creates a comprehensive recreational zone for families. Similarly, pairing sports courts with picnic areas can encourage extended park visits and foster community interaction.

Given the anticipated challenges with acquiring additional and traditional parkland, parks and open spaces should be designed to compliment and coordinate with the design of school yards where feasible. Urban school yards can and should be considered as an extension of the public realm and parks and open space network during times outside of school hours and program requirements.

Other Open Spaces

While traditional, Active Parkland will form the basis of the future parks system of the VMC, **this report recommends that the City of Vaughan consider the potential roles and functions of non-park open spaces**, as discussed in section 4.1. Environmental Open spaces, POPS, school yards, Mews and

1

PARK PROVISION

- Provide More Parkland
- Prioritize Areas Adjacent To Black Creek And Environmental Open Space
- Schedule Parks With Development

2

PARK CHARACTER

- Emphasize Natural Features
- Make Urban Parks Engaging And Resilient
- Make Public Squares Active And Flexible

3

FACILITIES

- Reflect Urban Character Of VMC
- Establish A Hierarchy Of Frequency And Importance Of Use
- Coordinate Design Of Parks And School Yards
- Prioritize Flexible and Versatile Spaces

4

OTHER OPEN SPACES

- Provide More Environmental Open Space
- Use POPS, School Yards, Mews And Flex Streets To Supplement Parks

5

CONNECTIVITY

- Optimize Park Use Through Connectivity
- Expand “The Loop” Concept From Earlier Planning Documents
- Ensure Roads Are Not Barriers
- Use Parks And Open Spaces To Enhance Pedestrian And Cycling Connectivity
- Connect Across Highway 407

Figure 23 - Design Strategies for Parks & Open Space

flex streets should be used to supplement and compliment traditional parkland, but not replace it. Given current and potential future policies that may make parkland acquisition challenging for the City of Vaughan, non-park open spaces and other open spaces will play a critical role in providing meaningful spaces for current and future residents.

Connectivity

Creating a connected park and open space system in and adjacent to the VMC is a design strategy

that must be considered when any new parkland is acquired or designed. Ensuring that spaces are simple to navigate both to and through will help to ensure that residents and visitors are able to get to and use the open spaces and facilities that they will need.

It is critical that roads do not create barriers to parkland. While the VMC is geographically and physically defined by a number of major roadways, consideration must be given to how residents can safely move under, over or across the roads to access parks, open spaces and trails.

4.3 Park Typologies

The development of parks and other open spaces in the VMC will be as important as the development of buildings. They will not only provide places for recreation and access to natural features but also contribute to a character and identity for the downtown that is more complex and appealing than one comprising solely of high-density development. A rich and varied parks and open space network will be vital to attracting a diverse population and employment to the VMC and make it a civic and tourist destination. Recommendations from existing planning documents include:

- Ensure there is parkland and other open space adequate for a range of recreational activities and passive enjoyment within walking distance of VMC residents and workers
- Provide central neighbourhood gathering and recreation spaces
- Provide civic open spaces capable of accommodating events with city-wide appeal
- Ensure the VMC develops with a variety of public open spaces, including urban parks, public squares and naturalized environmental open spaces
- Significantly enhance the image of the VMC
- Integrate natural features and open space with development
- Enhance the pedestrian network with paths and trails

Parks are a primary organizing element within the urban fabric with respect to street and block layout, land use configuration, and built form character. Spaces must be designed to encourage physical activity, wellness, and formal and informal use to promote spontaneous play and recreation.

Parks within the VMC shall be designed without surface parking, with the exception of necessary spaces for service vehicles and accessibility requirements. Generally, parks shall be unencumbered by underground parking, utility easements, or utility structures located above or below grade.

Parks should have public edges that open up to the surrounding community and should be designed with an emphasis on making them public and inviting. Good signage, appropriate lighting, and direct, generous pathways all contribute to the identity, accessibility, use, and perceived safety of parks. The location of new parks should prioritize sites with as many public frontages as possible, including sites which terminate streets and corner locations.

Parks do not need to end at their formal boundaries. They should be integrated into enhanced streetscapes along their street edges. Parks that share blocks with private open space should blur the boundary and connect to the open spaces to expand the usability and perceived scale of the park. They should take advantage of opportunities for visual and physical connectivity to become further integrated within their neighbourhoods. Pedestrian and cycling connections along public streets between the VMC's different neighbourhoods, parks, and open spaces are important in promoting the use of individual parks.

Park facilities, including well used urban facilities like dog parks and playgrounds, reflect the unique needs and demographics of a dense urban population. Parks and open space are programmed according to a hierarchy that recognizes the frequency and importance of use to ensure that facilities are appropriately located.

As the VMC undergoes significant development, it is crucial to design and program new parks and open spaces that cater to the entire community. These areas should offer a balance of passive and active recreation opportunities, supported by facilities that enable year-round activities. The design process must consider all four seasons, ensuring that different uses coexist harmoniously to create safe and comfortable environments for people of all ages and abilities. By taking into account the diverse schedules and interests of various groups within the community, VMC parks can effectively address the needs and desires of residents throughout the day, week, and year, fostering a more inclusive and vibrant public space.



Figure 24 - Park Precedent - Concord Community Pop Up Park, Vancouver. Design By: PWL Partnership.

The following sections detail the four core park typologies that will comprise the park system within and around the VMC. For each typology, we outline its defining characteristics and provide accompanying figures illustrating their respective locations. This comprehensive overview offers a clear understanding of how these diverse park types will be integrated into the VMC's landscape.

typologies currently described in the PWMP. These potential discrepancies will be addressed in future updates to the PWMP, ensuring that the document remains aligned with the evolving strategic and official plans.

It is important to note that the ongoing development of the Greenspace Strategic Plan, coupled with concurrent revisions to the Vaughan Official Plan and VMC Secondary Plan, may impact the parkland

4.3.1 Public Squares



Figure 25 - VMC Public Squares



Figure 26 - Public Squares Precedent - Market Square, Guelph. Design By: Janet Rosenberg & Studio Inc.

The VMC Secondary Plan identifies the general locations for six Public Squares in the VMC, with their precise location, size, shape, and characteristics to be determined, to the satisfaction of the City, through the development process. To ensure equitable access to green spaces in light of increased population projections and to accommodate active development applications, these locations have been refined and expanded beyond the original six. The updated layout of these Public Squares is illustrated in Figure 25 on the previous page.

Public Squares are evolving from traditional passive gathering spaces into dynamic, multi-functional

areas that cater to diverse community needs. This transformation ensures their continued relevance as vibrant hubs for social interaction, recreation, and community engagement. The VMC SOS plan defines them as “social spaces for daily urban life, framed by the surrounding architecture,” capable of accommodating both “VMC-wide facilities or neighbourhood-scale facilities.”

To qualify as a Public Square, these spaces must meet specific criteria. They should have a minimum contiguous area of 0.2 hectares and be strategically positioned in mixed-use, high-traffic areas. Ideal locations are adjacent to social hubs like shops, cafes,

restaurants, and institutions, or at the intersection of such civic spaces with significant Environmental Open Spaces. Crucially, at least half of the square's perimeter must border a public street or a mews with a public access easement. Such thoughtful placement fosters neighbourhood-oriented social interactions while ensuring the space remains highly visible, naturally survived, and easily accessible to pedestrians. It's worth emphasizing that private amenity spaces, regardless of their features, do not fall under the category of Public Squares.

The design of these squares prioritizes user comfort, engagement, and resilience. They typically feature public art, varied seating options, canopy trees, and active park facilities, all constructed with resilient, high-quality materials capable of withstanding intense use. A balance of soft and hard landscaping is maintained, with contextual design considerations focusing on creating favorable microclimatic conditions. These elements work in concert to create spaces that are not only visually appealing but also functional and animated throughout the year, regardless of weather conditions.

As Vaughan continues to grow and intensify, the demand for parkland is expected to increase. Public Squares, with their dynamic and versatile nature, are poised to play a crucial role in meeting this demand. They will form an essential component of the city's social, recreational, and cultural landscape, providing much-needed green spaces in urban environments and contributing to the overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike. The emphasis on durability will ensure that these Public Squares remain vibrant and well-maintained community assets for years to come.

Public Squares should have the following characteristics or features:

- Minimum 0.2 Ha contiguous park area
- Strong interface with the adjacent public streets
- Adjoining active frontages allowing passive surveillance
- Multi-use programmable space
- Designed for year-round use
- High quality resilient materials and special features
- Site furnishings including benches, bicycle parking, and waste receptacles
- Canopy trees and contemporary planting
- Outdoor recreational facilities to meet area residents' needs, including, but not limited to: Play courts, junior and senior playground facilities, skateboard facility, skating rink, water play, fitness equipment, dog off-leash areas
- Park amenities including outdoor gaming areas, flexible lawn space, social gathering space, shade structure, fountains / water features, public art installations, exhibit space, seating area
- Potential commercial concessions (food kiosks/ open air cafes) in the square or in adjacent uses
- Wi-Fi capabilities, smart technology



Figure 27 - Public Squares Precedent - East Village London, Plot 5, London, UK. Design By: Carve, Amsterdam.

Transit Square

Transit Square, designed as a VMC-wide facility, largely meets the planning requirements for a Public Square. While it lacks active facilities, it offers a spacious, flexible area suitable for seating, the hosting of large events, concerts, and markets, and generally serves as a civic destination. Currently, a portion of Transit Square is earmarked for future development, which will reduce its total area to 0.2 hectares. This reduction will place Transit Square at the lower end of the City's size standards for such spaces. However, the adjacent New Park Place, designed as a Flexible Street, can temporarily expand the square's capacity for larger events.

The primarily passive nature of Transit Square necessitates that other Public Squares and Urban Parks in the VMC compensate for the facility requirements needed to serve the projected VMC population. These additional spaces will need to provide the active amenities that Transit Square lacks to ensure a well-rounded offering of public facilities for the community.

Millway Park & Promenade (MPP)

The Millway Park & Promenade is a vital civic corridor in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, comprising four consecutive Public Squares. This urban spine extends along the western edge of Millway Avenue from Apple Mill Road to Doughton Road, positioned above the subway station and tunnel, with the potential to link the north and south halves of the VMC across Highway 7.

As envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan, the MPP aims to be a cohesive and unified system of parks offering diverse amenities for residents, workers, and visitors, functioning as both the civic spine and central retail street at the heart of the VMC.

Currently, the two northern blocks of the MPP have been developed, albeit with some deviation from the

original vision. The northernmost, Transit Square block, described above, incorporates some passive elements outlined in the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan but lacks any active features. Its east-west paving orientation contradicts the intended north-south pattern of movement, central to the Millway Promenade concept. The adjacent block, situated between New Park Place and Highway 7, houses an impressive subway station but similarly fails to include design features that would unite it with the other Public Squares in support of the integrated promenade idea.

Due to the design, layout, and programmatic issues encountered with the first two segments, the original vision for the MPP remains largely unrealized. To breathe new life into the MPP concept, concentrated efforts are now required for the two remaining blocks south of Highway 7. This revitalization involves developing a unified design language that not only connects these southern segments but also extends across the South Urban Park block and opens future opportunities to reintegrate the two northern blocks into the new MPP design framework. The renewed focus also aims to introduce active facilities into the MPP and re-imagine a more comfortable, accessible crossing over Highway 7 for both pedestrians and cyclists, thereby reinvigorating the MPP's potential as a vibrant urban corridor.

The MPP's new design approach envisions a dynamic, 24/7 pedestrian-centric "urban promenade" that seamlessly blends traditional park features with a vibrant urban retail corridor. Guided by the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan, the Millway Park & Promenade concept creates a rich tapestry of green spaces innovatively interwoven with active facilities and multifunctional elements.

This vision can be realized through a diverse array of features: architectural landmarks doubling as play structures, creatively designed multi-functional seating areas, multi-seasonal water installations, immersive public art, and interactive plazas. These

elements are harmoniously integrated with mature trees and essential transit infrastructure, maximizing functionality while unifying the park's segments through cohesive design.

The result is a versatile landscape offering both active and passive amenities, catering to residents, workers, and visitors alike, bringing the combined vision of a 'Park' and 'Promenade' to life within the MPP

4.3.2 Urban Parks



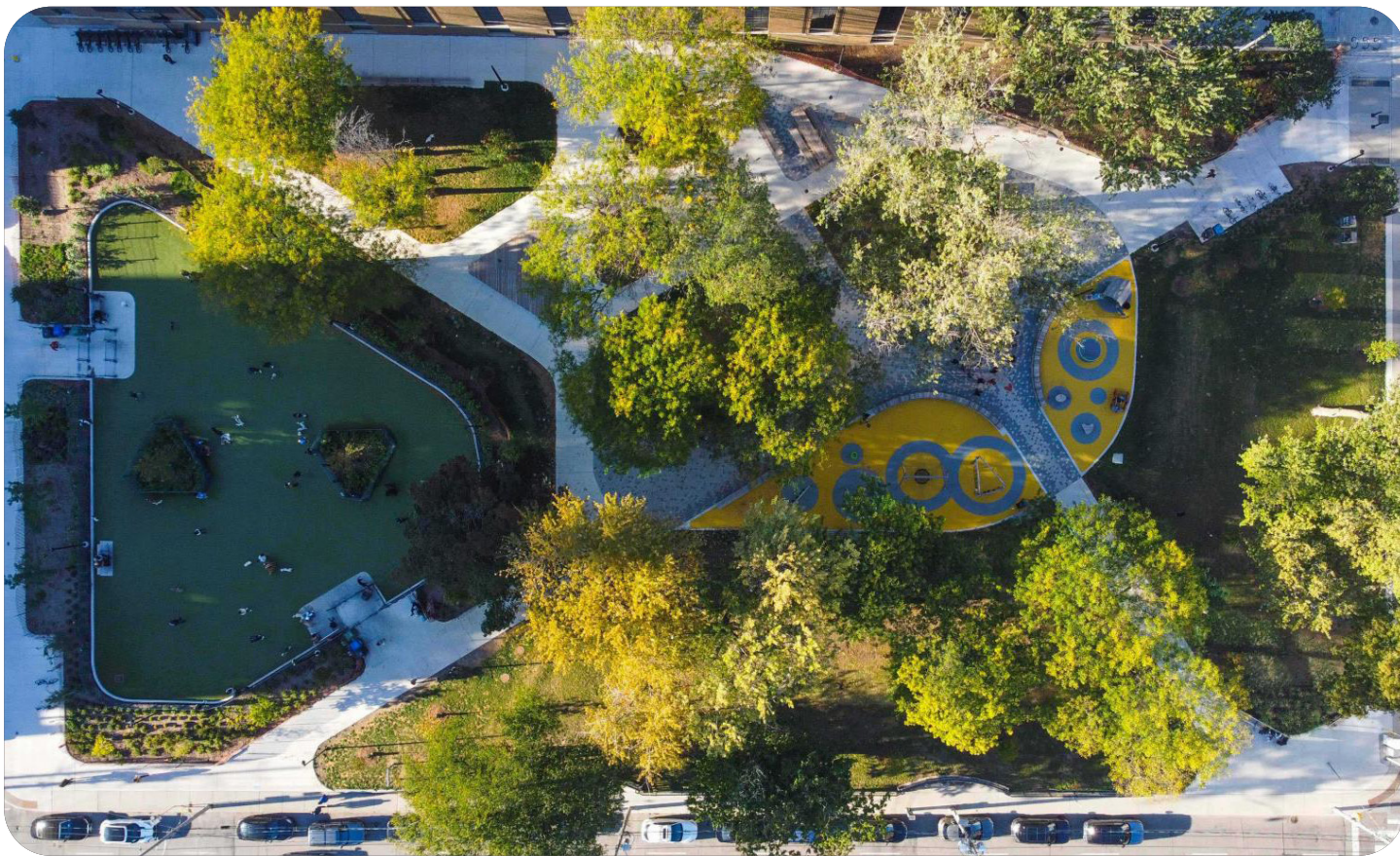


Figure 29 - Urban Park Precedent - St Andrew's Park, Toronto, ON. Design By: DTAH, Toronto.

In the evolving landscape of urban development, particularly within Strategic Growth Areas like the VMC, Urban Parks have emerged as a versatile and multifunctional solution to the green space needs of high-density communities. These innovative spaces represent a significant departure from traditional park typologies, effectively blending the core functions of Neighbourhood Parks with enhanced facilities designed to support the intensive use characteristic of densely populated areas.

The Urban Park expands on the Neighbourhood Park model, offering a more comprehensive and adaptable approach to community recreation and gathering. This shift is particularly evident in the VMC, where Urban Parks are set to replace the previously identified Neighbourhood Parks, which will continue to serve

as the foundation for parkland in greenfield and low-density developments in the City of Vaughan.

Urban Parks emphasize highly programmed outdoor spaces. These areas are designed to facilitate a diverse array of year-round recreational activities and community events, catering to the varied interests and needs of local residents. The parks incorporate flexible gathering areas alongside specialized facilities for active pursuits, striking a balance between everyday use and the capacity to host larger-scale, citywide entertainment and cultural events. This dual functionality not only serves the immediate community but also fosters broader interaction and cultural expression, contributing to the vibrancy of the urban fabric.

In recognition of the increased intensity of use compared to traditional parks, Urban Parks are engineered with a focus on durability and sustainability. This approach involves the incorporation of robust infrastructure and carefully selected materials, ensuring long-term functionality while maintaining environmental responsibility. The result is a balanced design that delivers equitable green spaces capable of withstanding heavy use while seamlessly integrating both active and passive recreational opportunities. This thoughtful planning fosters a strong sense of community and belonging within the densely populated urban context, making Urban Parks vital contributors to the quality of life in high-density neighbourhoods.

Certain larger Urban Park typologies within this new paradigm have the potential to become destinations for citywide entertainment and major cultural and community events. In the VMC Secondary Plan, two such significant Urban Parks have been identified: the North Urban Park and the South Urban Park. Together, these parks encompass approximately 40% of the total park area within the VMC, representing a cornerstone of the future park network in the area.

Urban Parks should have the following characteristics or features:

- Minimum 0.75 Ha Park area
- Street frontage on at least two public street sides
- Convenient pedestrian access points
- Year-round adaptability for seasonal festivals, events and landscape themes
- Adjoining active frontages allowing passive surveillance
- Designed to frame view corridors, where possible
- Accommodate both day-to-day uses and special events
- Flexible spaces for cultural programming and large gatherings, where warranted
- Utilities and infrastructure to facilitate a wide variety of events
- Lighted walking and cycling paths
- High quality, resilient materials and special features
- Site furnishings including benches, bicycle parking, and waste receptacles
- Large-scale canopy trees and ornamental planting
- Outdoor recreational facilities to meet area residents' needs, including, but not limited to: Senior or junior sports fields, play courts, accessible junior and senior playgrounds, skateboard facility, skating rink, water play, fitness equipment, dog off-leash areas,
- Park amenities including flexible lawn space, social gathering space, event spaces, park pavilion, feature shade structures, public art, picnic area, seating area, food kiosks, accessible washrooms.
- Potential commercial concessions (food kiosks/ open air cafes) in the park or in adjacent uses
- Wi-Fi capabilities, smart technology



Figure 30 - Rendering of North Urban Park. Design By: CCxA, Montreal.



Figure 31 - Urban Park Precedent - Hunters Point South Waterfront, Brooklyn, NY. Design By: SWA/Balsley New York.



Figure 32 - Urban Park Precedent - Klyde Warren Park, Dallas, TX. Design By: OJB, Dallas.

North Urban Park

North Urban Park is situated in close walking distance to the VMC Mobility Hub and is bookended by the existing Transit Square to the east and Applewood Crescent to the west. Given the need to find and acquire additional parkland in and around the VMC, this Master Plan recommends extending North Urban Park west into the Environmental Open Space through integration with the buried stormwater management facilities. This western extension would connect the Urban Park into the broader open space network that is proposed to run adjacent to Highway 400 and creates opportunities for both active and passive recreation.

While the core areas of the North Urban Park are more suited to civic uses, small courts and play spaces, the uses recommended for the western extent of the park will provide a more diverse set of active programs for future residents.

South Urban Park

South Urban Park is situated in close walking distance to Millway Park and Promenade and will service some of the most dense development within the VMC. It connects the Black Creek corridor to the east with the heart of the new south-west quadrant community to the west.

The South Urban Park is strategically designed across four blocks to meet diverse community needs. The park's layout follows a thoughtful progression, transitioning from west to east. The western block features a cultural hub centered around a civic centre and community space, ideal for hosting events and gatherings. Moving eastward, the two central blocks are dedicated to extensive active facilities and sports amenities, providing a range of recreational opportunities. Finally, the eastern block transitions to more flexible, naturalized spaces that visually connect with the Black Creek corridor beyond Jane Street.

This versatile design allows South Urban Park to serve the community year-round, accommodating everything from large-scale events to intimate gatherings. The park's amenities are carefully chosen to ensure engagement across all seasons, while also incorporating sports facilities that are too expansive for the VMC's smaller parks.

By offering this comprehensive mix of cultural, recreational, and natural areas, South Urban Park maximizes its utility and provides a unique experience that smaller parks in the area cannot match. This approach not only responds to the VMC's context but also creates a dynamic, all-encompassing space that promises to be a focal point for residents and visitors alike.

4.3.3 Destination Park



Figure 33 - VMC Destination Park



Figure 34 - Civic Place Warragul, Victoria, Australia. Design By: FFLA, Melbourne.

Vaughan's Destination Parks are the city's premier parks, playing a pivotal role in shaping Vaughan's identity. These large, culturally and naturally significant green spaces provide a diverse array of unique recreational opportunities for residents, catering to their active and passive leisure needs while serving as community hubs, tourist attractions, educational centres and environmental conservation areas.

The Village at Black Creek, owned by the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority (TRCA), present a unique opportunity for the City of Vaughan to create a

distinctive Destination Park that aligns with the city's vision for world-class public green spaces. These lands have the potential to offer a tranquil atmosphere and a range of programs and activities that differ significantly from traditional parkland uses, building upon the strong heritage setting of The Village at Black Creek.

The Village at Black Creek can be developed to provide a variety of unique experiences, built around agricultural, ecological, and cultural heritage, including allotment gardens, agricultural demonstration gardens, and a destination natural playground.

By working closely with the TRCA, the City of Vaughan can create alternative recreational opportunities that complement and enhance the existing heritage buildings and landscape. This approach will allow The Village at Black Creek to become a defining feature of Vaughan's park system, attracting visitors from across the city and region.

In line with the philosophy surrounding Destination Parks, the development of these lands should focus on creating a space that brings together principles of equity, diversity, ecology, restoration, education, and culture. The park should be designed to offer experiences that differ from those in other District or Urban Parks, maintaining a strong connection to the existing heritage landscape and repurposing heritage buildings when possible.

While The Village at Black Creek is located near the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC), current opportunities to cross over Highway 407 are limited and not conducive to walking and cycling. To unlock the full potential of these lands and ensure they become an integral part of Vaughan's Destination Park network, it is recommended that pedestrian and cyclist connections between the VMC and the North Lands be significantly improved. This improvement will also connect the VMC to the entire South York Greenway, a major active transportation connection in the City, and establish a connection to the Toronto Northwest Cultural Trail, a 27km active transportation and cultural route extending to Jack Layton Terminal on Lake Ontario's shoreline.

By developing The Village at Black Creek (or The Village Park) as a Destination Park, Vaughan can create an iconic green space that serves multiple purposes: a community hub, tourist attraction, educational centre, and environmental conservation area. This comprehensive approach to planning, management, and maintenance will help meet the diverse needs of visitors while preserving the area's natural and cultural resources.

The creation of this Destination Park also presents a unique opportunity to adaptively reuse and reinvigorate numerous historic buildings that sit within the North Lands. These buildings have the potential to host a number of uses that will support the park, including retail services, amenities for park goers, and other creative, enriching experiences. The development of The Village Park as a Destination Park has the potential to breathe new life into the space and its aging, heritage assets.

Through thoughtful development of The Village at Black Creek, Vaughan can enhance its reputation as a city known for remarkable public green spaces, positioning itself alongside other municipalities renowned for their iconic parks. This project represents an opportunity to create a truly unique and world-class destination park that captures the interest of residents and visitors alike, while honoring the area's rich heritage and natural beauty.



Figure 35 - Weigall Oval Precinct, Adelaide, Australia. Design By: JPE Design Studio, Adelaide.

4.3.4 District Parks

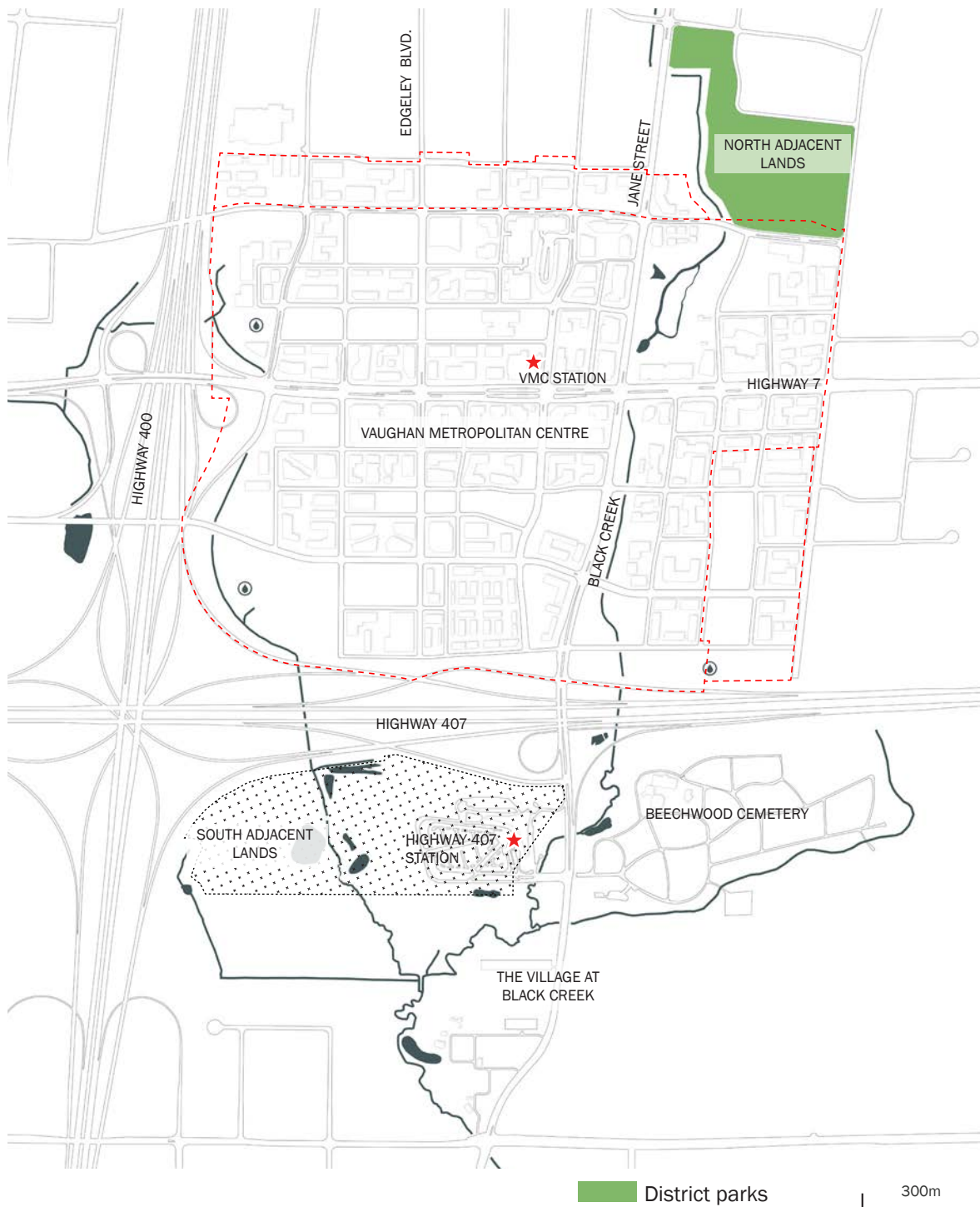


Figure 36 - VMC District Parks



Figure 37 - Chatfield District Park, Vaughan, ON

District Parks are vibrant public spaces that serve as hubs for a wide range of outdoor sports, recreation, and community activities. Designed to accommodate larger fields for youth and adult sports, they offer multifaceted outdoor recreational experiences. However, due to space constraints and high land costs, these large parkland typologies cannot be accommodated within the boundaries of intensification areas like the VMC. This necessitates looking for locations outside, but near, the VMC to establish District Parks. By being situated in close proximity, these parks can play a crucial role in

supporting densely populated communities, providing access to quality sports infrastructure, thereby promoting physical activity, social connection, and community engagement.

District Parks should have the following characteristics or features:

- 5 or more hectares in size
- Support a variety of recreational and athletic interests
- May support all facilities and amenities found in Urban Parks, per Section 4.3.2
- Large junior and senior sport fields
- Large skateboard parks
- Outdoor skating facilities
- Field houses
- Picnic shelters
- Large off-leash dog areas
- Potential co-location of Community Centres, where possible.

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan has identified several large parcels of land outside the VMC Secondary Plan area, within close walking or cycling distance of the VMC. These “Adjacent Lands” represent the best opportunity to ensure an adequate supply of Active Parkland not only for VMC residents but also for neighboring intensification areas facing similar challenges in land availability and facility provision, as discussed in section 3.2.

Although Adjacent Lands provide significant opportunities, leveraging these opportunities comes with significant challenges, including land acquisition, infrastructure development, and competing land uses. Overcoming these challenges will be crucial in realizing the full potential of these spaces and creating a comprehensive, accessible, and diverse parkland systems that enhances the quality of life for residents while supporting the growth of urban centres.

North Adjacent Lands

North of the VMC Secondary Plan area, a 14-hectare parcel, located northeast of Jane Street and Portage Parkway, offers a promising opportunity for future Active Parkland expansion. These North Adjacent Lands have the potential to evolve into an iconic District Park, capable of hosting large-scale sports and recreation facilities alongside a diverse range of amenities typical of both District and Urban Parks. The site further offers opportunities for the continued naturalization of Black Creek, direct connection to Edgeley Pond and Park, and improved accessibility for VMC residents without the need to cross a 400-series highway.

Currently occupied by active industrial and commercial businesses, these North Adjacent Lands are viewed as a long-term, post-2051, prospect for parkland development subject to further planning study. While the existing land-use poses a barrier, the substantial size and strategic location of these parcels make them important to the VMC’s long-term park planning strategy.

South Adjacent Lands

The South Adjacent Lands represent a significant area of interest for future development and recreational opportunities. These lands, situated south of Highway 407 near the 407-subway station, are currently part of the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) realty portfolio. They are earmarked for a planned maintenance yard and feature an EA-approved MTO transit way alignment, with a projected implementation time frame of post-2041.

Looking ahead, should these lands be deemed surplus at a future date, or if the existing and proposed uses are reevaluated by the province, it is recommended that the City of Vaughan communicate with the Province and MOI regarding its long-term park planning initiatives.



Figure 38 - North Adjacent Lands Park

4.4 Open Space Typologies

4.4.1 Environmental Open Spaces





Figure 40 - EOS Precedent - Mayfield Park, Manchester, UK. Design By: Studio Egret West, London.

Environmental Open Spaces (EOS) are primarily naturalized landscape areas that protect, renew, and enhance environmental features and functions, including the management of water, the provision of suitable habitat for plant and animal species, and the buffering of the VMC from adjacent highways. If compatible with these functions, they should incorporate passive recreational facilities and amenities, including multi-use trails, boardwalks, overlooks, passive gathering spaces, as well as public art and educational opportunities. Where applicable, EOS lands may also incorporate active facilities such as fitness and circuit stations and natural playgrounds seamlessly integrated into the landscape.

Environmental Open Spaces currently link the east, south and west sides of the VMC, helping to form an Outer Loop around the downtown. Providing convenient access to these spaces and providing a connection in the north of the VMC to complete the loop will result in a substantial open space available to residents and visitors. As discussed in Section 2.2, surveyed residents cited a strong desire to have convenient access to open spaces for walking and cycling trails. Environmental Open Spaces will help to meet this need.

Black Creek Renewal (BCR)

The Black Creek is the major natural feature of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. The vision for the renewal of the Black Creek corridor is to build a sustainable amenity space that functions as a hybrid of vital stormwater management (SWM), flood mitigation infrastructure and innovative public park and open space.

The Black Creek Renewal and Edgeley Pond & Park will act as catalysts for the VMC by supporting its dynamic transformation through innovative stormwater management design, creation of unique spaces, and the seamless integration of parkland amenities where residents and visitors can interact, learn, play, and grow. It will offer active and passive amenities for all user groups, with naturalized spaces on the west bank and an urban promenade on the east.

In 2005, a flooding event in the Black Creek sub-watershed illustrated the need for significant infrastructure improvements to reduce future flooding, improve transportation, and accommodate future development and redevelopment in the VMC. The VMC Black Creek Renewal Municipal Class EA evaluated potential channel alignments and physical improvements for the Black Creek between Highway 7 and Highway 407, with a goal of identifying a solution that would mitigate the current flooding and erosion problems and enhance the natural heritage system and public realm associated with the Black Creek channel corridor.

Given the complexity of this project, design and construction activities have been separated into three components:

- Renewal of the Black Creek channel between Highway 7 and Highway 407
- Replacement of the culvert under Highway 7 at Jane Street
- Construction of Edgeley Pond & Park

Edgeley Pond & Park

Edgeley Pond & Park (EPP) is an existing pond block located northeast of the Jane Street and Highway 7 intersection and within the Black Creek corridor. The redesigned EPP will celebrate its natural and cultural heritage and the important role that it plays in the larger watershed.

The EPP will be retrofitted with landscape enhancements, including trails, seating, and a pedestrian bridge, and incorporate landform and topography, to create an iconic park while treating local drainage to current stormwater management standards. An existing island with 200-year-old Red Oaks is preserved.

A sustainable approach to stormwater management, together with a narrative strategy to educate the public about the system's ecological performance, cultural history, and contemporary urban program will make this integrated design project a major destination for educational institutions and nature conservation organizations in the Region.

Although technically part of the Edgeley Pond & Park EOS system, EPP Square, at the north-east corner of Jane Street and Highway 7, is designed to function as a Public Square providing an effective transition from Edgeley Pond & Park's natural character to the more urban context of Jane Street and Highway 7.

Non-Traditional Storm Water Management & the Potential to Provide Additional Active Parkland

While the primary function of the EOS lands is passive in nature, it is recommended that EOS lands are expanded and connected to maximize their recreational potential. Additionally, the integration of non-conventional, below grade stormwater management infrastructure may allow EOS to incorporate parkland or park facilities on the surface, where feasible and appropriate.



Figure 41 - Rendering of Edgeley Pond & Park. Design By: DTAH, Toronto.

Given the anticipated challenges to acquiring parkland in and adjacent to the VMC, the use of EOS lands, specifically those currently planned for traditional storm water management ponds, as active parkland should be strongly considered by the City. Below grade storm water infrastructure and tanks have the potential to make space available for larger facilities, such as soccer pitches and other sports fields, significantly enhancing the area's recreational offerings and maximizing the use of available land.

While the use of EOS lands as active parkland should be considered, it must not come at the expense of critical, naturalized open spaces that provide important spaces for habitat creation and support. For example, areas along the Black Creek should remain as EOS, as the Black Creek forms an important corridor for wildlife as well as a unique open space within the VMC. Only EOS lands specifically identified as potential sites for storm water management ponds

should be considered as potential sites for active parkland.

In pursuing this approach, it is imperative to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the newly approved Non-Conventional Stormwater Management Facilities Policy, Procedure, Criteria and Standards. This framework ensures that any development of EOS lands aligns with the City's commitment to sustainable and innovative stormwater management practices. By following these guidelines, the City can effectively balance the need for recreational spaces with the imperative of maintaining ecological integrity and effective stormwater management.

4.4.2 Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space



Figure 42 - VMC POPS



Figure 43 - POPS Precedent - The Bounce, Calgary. Design By: CMLC, Calgary.

A privately owned publicly-accessible space (POPS) is a unique urban feature that blends private ownership with public access. These spaces are universally accessible and open to the public, yet they are owned and maintained by private entities. In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in the creation of POPS on new development sites, as illustrated in Figure 42 on the previous page.

The provision of parkland credits for POPS significantly impacts parkland acquisition. When developers create POPS, they receive parkland credits that reduce or eliminate their required parkland dedication or financial contribution (Payment-in-Lieu of Parkland) to the city. This substantially diminishes the city's ability to fund public parkland purchases. Over time, it may impair the city's capacity to acquire parkland, which is particularly problematic in intensification areas where securing parkland is vital for maintaining quality of life and supporting increased population density.

When POPS are unavoidable, they must provide significant recreational value to VMC residents. In intensification areas, POPS receiving parkland credit can no longer function solely as passive, plaza-like gathering spaces. These spaces must now incorporate active recreational facilities alongside passive amenities, adhering to the latest city standards. To ensure POPS effectively address community needs, the city should be consulted to determine appropriate facilities for these spaces.

Recognizing these challenges, the City of Vaughan is conducting a study to develop comprehensive city-wide standards and guidelines for POPS. This study aims to establish clear expectations for the planning, design, maintenance, and operations of POPS in both low-density and intensification areas, ensuring these spaces contribute meaningfully to the urban fabric and residents' quality of life.

4.4.3 Mews and Flexible Streetscapes



Figure 44 - VMC Mews and Flexible Streetscapes



Figure 45 - Mews / Flex Streetscape Precedent - Monon Boulevard, Carmel, IN.
Design By: Rundell Ernstberger Associates Indianapolis

Mews and Flexible Streetscapes play a crucial role in providing important connections for pedestrians to move through the VMC. These well-designed, accessible urban spaces serve as vital links between main streets, parks, and open spaces. As illustrated in Figure 44, the VMC incorporates a number of existing and proposed Mews and Flexible Streetscapes, enhancing the overall connectivity and walkability of the area.

Mews

In a traditional sense, “Mews” refers to a type of narrow, private, and often picturesque street or lane. In the urban context of the VMC, these spaces take

on a much more public and functional role, creating important open spaces and corridors that connect people to destinations, including parks.

As described in the Streetscape and Open Space Plan, *“Mews Connections are a fine-grain circulation layer that link together streets, parks and open spaces into a seamless pedestrian and cycling network.”*

The Master Plan includes a network of suggested mews locations to guide future development in the VMC. It is critical that these mews are created in order to ensure the VMC is well connected and accessible.

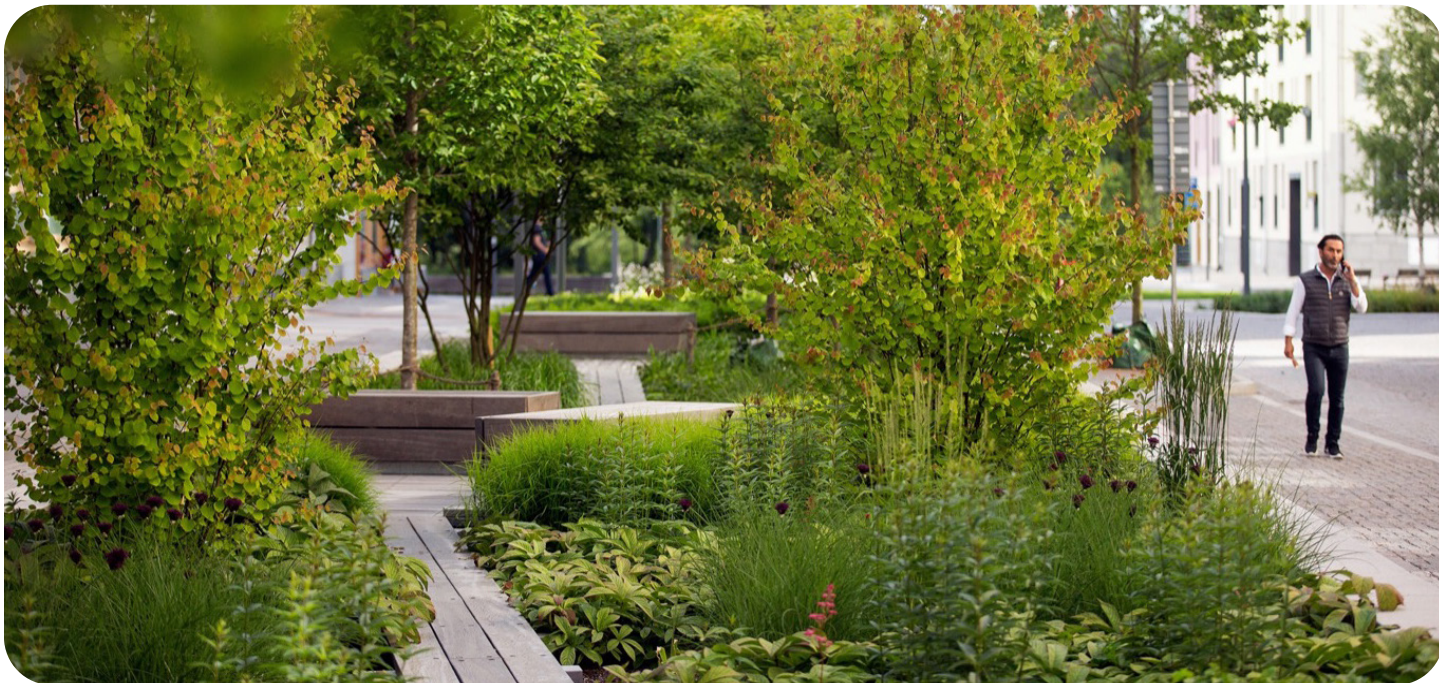


Figure 46 - Jaktgatan and Lövängsgatan, Stockholm, Sweden. Design By: AJ Landskap, Stockholm.



Figure 47 - Pop-up Park, Kitchener. Design By: 8 80 Cities Toronto.



Figure 48 - Hello Wood Pop-Up Park, Budapest, Hungary. Design By: Hello Wood, Budapest

Flexible Streetscapes

Several widened boulevards within the VMC present opportunities to introduce enhanced streetscapes. Given restraints on the quantity of park lands within the VMC, light recreational facilities or attractions should be explored when the right-of-way can accommodate them. Urban centres have long exploited linear strips of non-developable land as a means to expand on recreational opportunities for residents, The High Line in New York City being only one such example.

The creative use of these “grey areas”, which are both streetscapes and open spaces, can support streetscape enhancements, pop-up parks, public art installations, urban playgrounds, and many other uses. It is recommended that the City of Vaughan study other similar urban areas to identify recreational

potential within the boulevards of the VMC. Facilities should be tailored to respond to adjacent traffic conditions, remaining mindful of vehicular speeds and volumes, and ensure proper separation between pedestrians and vehicles.

Additional facilities to consider are fitness equipment, linear play elements, interactive art installations, feature seating structures, dynamic planting, and enhanced walkways with wayfinding elements.

Utilizing these elements, along with materiality, colour treatments, rhythm, scale, etc., in a cohesive manner aids in the creation of an identity for the road and can act as a means of improving connectivity within the open space system.

4.4.4 School Sites



Figure 49 - VMC Potential School Sites



Figure 50 - School Yard Precedent - Parc du Cossy, Switzerland. Design By: Approaches, Lausanne.

The VMC Secondary Plan calls for four schools in the VMC, and development trends suggest additional schools will be added in the future. Given the limited amount of Active Parkland in the VMC, school yards will be important sites for locating larger sports facilities that are available to the public outside of school hours. While co-location and sharing of facilities between schools and the public presents challenges related to ownership, maintenance and governance, there are examples of urban school sites which do this successfully.

One notable success story is the Canoe Landing Campus, in Toronto. This space, according to the City of Toronto, “seamlessly merges Canoe Landing Park, the community centre, a dedicated community space, two elementary schools [and] a child care centre”. The success of the project has resulted in “capital and operational efficiencies by sharing spaces and maximizing the open space”.

Using Canoe Landing as an inspiration, school sites in the VMC should be designed for use by both students and VMC residents. The park governance models, presented in Section 6, may provide the necessary structure and guidance for the City of Vaughan to establish successful partnerships with school boards and other relevant groups to realize this vision.

The City of Vaughan is currently exploring the development of a feasibility study for podium schools. This initiative is in response to land availability challenges in high-density areas, where rising property values and land scarcity make traditional school models increasingly difficult to implement and maintain. By undertaking this study, the City aims to inform future planning decisions for school sites in intensification areas potentially optimizing land available for outdoor amenities associated with school sites.

4.4.5 Interim Park Spaces



Figure 51 - Example of an Interim Park Space; Design By: Fairgrounds Racket Club, Toronto.

Recognizing that traditional, publicly owned parkland can take a long time to establish, due to the sometimes lengthy time to acquire land, the cost of construction, and many other factors, the use of interim park spaces should be considered. Interim park spaces can provide park-like experiences and facilities that help to meet demands for open space in the short term.

As these spaces are intended to be temporary, they are often fast to develop and flexible in their program. These spaces are often privately owned, which reduces the need for the city to have funding available while communities are still developing. An example of a successful, interim park space is Assembly Park

in the VMC. This space offers dynamic programming, space for public art, community gardens, gathering spaces and space for cultural events. The newly constructed Fairgrounds, offer temporary pickleball and paddle ball court rentals promoting physical fitness while providing temporary active facilities to supplement existing parkland.

While these spaces do not replace the need for traditional parkland, they may offer important open spaces and facilities until true parkland comes online. **It is strongly recommended that the City of Vaughan work with developers, landowners and other stakeholders to establish additional interim park spaces within or adjacent to the VMC.**

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4.5 VMC Parks Master Plan, Full Build Out



Figure 52 - VMC Master Plan

Urban & District Parks		Land that allows for the full range of typical park uses.
Destination Parks		Lands that allow for unique experience, amenities and attractions
Environmental Open Space		Natural systems requiring protection or lands used for stormwater management and may support trails and passive recreation.
Public Squares		Plazas or promenades that offer active and passive recreation and urban greening.
POPS & Mews		Privately-owned and maintained land open to the public , and wide, flexible streets that supplement Urban Parks and Public Squares.
Potential School Sites		Potential lands to be owned by school boards that may contain facilities available for public use.
Land for Consideration		The MOI lands are identified as proximal to the VMC with potential for recreation. Should the lands be deemed surplus in future they may be considered for alternative uses. This is not intended to limit any present or future changes to the site.

Figure 52, on the previous page, presents a cohesive vision for the future of parks and open spaces both within and adjacent to the VMC. The realization of these parks and open spaces, described above, will help to ensure that the future residents of the VMC have access to the necessary parkland and facilities to support a thriving and vibrant downtown.

The design and programming of each park must be carried out thoughtfully in response to current needs and future demands. Facilities must be selected to ensure a diverse range of activities is provided across the VMC. The distribution of facilities, as recommended by this Master Plan, are described

in Section 4.6 on the following pages. Additionally, the characteristics and requirements for each park are further described in the “Park Atlas” Included in Appendix 3.

4.6 Facility Provision and Distribution

Facilities within parks and open spaces provide a framework for activation and programming. These facilities, as defined and illustrated in the following sub-sections, necessitate careful organization based on usage patterns, timing, and purpose. They should be thoughtfully executed and located to reflect the unique character of VMC parks and open spaces, as well as the anticipated population numbers and demographics.

The anticipated facility needs for the VMC were determined during the Assessment Phase, based on an interpretation of the provision rates outlined in the Active Together Master Plan. These needs were calculated for a potential population of 128,000 people in the VMC. As discussed in Section 3.4, the Anticipated Facility Demand was tailored to suit a high-density urban centre, modifying the ATMP's provision rates and facility types based on the projected population profile. This approach ensures an adequate variety and quantity of facilities that are equitably distributed and are accessible via walking and biking.

The distribution of these facilities was carefully planned, considering their proximity to future residents, the benefits of co-location, the appropriateness for different park typologies, and land availability. In intensification areas, where space is at a premium, prioritizing versatile facilities that serve multiple purposes, or co-locating complementary facilities is paramount for enhancing user experience and maximizing park utilization.

Multi-use facilities can adapt to various activities throughout the day or season, transforming from farmers' markets to outdoor cinemas, or from skating rinks to skateboarding venues, depending on the time and weather. Multi-use courts serve a similar purpose, providing the flexibility needed to keep park facilities relevant for multiple age and user groups and reflecting the current needs of residents showcased through their particular use.

Co-location plays an important role in facility distribution. Splash pads located adjacent to playgrounds create comprehensive recreational zones for families and cater to similar age groups. Pairing sports courts with picnic areas encourages extended park visits and fosters community interaction.

To further optimize park function, incorporating smart technology into park design can enhance facility management and user experience, allowing for real-time adjustments based on usage patterns and weather conditions. As cities like Vaughan grow denser, this comprehensive approach to park and facility planning becomes increasingly vital. By prioritizing flexible design and multi-functionality, parks in intensification areas can adapt to changing demographics and evolving recreational trends. This approach not only enhances the long-term sustainability and relevance of these spaces but also ensures that they continue to meet the diverse and changing needs of the community they serve.

It is important to note that facility provisions were calculated based on the projected VMC population and its needs. This calculation does not account for the broader service area of District and Destination Parks. Consequently, the facilities allocated to these parks should be considered as minimums. The actual provision should be adjusted upward based on each park's projected service area, which extends beyond the VMC boundaries.

The sections that follow break facilities down into five categories, including:

Food and Agriculture Based Facilities

- Picnic Pavilion
- BBQ Picnic Area
- Allotment Garden
- Agricultural Demonstration Garden

Local Play Based Facilities

- Playground
- Natural Playground
- Splash Pad



Figure 53 - Park Facilities Precedent - Blucher Square, Khabarovsk, Russia. Design By: AFA, Moscow.

Gathering and Education Based Facilities

- Gathering Area
- Outdoor Classroom / Amphitheatre

Local Based Sports Facilities

- Skating Trail
- Pickleball
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Fitness Equipment
- Dog Park
- Multi-Use Field

Destination Based Sports Facilities

- Baseball Diamond
- Soccer Pitch
- Cricket Pitch
- Hockey / Skating Rink
- Skateboard Park

4.6.1 VMC Park Facilities Distribution



Figure 54 - VMC Facilities Provision



Figure 55 - Mixed Facilities Precedent - Solvallsparken, Sweden. Design By: Karavan landskapsarkitekter, Stockholm.

Figure 54, on the previous page, shows the future distribution and mix of facilities across the VMC. The process for locating facilities was largely influenced by the availability of land and the typology of the park; additionally, the frequency of use was taken into consideration.

Another key factor in locating facilities was the willingness of residents to travel to get to specific facilities. During the Assessment Phase, public consultation revealed that “56% of respondents are willing to travel more than 15 minutes by car or transit to use sports courts and fields. But 62% expect parks within a 10-minute walk to have trails for walking and cycling.”

Consideration was also given to how facilities will be used, with passive or less programmed facilities

being located in closer proximity to residents, and organized sports facilities being located further away.

Lastly, park facilities were strategically placed based on their context and intended use. Larger, centrally located Urban Parks like the South and North Urban Parks were designed with more open space to accommodate large cultural events, gatherings, and flexible use. In contrast, smaller Urban Parks and Public Squares incorporated more active and land-intensive facilities and programming. The subsequent sections provide a detailed breakdown of these facilities, grouped by similar characteristics.

4.6.2 Food and Agriculture Based Facilities



Figure 56 - VMC Food and Agriculture Based Facilities



Figure 57 - Example of Allotment Gardens. Image By: Osarieme Eweka

In densifying urban areas, limited access to private outdoor spaces has heightened the importance of community gardens and urban agriculture. This Master Plan recommends locations for food and agriculture-based facilities to accommodate activities typically associated with private backyards, such as outdoor dining and gardening. While picnic pavilions are inherently suitable to Urban Parks, integrating allotment gardens in Public Squares and Urban Parks is challenging due to competing recreational demands, seasonal aesthetics, wildlife conflicts, and high traffic exposure.

Allotment gardens require specific, permanent infrastructure like shade structures, sheds, and tables, making them single-use spaces. Their pre-planned nature allows for placement away from residential areas, often benefiting from proximity to naturalized areas. This strategic positioning enhances their functionality while minimizing conflicts with other urban park uses.

Subsequently, this Master Plan recommends locating food and agriculture-based facilities in larger park typologies such as District and Destination Parks, particularly near Environmental Open Spaces or natural heritage lands. Figure 56 suggests suitable locations balancing community needs, accessibility, and integration challenges.

To expand urban agriculture without overloading public parks, we recommend developing community gardens in private outdoor spaces, including rooftops. This dispersed approach reduces pressure on Urban Parks and Public Squares while creating a resilient, sustainable urban environment that fosters community engagement, supports local food production, and enhances residents' quality of life.

4.6.3



Figure 58 - VMC Local Play Based Facilities



Figure 59 - Playground Precedent - Grange Park, Toronto. Design By: PFS Studio, Vancouver.

Local play facilities are integral to community life, serving as hubs for spontaneous recreation, particularly among younger residents. These amenities are strategically and equitably distributed throughout VMC, ensuring easy walking access for all residents.

Playgrounds are versatile installations well-suited for both Urban Parks and Public Squares. They often benefit from proximity to complementary features like splash pads. While most playgrounds in Urban Parks and Public Squares cater primarily to nearby residents, those in larger, centrally located Urban Parks, such as the North and South Urban Parks, as well as those in Destination Parks,

serve a broader audience. These key playgrounds attract VMC residents and visitors from surrounding areas alike.

Recognizing their broader appeal, playgrounds in these central Urban Parks and the Destination Park should be designed as standout attractions. They should offer expansive layouts and innovative play structures, catering to a diverse age range. These signature playgrounds aim to create memorable experiences, becoming destinations in their own right for both local residents and visitors to the area.

4.6.4 Gathering & Education Based Facilities



Figure 60 - VMC Gathering & Education Based Facilities

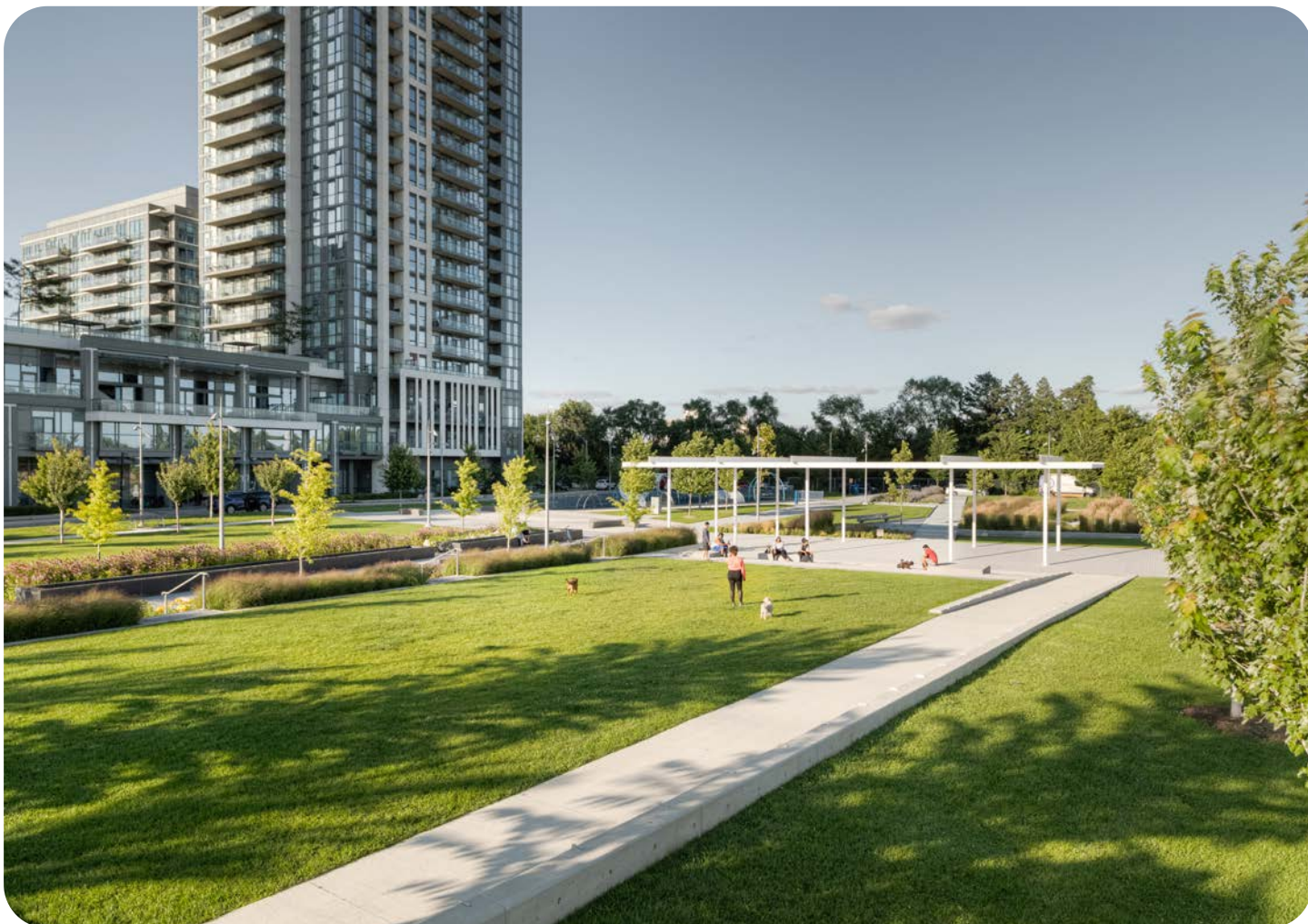


Figure 61 - Gathering Area Precedent - Senator Marian Maloney Park, Etobicoke. Design By: Janet Rosenberg & Studio Inc., Toronto.

Gathering and education based facilities are located primarily on or within close proximity to school sites. Gathering areas are also located within Urban Parks, where larger groups are expected to congregate for events and cultural activities. In addition to gatherings, these spaces can support yoga, fitness classes, and other similar activities.

Gathering areas can be comprised of either hard or softscaped spaces, and can include shade structures, seating and other similar amenities.

Outdoor classrooms and amphitheatres are similar, however, they should also incorporate stepped seating, platforms for speaking and presenting, and planting to help create a sense of enclosure and definition for the space.

4.6.5 Local Based Sports Facilities

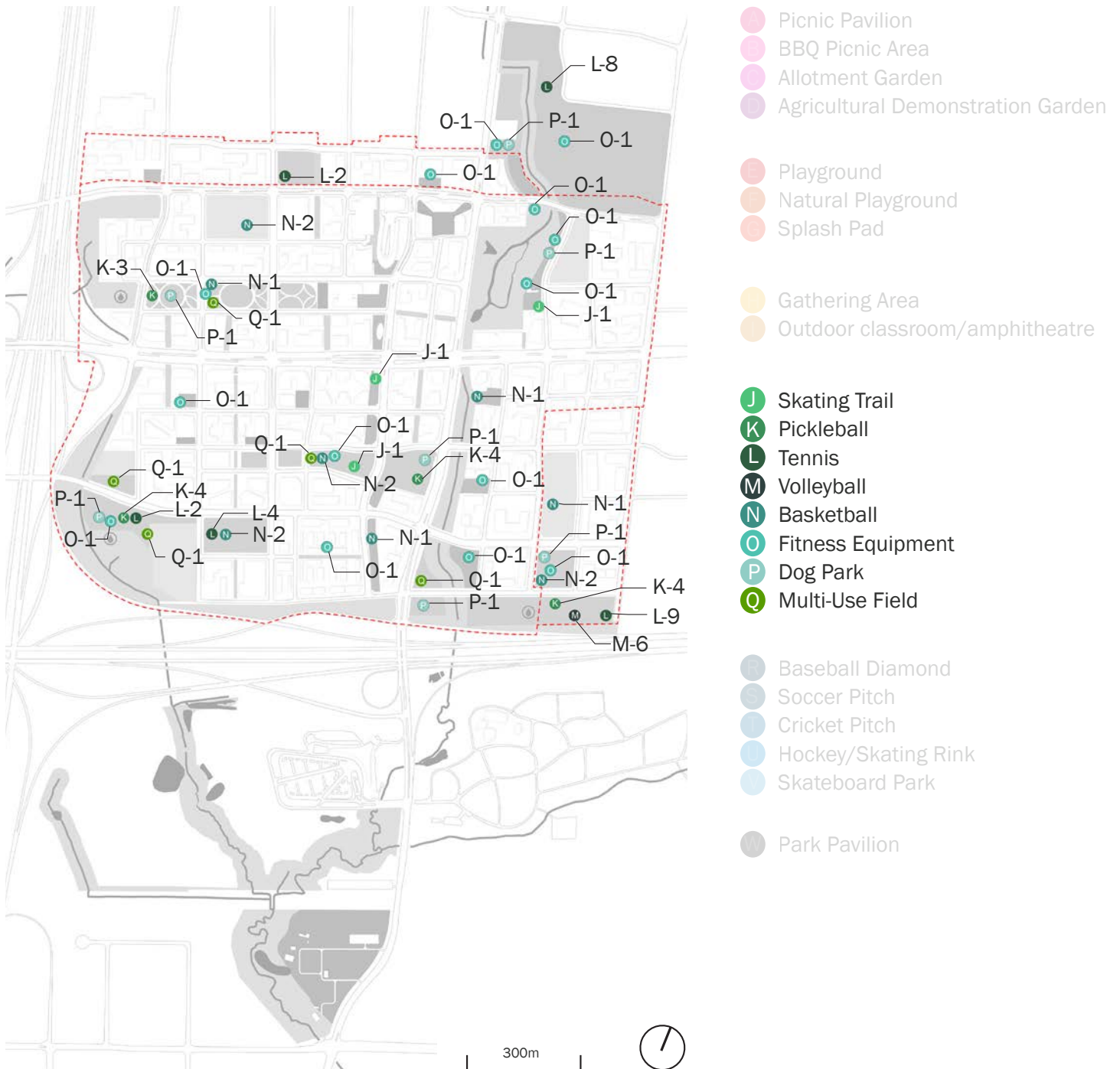


Figure 62 - VMC Local Based Sports Facilities



Figure 63 - Sport Facilities Precedent - A'Beckett Urban Square, Melbourne. Design By: Peter Elliott Architecture + Urban Design, Melbourne.

Local based sports facilities are those that are frequently used and may involve both programmed and unprogrammed play. These facilities are relatively compact in size and do not require significant supporting infrastructure. Local based sports facilities can also often be co-located, either adjacent to each other or on multi-use courts, designed to support multiple types of play.

In addition to sports courts, this category also includes dog parks, which, as is discussed in Section 3.4.4, are another critical consideration in planning parks and open spaces in the VMC. While dog parks are an important facility that must be made available to residents, it is strongly recommended that private developments provide dog relief areas in amenity rooftops or at grade within private courtyards to alleviate the pressure that dogs place on the park system.

Given the frequency of use and type of play that these spaces support, they are located in close walking distance of all VMC residents. While primarily concentrated in Urban Parks, some of these facilities may also be incorporated into Public Squares, as illustrated in Figure 62. In these more compact spaces, half-court designs for sports like basketball and racquet games can offer valuable opportunities for practice and casual play. Integration of these facilities allows for artistic re-imagining transforming standard recreational spaces into distinctive urban features. This approach maximizes space utilization and enhances the visual appeal and multi-functionality of Public Squares, elevating the overall character of the public realm.

4.6.6



Figure 64 - VMC Destination Based Sports Facilities



Figure 65 - Sport Facilities Precedent - Julia Reserve Youth Park, Australia. Design By: JMD Design, Redfern.

Destination based sports facilities are land intensive and used primarily by those registered to play organized sport. Given the land requirements and acknowledging that use of these spaces typically serves specific resident groups, they are primarily located on the periphery of the VMC or in adjacent land parks. Within the VMC, smaller format facilities, such as junior soccer pitches, may be located on school sites or as multi-use space within the North and South Urban Parks. Given that the majority of these facilities are located in the north adjacent land park, it is recommended that

the City of Vaughan prioritize the acquisition of this land as a future district park, which would serve both VMC residents and those from surrounding areas, including the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area.

4.6.7 Facilities Provision Summary

The Success of the VMC Relies on Lands Outside of its Original Boundary

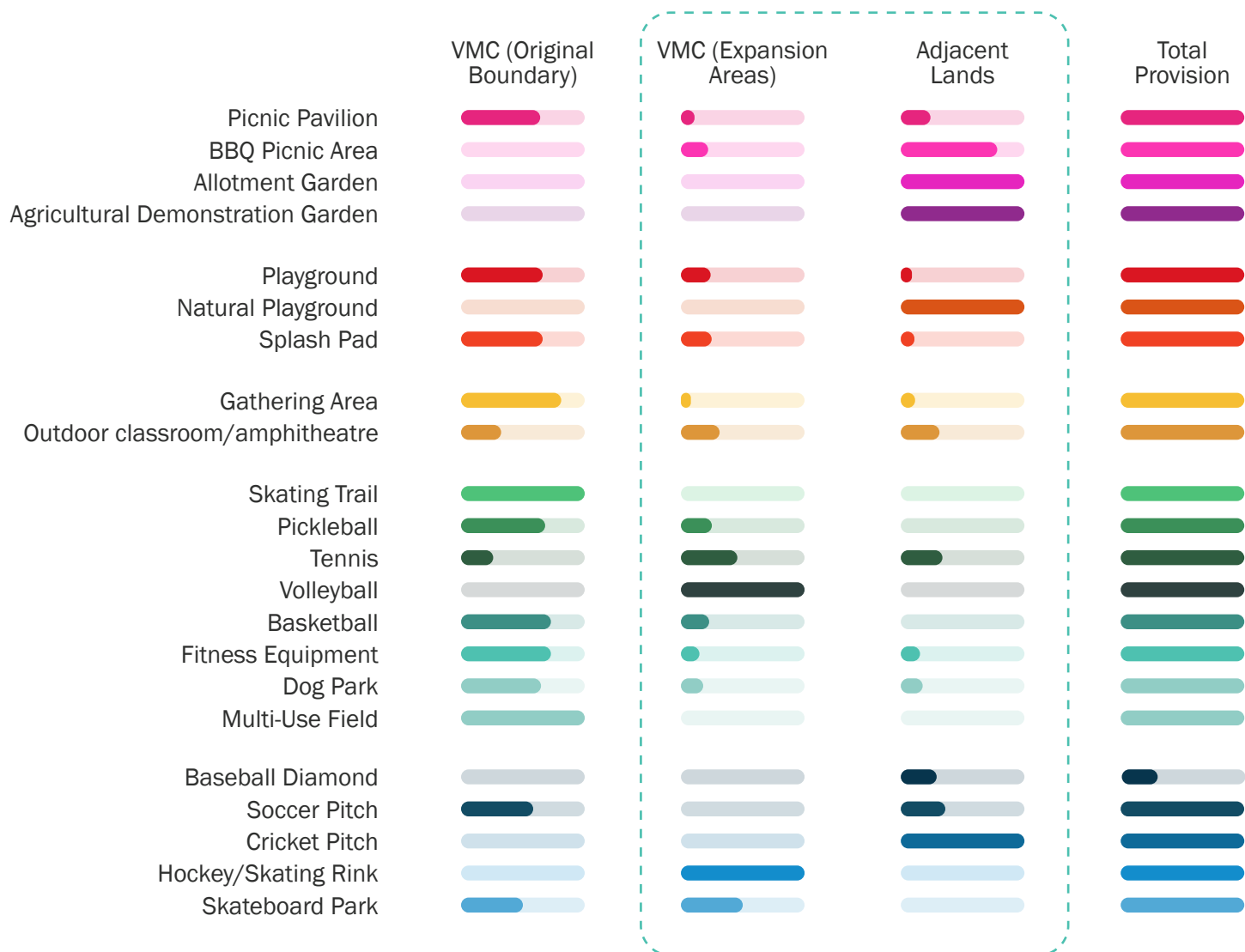


Figure 66 - Facilities Provision Summary

As shown in Figure 66, by distributing facilities and parkland as shown and described in the previous sections, the majority of facilities that are anticipated to be required by the future population can be located in or adjacent to the VMC.

Facilities within VMC can largely support the most common sport and leisure demand within neighbourhoods, in close proximity to residents, while adjacent land parks provide an essential contribution to accommodate larger, destination based facilities.

While this Master Plan demonstrates an optimistic vision for parkland and facility provision, it must be stressed that this plan is reliant on substantial new parkland being acquired within Secondary Plan Expansion Areas and within adjacent lands.

On its own, the VMC and the parkland originally allocated though the Secondary Plan will not sufficiently support future populations. As the height and density of developments in the VMC continues to grow, this inability for the VMC to provide sufficient parkland will continue to grow.

In addition to pressures from development itself, the VMC faces, and will likely continue to face, challenges in acquiring parkland due to restrictive policies that decrease the amount of parkland that must be provided by those who are developing lands within the VMC.

Any future policies that further decrease parkland provision will increase the challenges being faced, significantly compromising the ability of the VMC to become a thriving community with a diversity of spaces and facilities.

It is a core recommendation that the City of Vaughan prioritize the acquisition of parkland within the VMC and it's expansion area boundary as well as within adjacent lands.

4.7 Circulation

4.7.1 Cycling & Multi Use Trail Networks

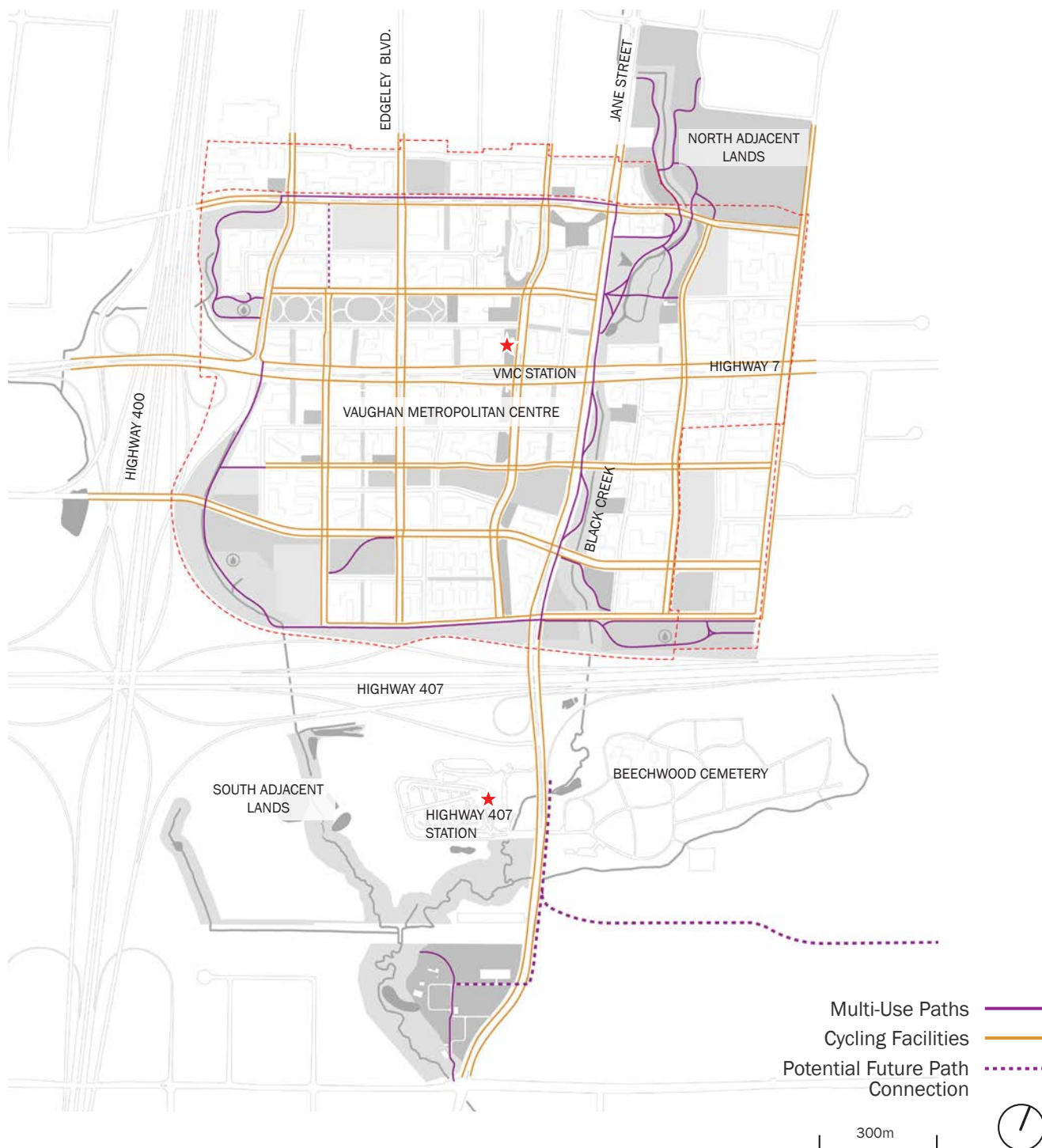


Figure 67 - VMC Cycling & Multi Use Trail Networks

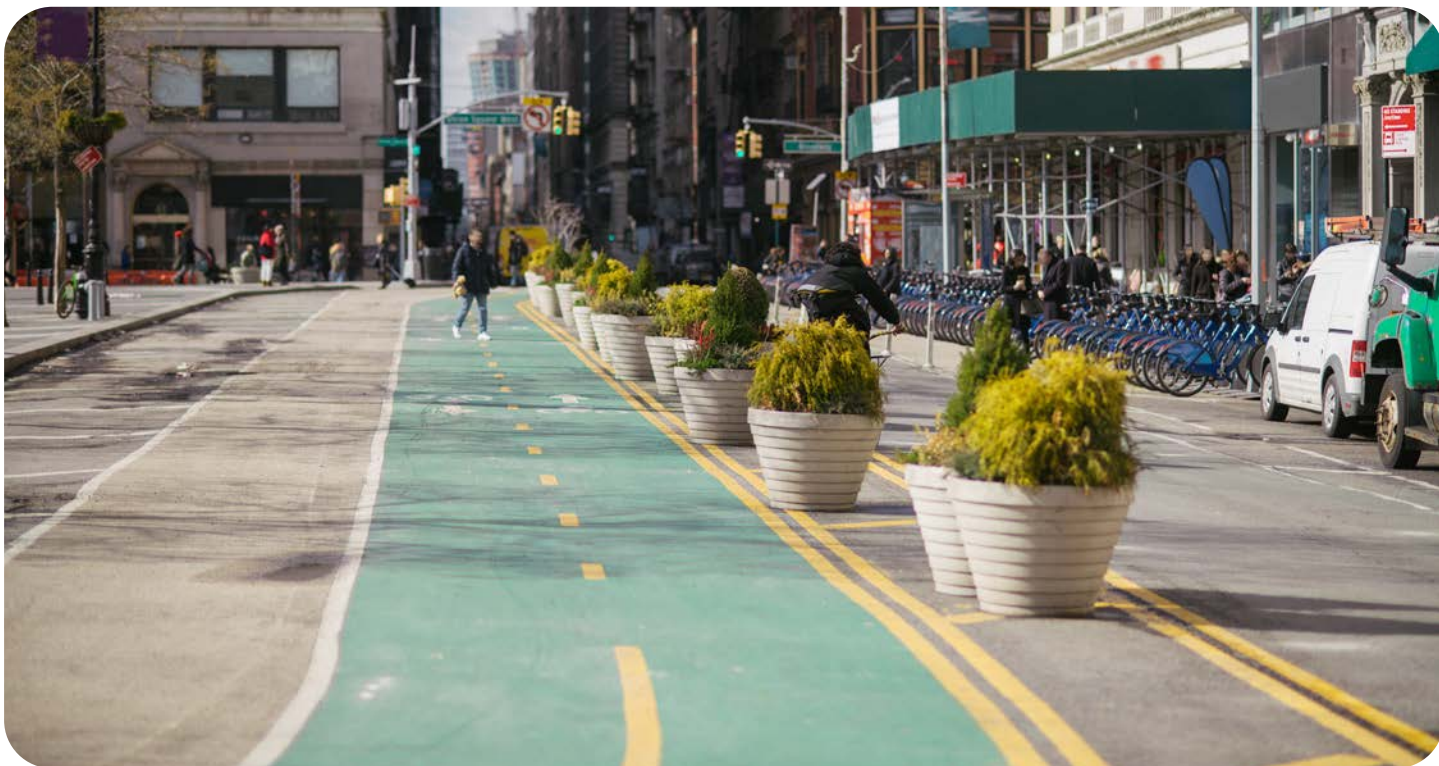


Figure 68 - Cycling Lane Precedent - Union Square, New York. Image By: Nick Starichenko

This Master Plan has developed a comprehensive circulation network that interconnects various parks and open spaces in the VMC. Building upon previous studies, this plan enhances the “loop” concept by introducing an inner “Urban Loop” and an “Outer Loop” These loops provide Vaughan residents with multiple options for traversing the VMC, promoting accessibility and connectivity throughout the area.

While the plan addresses long-term goals, it also recognizes the immediate need for improved pedestrian infrastructure. Many interim pedestrian routes connecting important community destinations, schools, and transit stops will require pedestrians to cross busy roads. To enhance the VMC’s walkability, the plan recommends improving intersections to help calm traffic. A particular focus is placed on Highway 7, which currently acts as a barrier, effectively splitting the VMC into two halves. Further study is recommended to explore methods for improving pedestrian and cyclist comfort and safety where Highway 7 intersects with minor and major collectors and regional roads.

Expanding the scope of active transportation, the plan also emphasizes improving connections south of Highway 407. This enhancement would provide better access to city-wide and regional links such as the South York Greenway, the Vaughan Super Trail and the Toronto Northwest Cultural Trail. By doing so, the plan aims to leverage many kilometers of key destinations, neighborhoods, cultural elements, and art installations, creating a more integrated and vibrant community experience.

To support and encourage cycling as a viable transportation option, the plan recommends complementing the expanded cycling network with appropriate infrastructure. This includes strategically locating bike parking, drinking fountains, and other cycling amenities in parks and open spaces, particularly at community destinations and in all new developments. These additions will not only enhance the cycling experience but also promote a more sustainable and health-conscious community.

4.7.2 Loop Trails

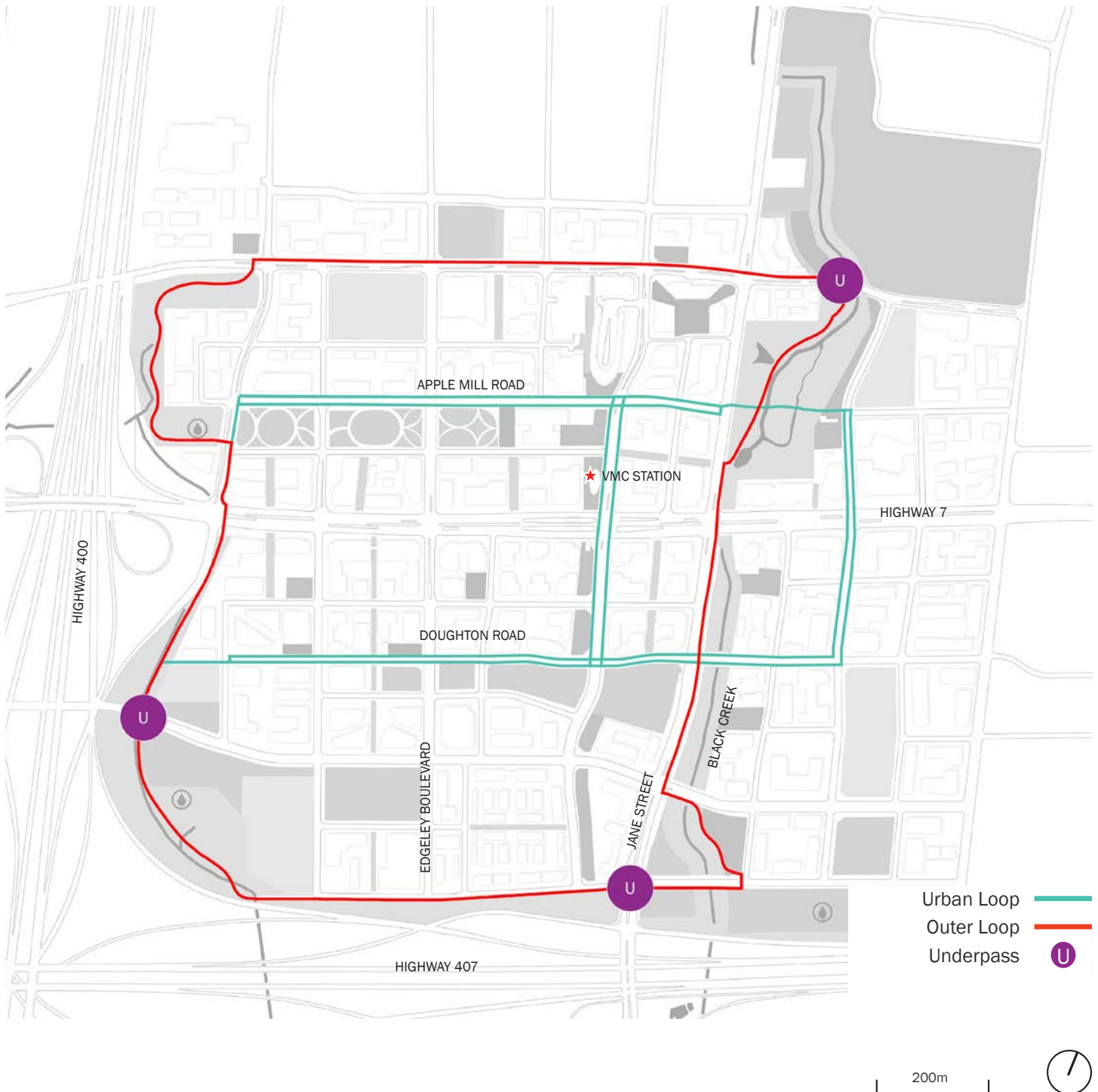


Figure 69 - VMC Loop Trails

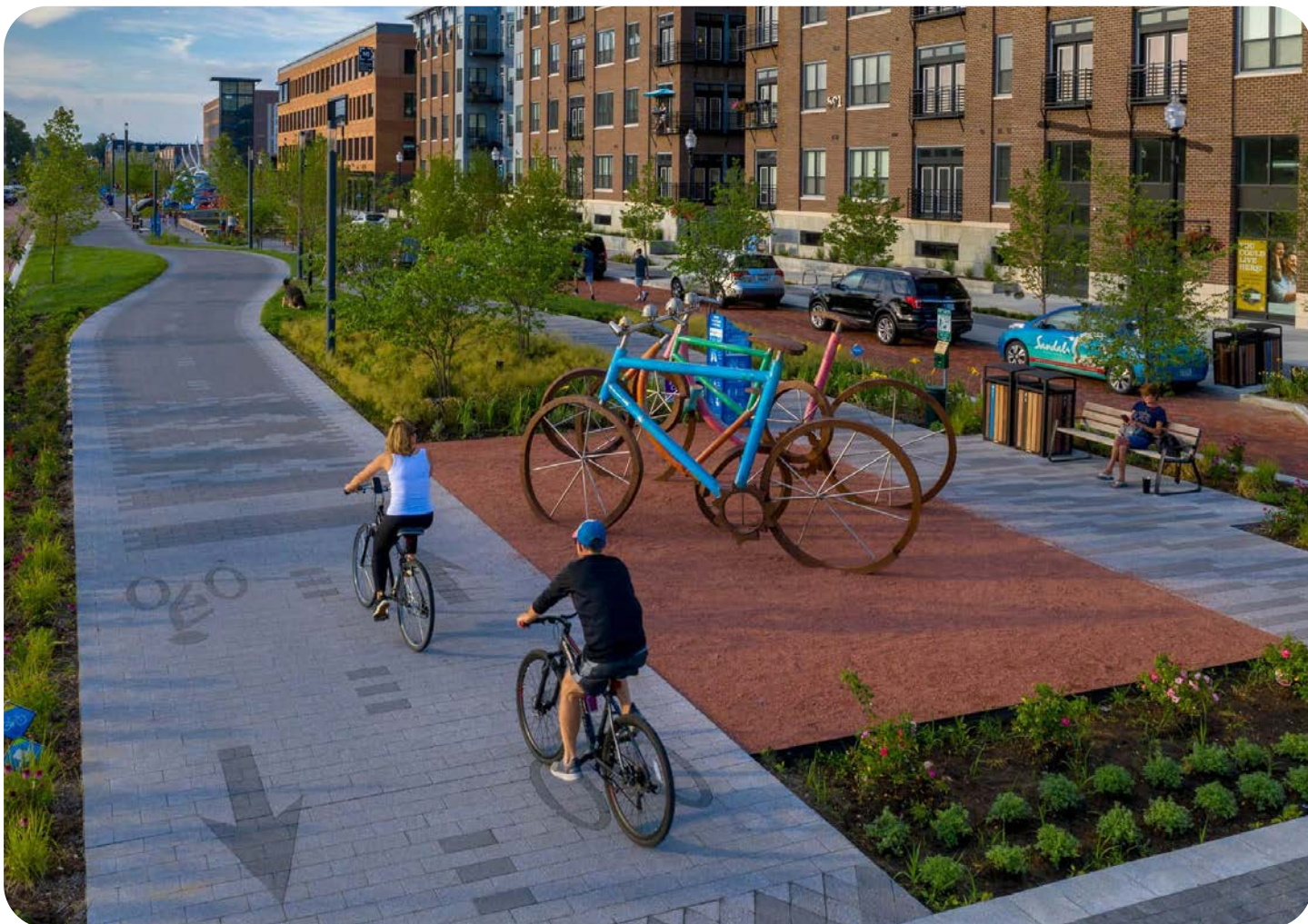


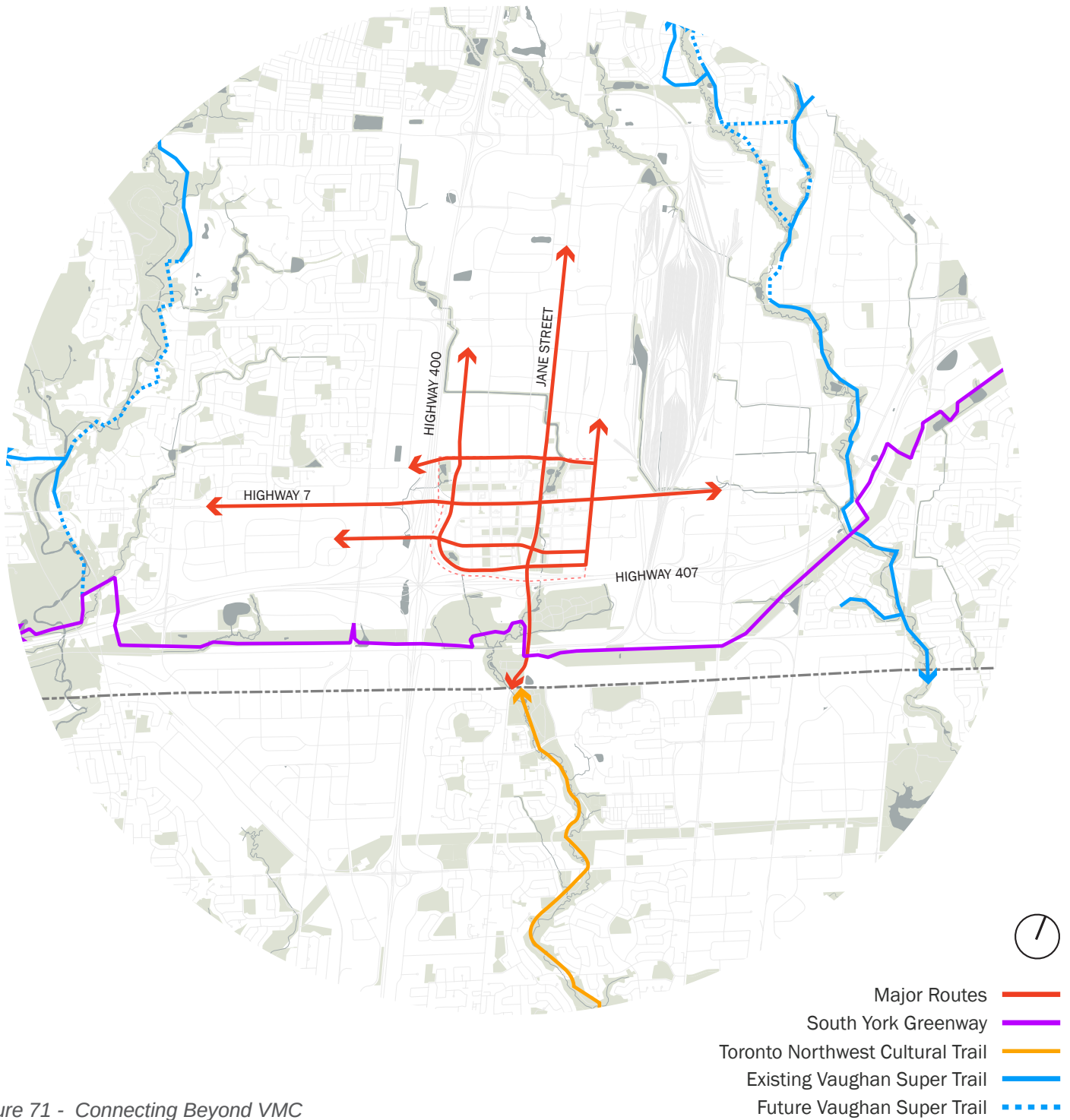
Figure 70 - Multi Use Trail Precedent - Monon Blvd, Carmel. Design By: Rundell Ernstberger Associates Indianapolis.

As noted in the previous section, the circulation network of VMC features two loops – the Urban Loop and the Outer Loop.

The Urban Loop is a 4-km path, connected in the middle, which links the two Urban Parks, Millway Avenue Promenade, and lands to the east of Black Creek. The Urban Loop also provides access to Environmental Open Spaces where it crosses the Black Creek and in the west adjacent to Highway 400. The Urban Loop is characterized by having dedicated cycling and walking infrastructure in an urban setting.

The Outer Loop is a 6-km path which connects all of the VMC's Environmental Open Spaces via multi-use paths. The loop is planned to maintain a nearly barrier free connection around the VMC, with proposed locations for underpasses below existing and future roadways. The Outer Loop is intended to offer an escape from the city, providing access to larger areas of naturalized landscapes. The loop connects to numerous Urban Parks and Public Squares via additional multi-use trails, sidewalks and bike lanes.

4.7.3 Connecting Beyond VMC



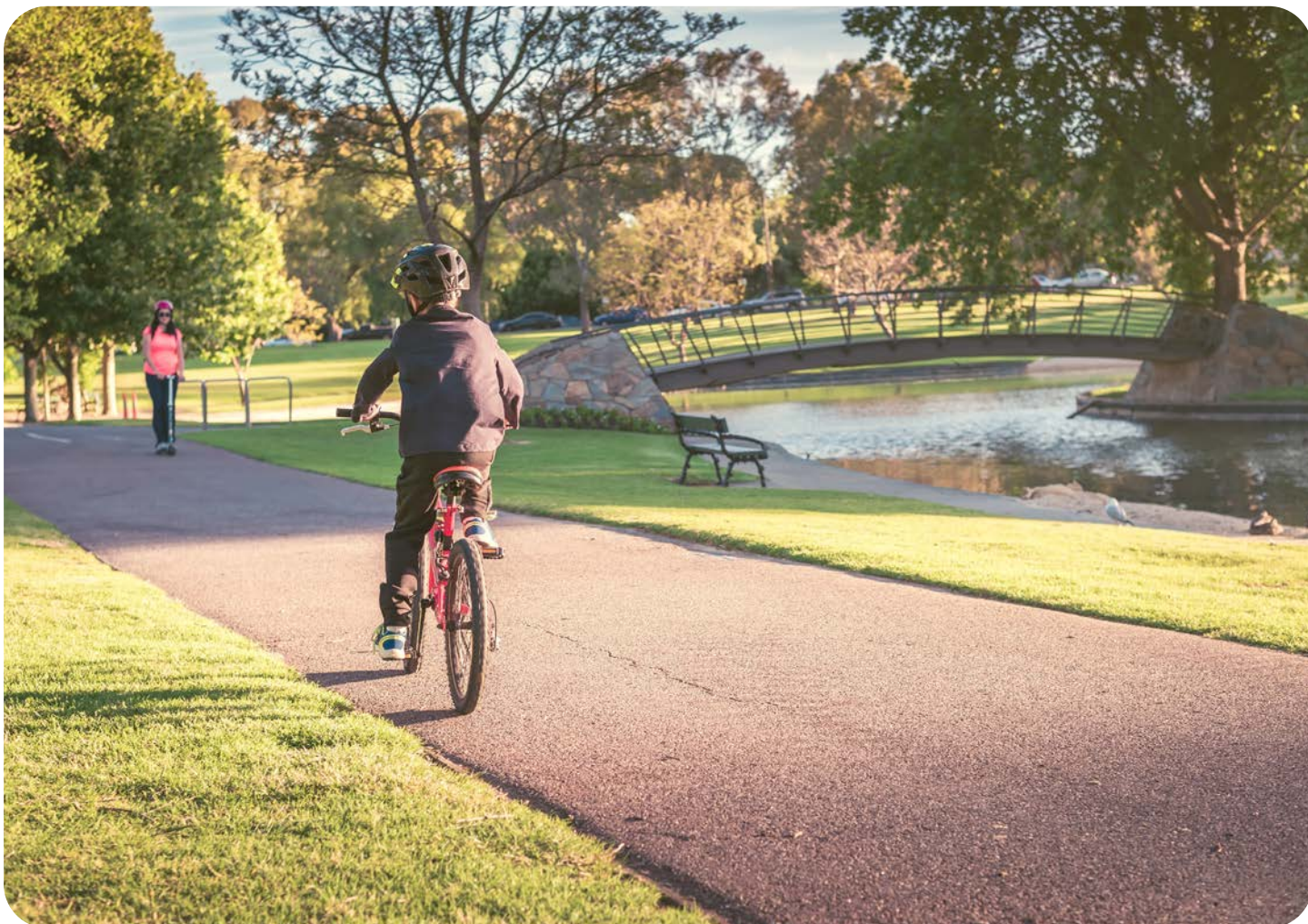


Figure 72 - Precedent of Trails in Natural Lands - Adelaide Park Land, Australia. Image By: Andrey Moissejev

This Master Plan prioritizes active transportation connections within and adjacent to the VMC. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential for broader connections throughout and beyond the City of Vaughan boundaries. Major cycling routes, the South York Greenway, the Vaughan Super Trail, and the Toronto Northwest Cultural Trail offer extensive trail networks linking key destinations, neighbourhoods, parks, open spaces, amenities, and cultural experiences.

A critical aspect of this plan is establishing connections across or beneath Highway 407. This

would not only connect the VMC to these aspirational trail networks but also integrate it with The Village at Black Creek, thereby incorporating it into the broader natural heritage system.

The plan also advocates for exploring active transportation links to the north, east, and west of the VMC. These connections would strengthen the VMC's relationship with neighbouring future growth centers. Ultimately, this would enhance citywide connectivity, significantly benefit VMC residents, and improve overall urban mobility and accessibility.

4.7.4 Connecting to the Lands South of HWY 407

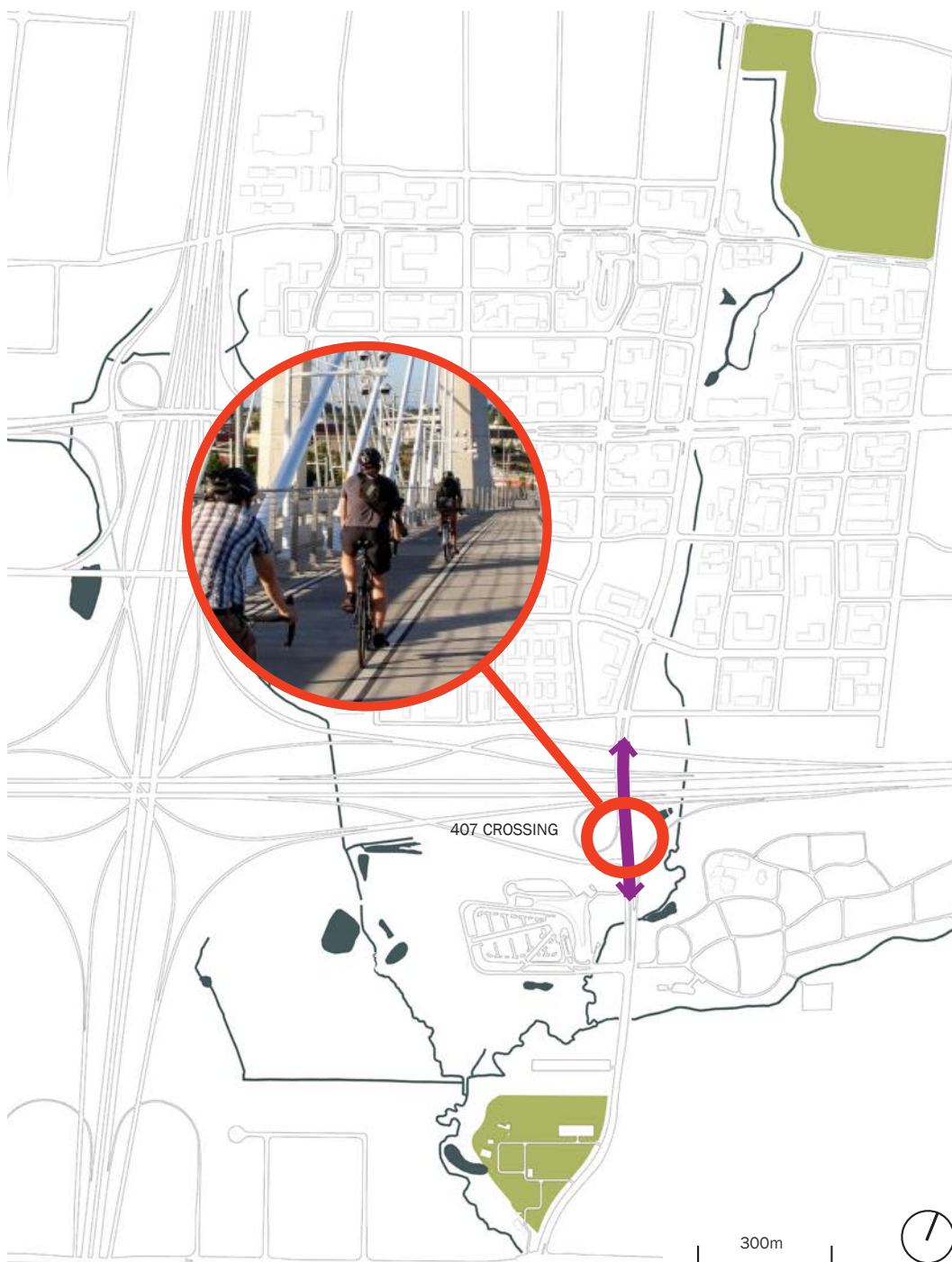


Figure 73 - Connecting to the Lands South of HWY 407



Figure 74 - Pedestrian / Cyclist Bridge Precedent - Perth, Australia. Image By: NeoPhoto.

As discussed in the previous section, connecting to the lands south of HWY 407 is crucial for maximizing the potential of adjacent land parks and leveraging the benefits of the South York Greenway, Vaughan Super Trail, and Toronto's Northwest Cultural Trail.

The current design of the Jane Street Bridge inadequately accommodates pedestrians and cyclists, presenting significant safety risks and inconveniences for those attempting to cross. While a crossing does exist, its suboptimal configuration and lack of proper safety features serves as a significant obstacle, severely limiting the VMC's connectivity to vital parks, trails, and open space opportunities. Improving this existing crossing is crucial to enhance connectivity and ensure the safety of all users.

Options for a crossing HWY 407 may include:

- A typical bike lane and sidewalk beside the road
- A completely separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing - either a new bridge or a modification of the existing structure
- An underpass, coordinated with potential future infrastructure works near the Black Creek.

This Master Plan recommends that the City of Vaughan actively work with relevant stakeholders to improve the HWY 407 pedestrian crossing in the near future.

4.8 Signage and Wayfinding

As part of a comprehensive strategy to create an interconnected network of parks and open spaces in the VMC, the City procured a consultant to develop a Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan. This plan aims to enhance how residents, visitors, and businesses perceive and navigate the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC), aligning with the goals set forth in the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan and the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan.

The primary purpose of this document is to establish a cohesive system that enhances navigation throughout the VMC's major destinations, including community hubs, transit stations, parks, open spaces, and active transportation links. By providing clear and consistent information, the signage system seeks to enhance the overall experience for pedestrians and cyclists, making the VMC more accessible and user-friendly.

To realize this vision, the City of Vaughan collaborated with Cygnus Design Group to create a Master Plan guiding signage development in the downtown area. This plan encompassed the design of a unified family of exterior signs for pedestrians and cyclists, detailing materials, specifications, and identifying target locations. The design process incorporated significant input and evaluation from various City departments and transit authorities to ensure a comprehensive approach.

Following the Master Plan's creation, the City launched a VMC Signage Pilot to test the effectiveness and durability of four signage prototypes. These prototypes were strategically placed near crucial locations such as the VMC Subway Station, SmartVMC Bus Terminal, and along the Millway Avenue and Applemill Road cycling routes. Public feedback was gathered through several engagement methods:

1. An online survey accessible via QR codes on the signs and the City of Vaughan website
2. A UX Advisory Group consisting of four community members who provided detailed feedback on functionality, design, accessibility, and overall effectiveness
3. An in-person pop-up event at Concerts in the Park in Transit Square, where staff engaged directly with residents and visitors

The feedback collected through these engagement efforts will inform further refinements to the signage prototypes, enhancing their effectiveness. This report recommends that the City engage a consultant within a year of the pilot's completion to undergo the necessary refinement and develop a comprehensive implementation plan for the VMC Wayfinding Signage system. This plan will include a strategy for the timely installation of signage in coordination with ongoing development.

The full implementation of this refined signage and wayfinding system throughout the VMC is expected to not only improve navigation but also contribute to the area's overall identity and user experience, supporting the VMC's development into a vibrant, accessible, and well-connected urban center.



Figure 75 - Signage Design of VMC Signage and Wayfinding System. Design By: Cygnus Design Group, Toronto.

4.9 VMC Full Parks Master Plan



Figure 76 - VMC Full Parks Master Plan



Figure 77 - VMC Full Parks Master Plan - Perspective, Looking North.

The VMC Full Parks Master Plan presents a vision of an integrated Vaughan Metropolitan Centre where all elements - parks, open spaces, facilities, and circulation networks - are interconnected in meaningful and impactful ways. At its core, the plan envisions a robust park and open space network equipped with facilities designed to meet the anticipated needs of both current and future residents.

Accessibility is a key feature of this vision. The plan ensures that all these spaces are within walking or cycling distance for residents, connected through a

comprehensive network of walkways, multi-use paths, and cycling facilities. To overcome potential barriers posed by roads, the plan incorporates connections both above and below grade to resolve these obstacles.

Ultimately, this Master Plan is a cohesive strategy where each component works in harmony to achieve the project's overarching goals and objectives. The result is a vision for a VMC that is not only well-connected and accessible but also responsive to the evolving needs of its community.











HIGH
407





Phasing & Implementation

5.1 Parkland Acquisition & Development

5.1.1 Parkland Acquisition & Development Approach

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is poised to become one of North America's most densely populated urban areas, with projections of 63,000 residents by 2031 and 128,000 by 2051. This rapid growth demands a strategic approach to parkland acquisition and development, carefully synchronized with ongoing urban expansion.

Securing parkland for current and future VMC residents involves a multi-step process, beginning with land acquisition. Cities can secure parkland through various means, including direct parkland dedication during the development process or payment-in-lieu (PIL) collected from development applications. Once acquired, the city must invest in developing the parkland and installing facilities and amenities. In the VMC, these development costs would be covered by Development Charges (DCs) and Section 37 funds, as described in the following section.

The parkland provision process requires careful consideration of land acquisition costs, park development expenses, and implementation phasing to ensure that green space availability keeps pace with urban growth and development trends while ensuring equitable distribution of parkland throughout the VMC.

This section of the PWMP provides a comprehensive breakdown of the phased parkland acquisition and development strategy. It includes analyses of land acquisition, park development phasing, and the various funding mechanisms available to municipalities to support the expansion of the VMC's park network. Additionally, this section identifies potential funding gaps in the current system, highlighting areas where additional resources or alternative funding strategies may be necessary to meet the city's parkland goals and maintain an adequate level of service for its growing population.

The phasing and implementation strategy for the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan, outlined in the following pages, provides a comprehensive framework for delivering a high-quality, accessible park system in a rapidly densifying urban environment. By balancing land acquisition methods, phasing development, and exploring innovative funding strategies, the City of Vaughan can create a park system that meets the needs of its growing population while contributing to the overall livability and attractiveness of the VMC.

The implementation of this plan will require ongoing commitment, flexibility, and collaboration between the City, developers, and the community. While challenges exist, particularly in terms of funding gaps and the pressure of rapid development, the realization of this park system is crucial for creating a vibrant and sustainable downtown core for Vaughan.

By prioritizing the creation and enhancement of parks and open spaces, the City of Vaughan is making a significant investment in the long-term success of the VMC. These spaces will not only serve as essential amenities for residents and visitors but will also play a crucial role in defining the character and identity of the VMC as a world-class urban center.



Figure 78 - Fareground, Austin, Texas. Design By: Studio dwg., Austin.

5.1.2 Parkland Acquisition Tools

The City of Vaughan employs two primary mechanisms to secure land for future parks in the rapidly growing Vaughan Metropolitan Centre: Parkland Dedication and Payment-in-Lieu (PIL). These tools enable the city to leverage new development for acquiring public parkland, ensuring that urban growth is accompanied by adequate open spaces. By requiring developers to either set aside a portion of their land for parks or provide a financial contribution in lieu of land, Vaughan can strategically plan and secure areas for future green spaces throughout the VMC.

Parkland Dedication

Parkland dedication is a requirement in Ontario where developers must allocate a portion of their development site for public parks and recreational spaces. The amount of land required is typically calculated as a percentage of the total development area or based on the number of dwelling units in residential developments. This practice ensures that as communities grow, there is adequate green space for residents.

Payment-In-Lieu (PIL)

Payment-in-Lieu offers an alternative to physical parkland dedication, particularly useful in scenarios where land provision is impractical or undesirable. This mechanism allows developers to contribute financially to the municipality instead of setting aside actual land for parks. The payment amount is generally based on the market value of the land that would have been dedicated. Municipalities then use these funds to acquire parkland or enhance existing parks in other areas of the community, providing flexibility in parkland planning and development.

5.1.3 Parkland Development Tools

To finance the development and construction of parks in the rapidly growing Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, the City of Vaughan utilizes two key funding sources: Development Charges (DCs) and Section 37 funds. These mechanisms allow the city to leverage new development to create and enhance public spaces, ensuring that urban growth is accompanied by adequate social infrastructure. Together, these tools provide the financial resources necessary to transform acquired land into vibrant, functional, facility-rich park spaces that serve the VMC community.

Section 37 (s.37) Funding

Section 37 of the Planning Act in Ontario allowed municipalities to negotiate community benefits in exchange for increased height and density in development projects.

This funding is crucial for elevating the quality and amenities of parks beyond basic provision. It can be used for features such as:

- Public art installations
- Enhanced landscaping and specialized plantings
- Upgraded play equipment or unique play features
- Community gathering spaces (e.g., amphitheaters, pavilions)
- Specialized recreational facilities (e.g., skate parks, outdoor fitness equipment)

The strategic use of Section 37 funds can significantly contribute to creating distinctive, high-quality public spaces that define the character of the VMC and enhance the user experience. However, it is important to note that recent changes to the Planning Act have phased out Section 37 agreements in favor of a new Community Benefits Charge that no longer includes provisions for parkland enhancements. The City will need to adapt its strategies accordingly.

Development Charges (DCs)

Development Charges play a crucial role in funding growth-related capital costs, including parks and recreation facilities. In Ontario, and specifically in Vaughan, DCs are collected from developers to help pay for the infrastructure required to service new development.

These funds are essential for the basic development of new parks, including site preparation, basic amenities, and standard facilities. However, it's important to note that DCs cannot be used for land acquisition costs or for the enhancement of existing facilities.

The City of Vaughan, like all Ontario municipalities, must carefully balance its DC rates to ensure they adequately fund necessary infrastructure without unduly burdening development, which could potentially slow growth. Regular updates to the City's Development Charges By-law, informed by detailed background studies, help ensure that charges remain appropriate and legally defensible.

5.1.4 Order of Magnitude Class “D” Cost Estimate

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan undertook a comprehensive 30-year analysis of parkland development and construction costs in relation to available city funding sources, as outlined in the previous section. This in-depth review aimed to formulate a strategy for implementing parks alongside urban development while pinpointing potential funding gaps.

Central to this analysis is the use of Order of Magnitude Class “D” cost estimates for park development and construction. This estimation method is well-suited to the planning level of a Master Plan, providing a preliminary but informative financial overview. Typically employed for project screening, feasibility assessment, concept evaluation, and initial budget approvals, Class “D” estimates offer valuable insights with the following key characteristics:

1. **Level of Project Definition:** 1% to 15% of full project definition – This characteristic refers to the amount of detail and specificity available about the project at the time of estimation and is characteristic of projects in their early stages with only broad concepts and general ideas defined.
2. **Expected Accuracy Range:** -20% to -50% on the low side, +30% to +100% on the high side – This characteristic describes the potential variance in the actual costs compared to the estimated costs. The wide range reflects the uncertainty inherent in early-stage planning. Meaning that the actual costs can range between being as much as 50% lower than estimated or as much as 30% to 100% higher than estimated. For example, if a park is estimated to cost \$1 million, it could potentially cost as little as \$500,000 (50% less) or as high as \$2 million (100% more).

The use of this type of estimate is appropriate for a Master Plan like the VMC PWMP because it provides a reasonable basis for long-term planning and budgeting while acknowledging the inherent uncertainties in projecting costs for projects that may

be implemented years or even decades in the future. It allows decision-makers to understand the potential financial scope of the project while recognizing that more precise estimates will be developed as individual park projects move closer to implementation.

The estimates for park construction were based on a breakdown of major cost elements and park assets including site preparation, hard and soft elements, civil and electrical works, basic park amenities and furnishings, and standard park facilities, using current (2024) dollar values. These estimates also included design contingency, overhead and profit as well as consultant fees.

These costs are phased over the next three decades to align park development with projected population growth trends, while balancing the costs with available funding, further discussed in the following section.

It is important to note that these estimates do not account for future inflation or market fluctuations, as attempting to project these factors over a 30-year period would introduce significant uncertainty and potentially reduce the usefulness of the estimates for current decision-making.



Figure 79 - Weigall Oval Precinct, Adelaide, Australia

5.2 Parkland Phasing

5.2.1 2024: Existing Parkland Provisions

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) faces a significant challenge in providing adequate parkland for its growing population. As of 2024, with approximately 7,700 residents, the VMC's Active Parkland provision falls substantially short of both its original vision and the citywide average. Despite the City of Vaughan owning a total of 10 hectares of land within the VMC, only a fraction of this area is currently developed and accessible to residents.

Edgeley Park, a modest 0.34 hectares, stands as the VMC's sole fully operational park with active facilities. The in-progress Millway Linear Park (0.37 ha) will soon complement it, bringing the total developed Active Parkland to less than one hectare, equivalent to 0.09 hectares per 1,000 residents. This provision falls substantially short of the original VMC Secondary Plan vision of 0.8 to 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people and the citywide average of 1.86 hectares reported in the 2018 Active Together Master Plan.

The addition of the constructed TTC Plaza (0.21 ha) and TTC Station Plaza (0.36 ha) area slightly improves the situation, bringing the combined total of developed parkland to 1.28 hectares and the total Active Parkland provision ratio to 0.17 hectares per 1,000 people. However, it is important to note that, while these spaces offer flexible open space for local and city-wide events, they lack the active recreational facilities necessary to fully serve VMC residents' active facility needs.

Several undeveloped, city-owned parcels hold potential for future parkland expansion. These include the substantial North Urban Park (3.18 ha), Edgeley Pond & Park (4.50 ha, non-SWM area), and the future Black Creek Revitalization (BCR) Park West (1.04 ha). The development of these spaces is crucial to meeting the recreational and greenspace requirements of the VMC's growing population.

This current situation underscores the urgent need for accelerated park development within the VMC. Priority should be given to developing existing city-owned parcels to provide much-needed recreational facilities for current and future residents. Additionally, the city should consider acquiring additional parkland to increase available greenspace per capita and bridge the significant gap between current Active Parkland provision and the VMC's growing population needs.

By prioritizing the development of these spaces and acquiring more land, Vaughan can work towards creating a more balanced and livable urban environment that meets the recreational needs of its residents, both current and future. This approach will help the VMC align more closely with its original parkland vision and the broader citywide standards for greenspace provision.

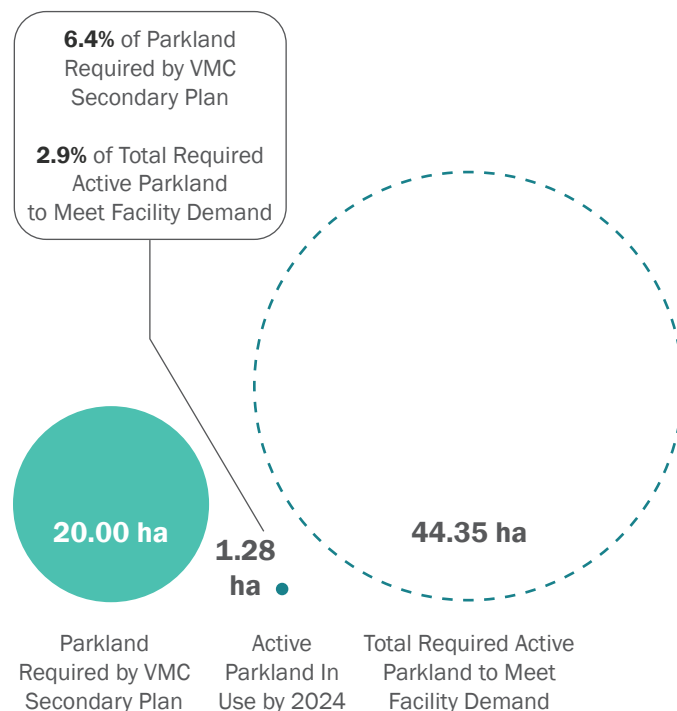


Figure 80 - Parkland Provision by 2024



Figure 81 - Total Parks & Open Space (2024)

5.2.2 2025-2031: Foundation and Early Growth

The initial phase of the plan, spanning from 2024 to 2031, aims to address the critical shortage of Active Parkland in the VMC by targeting the acquisition of 4.91 hectares of new parkland. This expansion will primarily be conveyed through active development applications in the form of parkland dedication (4.72 hectares), with a smaller portion (0.19 hectares) acquired with payment-in-lieu funds. When combined with the existing 10 hectares of city-owned land, this will bring the VMC's total parkland to 14.90 hectares.

The newly acquired 4.91 hectares will include significant parkland additions across the VMC. Three of the four South Urban Park (SUP) blocks will be acquired in their entirety, along with a portion of SUP Block 3. Other notable land acquisitions include two Public Squares along Millway Avenue: Millway Promenade North and Millway Square, as well as White Elm Square and Colossus Park.

Despite a total of 14.90 hectares of city-owned land being available by 2031, the amount of developed parkland in the VMC will total 12.1 hectares, improving the Active Parkland provision rate from 0.17 to 0.19 hectares per 1,000 residents, based on a projected 2031 VMC population of 63,000.

Through this phasing and implementation strategy the Northwest quadrant will see the development of the first two phases of the North Urban Park, introducing the first permanent active park facilities to this long-standing VMC community. Similarly, the Southwest quadrant will see significant improvements in facility allocation with the development of blocks 2 and 4 of the South Urban Park, alongside Millway Square. This quadrant will also benefit from the development of Colossus Park, improving connectivity and

providing additional supporting facilities to the future neighbouring school site. Meanwhile, the Southeast quadrant will gain its first active recreational spaces with the development of BCR Park West, ensuring a more balanced distribution of Active Parkland across the VMC.

These additions will establish the foundation of the VMC's park network, providing essential green spaces within each VMC quadrant as the area continues its rapid transformation. While this represents a substantial improvement from the current situation further efforts will be necessary to meet the growing demands of the VMC's burgeoning population beyond 2031.

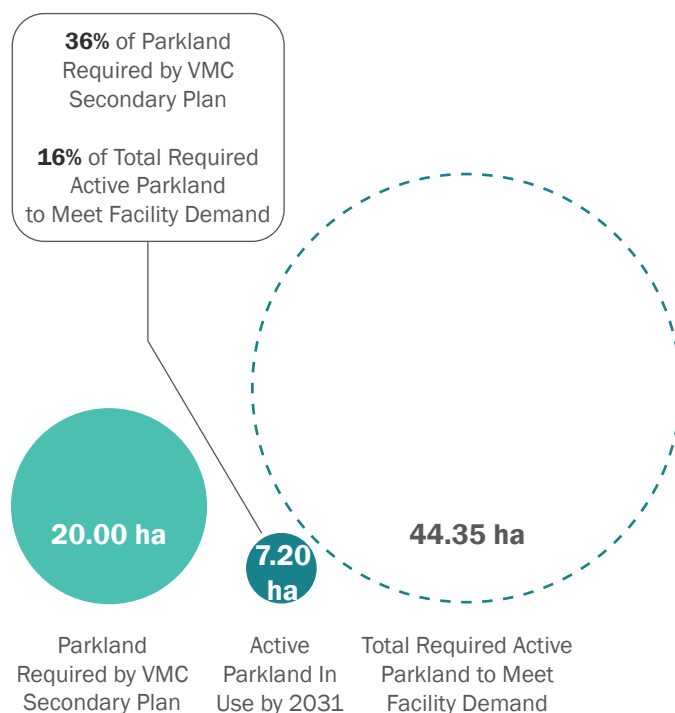


Figure 82 - Parkland Provision by 2031

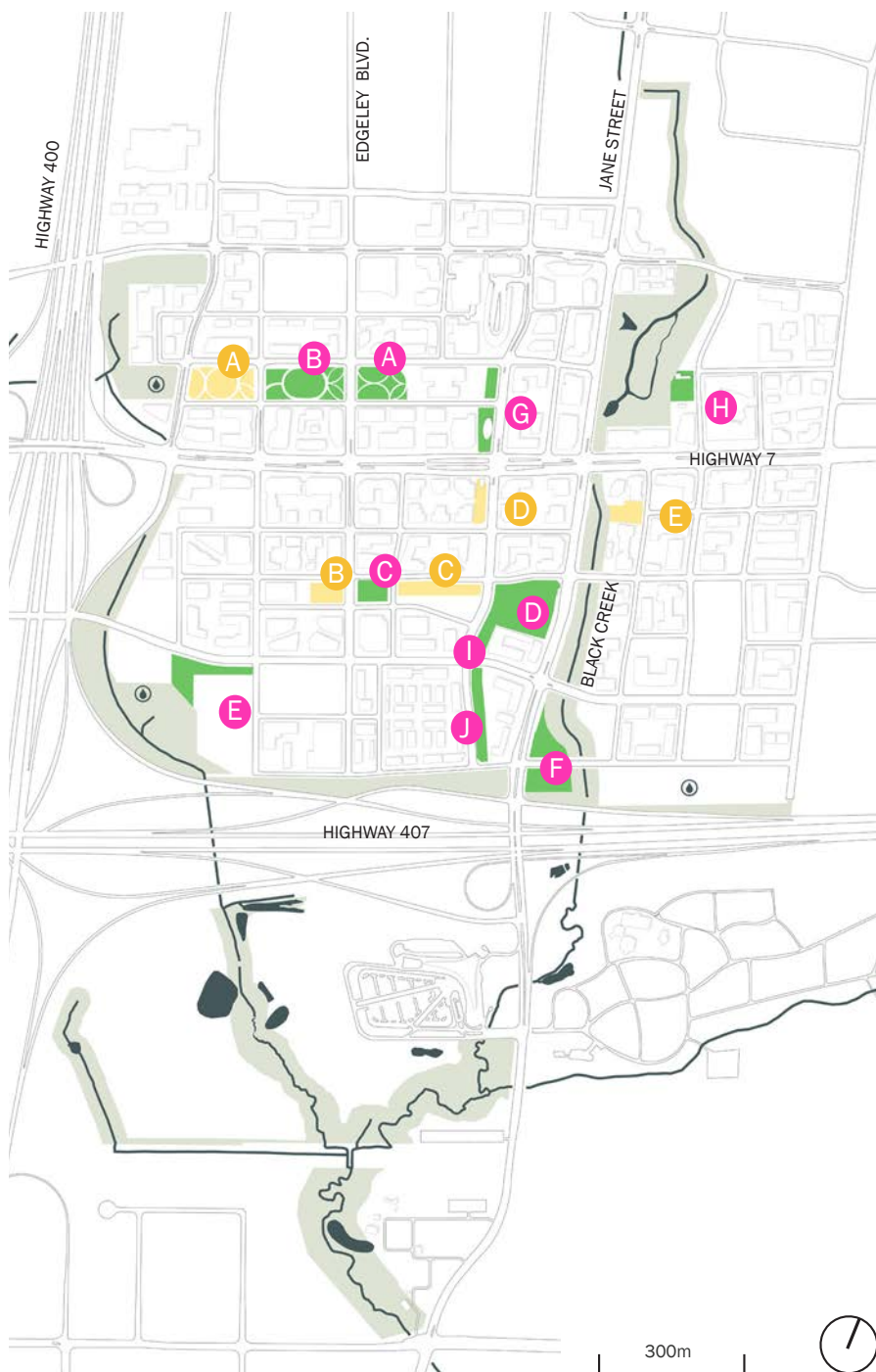


Figure 83 - Total Parks & Open Space in Use (2031)

Active Parkland

- A** U1-1 North Urban Park, Block 1
- B** U1-2 North Urban Park, Block 2
- C** U2-2 South Urban Park, Block 2
- D** U2-4 South Urban Park, Block 4
- E** U4 Colossus Park
- F** U10 BCR Park West
- G** S0 TTC Plaza & Transit Square
- H** S5 Edgeley Park/Strata Park
- I** S8 Millway Square
- J** S9 Millway Avenue Linear Park

Acquired Parkland

- A** U1-3 North Urban Park, Block 3
- B** U2-1 South Urban Park, Block 1
- C** U2-3 South Urban Park, Block 3
- D** S6 Millway Promenade North
- E** S11 While Elm Square

- Environmental Open Space
- Parks & Open Space Open by 2031
- Parks & Open Space Acquired by 2031

5.2.3 2032-2041: Expansion and Diversity

The second phase of parkland development in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) marks a significant leap forward in Active Parkland provisions, adding 10.42 hectares to the area's greenspace inventory. This phase introduces a diverse approach to land acquisition, contrasting with the previous phase's reliance on parkland dedication. Of the new parkland, 2.55 hectares will be purchased through Payment-in-lieu (PIL) contributions, while 0.83 hectares will be obtained through conveyance. Notably, 7.04 hectares will come on-line through a partnership with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), showcasing the importance of collaborative efforts in urban greenspace development.

Key acquisitions and developments during this period will reshape the VMC's landscape. The completion of Millway Promenade South, in conjunction with Millway Promenade North, will realize the Millway Park & Promenade envisioned in the existing VMC Secondary Plan. This will establish a crucial civic corridor comprising four consecutive Public Squares. Additionally, the completion of Block 3 of the North Urban Park and Block 1 of the South Urban Park will significantly advance the key north-south and east-west park connections in the VMC, enhancing urban connectivity and green space accessibility.

The southeast quadrant of the VMC will see substantial parkland expansion and facility allocation with the addition of Freshway Square, BCR Square, and Block 1 of Peelar Park. The development of the previously acquired White Elm Square will further support the projected growth in this area. Extending the reach of parkland provisions, the plan includes the acquisition of the first Public Square in the VMC north expansion area, bringing green spaces to the northern boundary of the VMC.

A notable highlight of this phase is the projected addition of The Village Park, envisioned as a Destination Park for the City. This significant addition will not only increase recreational parkland but also open connections to kilometers of trail and open space networks south of Highway 407.

These diverse additions will collectively enrich the VMC's greenspace network, offering a variety of parkland typologies and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. By the end of this second phase, parkland development is expected to align closely with acquisition, with 24.72 hectares developed out of 25.32 hectares of available parkland.

While this represents a substantial improvement in Active Parkland provision—138% of what the original Secondary Plan required—it's important to note that the total parkland area still falls short of the 44.35 hectares of Active Parkland needed to fully meet facility demands. This underscores the ongoing challenge of balancing rapid urban development with the creation of adequate green spaces in growing metropolitan areas.

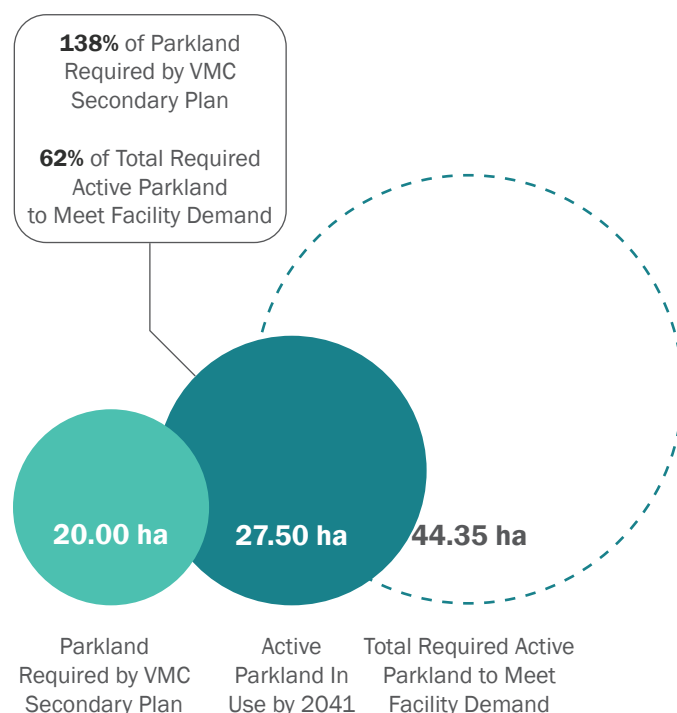


Figure 84 - Parkland Provision by 2041

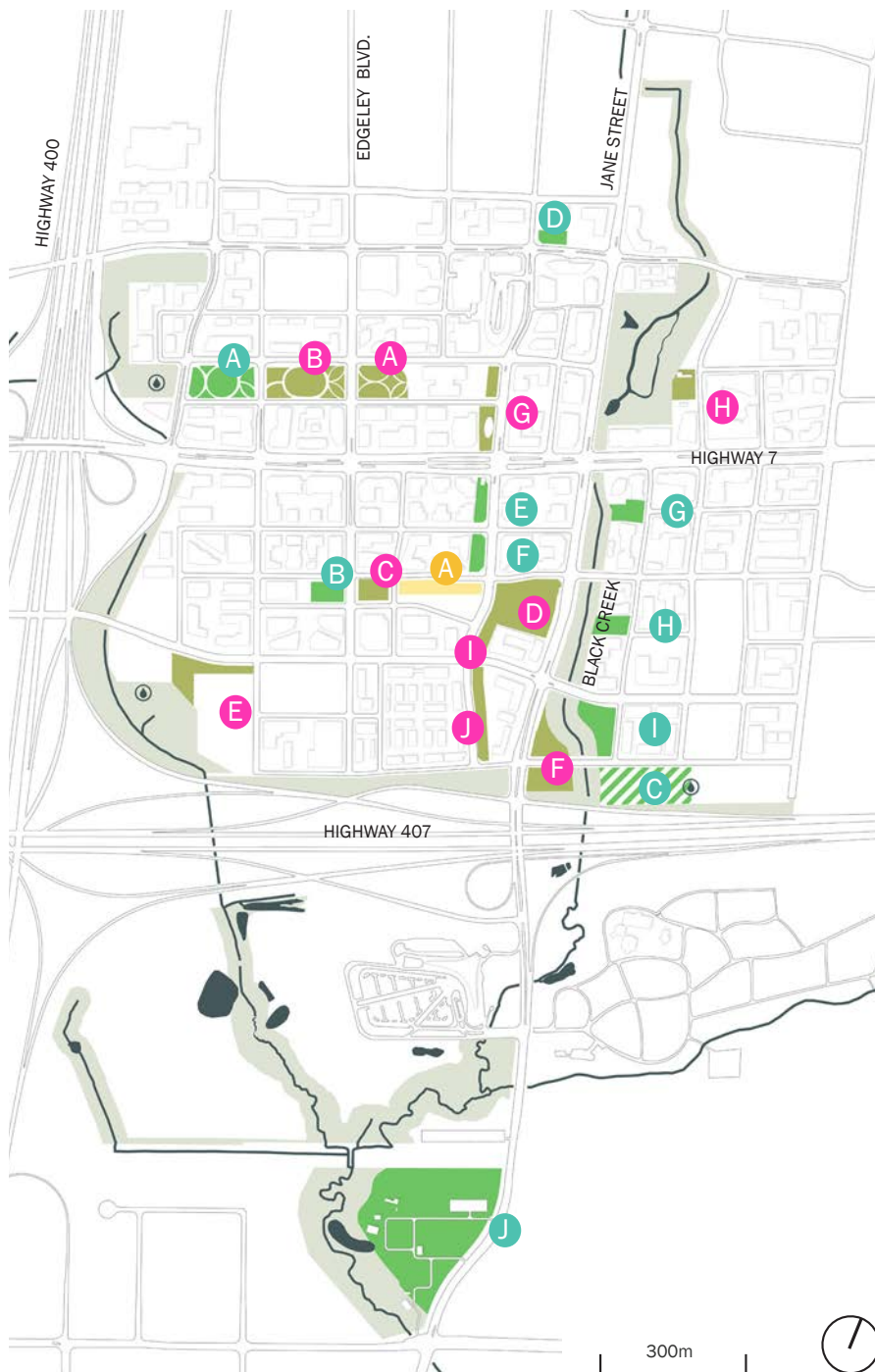


Figure 85 - Total Parks & Open Space in Use (2041)

Active Parkland

- A** U1-3 North Urban Park, Block 3
- B** U2-1 South Urban Park, Block 1
- C** U7 Peelar Park, Block 1
- D** S2 Portage Square
- E** S6 Millway Promenade North
- F** S7 Millway Promenade South
- G** S11 White Elm Square
- H** S12 Freshway Square
- I** S13 BCR Square
- J** D1 The Village Park

- A** U1-1 North Urban Park, Block 1
- B** U1-2 North Urban Park, Block 2
- C** U2-2 South Urban Park, Block 2
- D** U2-4 South Urban Park, Block 4
- E** U4 Colossus Park
- F** U10 BCR Park West
- G** S0 TTC Plaza & Transit Square
- H** S5 Edgeley Park/Strata Park
- I** S8 Millway Square
- J** S9 Millway Avenue Linear Park

Acquired Parkland

- A** U2-1 South Urban Park, Block 3

- Environmental Open Space
- Parks & Open Space Open by 2041
- Parks & Open Space Acquired by 2041
- Area With Potential Underground SWM Facility
- Parks & Open Space Opened before 2032

5.2.4 2042-2051: Refinement and Completion

The third phase marks a further addition of 7.49 hectares of parkland, with a small portion (0.14 hectares) acquired through direct parkland conveyance and the remaining 7.35 hectares purchased through PIL funds.

This phase focuses on completing key elements of the VMC's parkland vision. It includes acquiring the final parcel of the South Urban Park and the last Public Square within the Southwest quadrant. Parkland acquisition extends to the north and south expansion boundaries of the VMC, anticipating increased development at its periphery. A significant addition is the acquisition of the Black Creek Greenway and Black Creek North Square, which will enable the re-naturalization of Black Creek at the VMC's north end. This creates a vital connection between Edgeley Pond & Park and the proposed Black Creek North Park beyond the VMC boundary, enhancing the area's ecological corridors.

Looking ahead to 2051, the VMC is projected to have 32.82 hectares of Active Parkland available for an estimated population of 128,000. This translates to a park ratio of 0.26 hectares per 1,000 people. While this total parkland area represents 164% of what was originally required in the Secondary Plan, it falls significantly short of the 44.35 hectares needed to meet facility demands.

Recognizing this impending deficit, the PWMP has proactively identified potential parkland acquisitions beyond 2051, as shown and described in the following section. This long-term strategy aims to align available greenspace with the VMC's growing population needs, demonstrating the City's commitment to creating a livable, dynamic urban center that caters to the diverse needs of its future inhabitants.

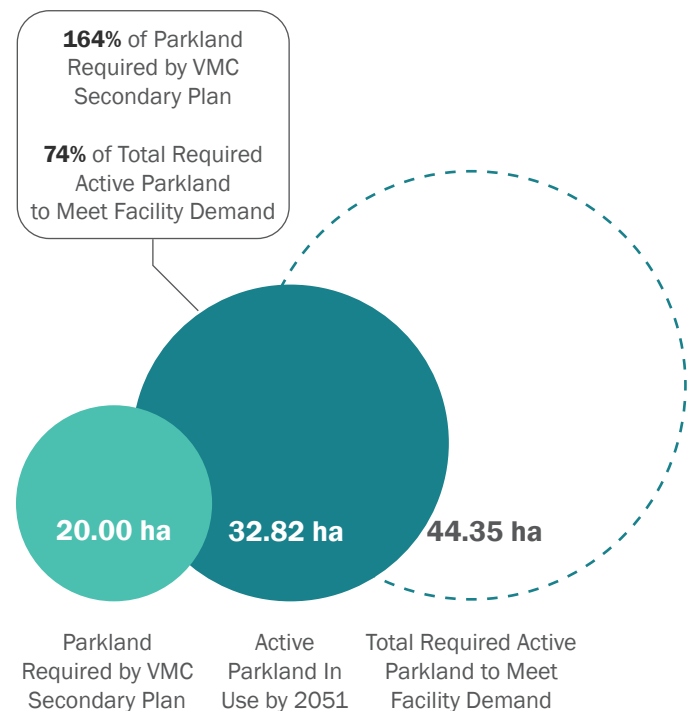
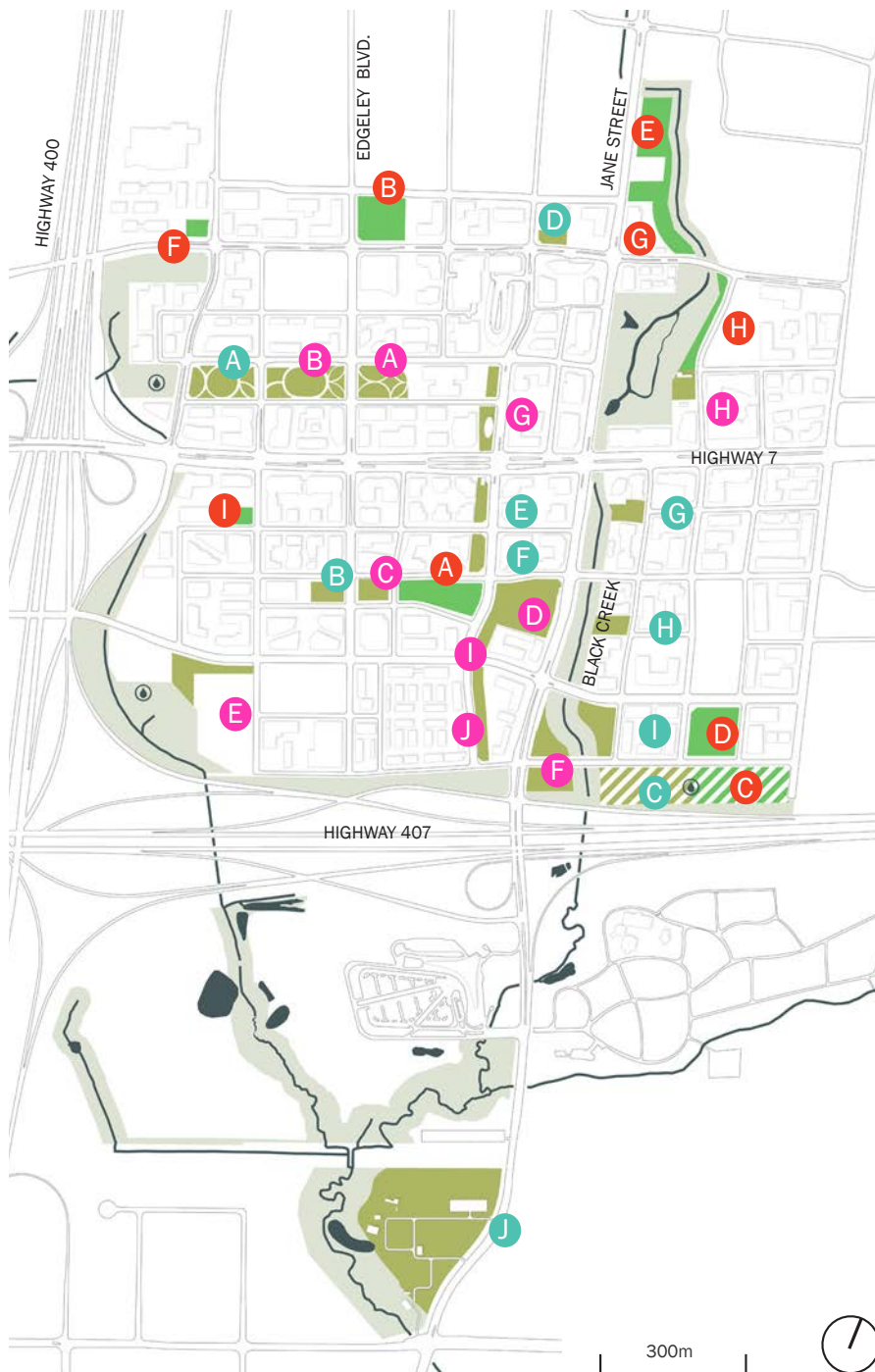


Figure 86 - Parkland Provision by 2051



Active Parkland

- A** U2-3 South Urban Park, Block 3
- B** U3 North Boundary Park
- C** U8 Peelar Park, Block 2
- D** U9 Maplecrete Park
- E** U11 Black Creek North Park
- F** S1 Applewood Square
- G** S3 Black Creek North Square
- H** S4 Black Creek Greenway
- I** S10 Block 1 Square

- A** U1-3 North Urban Park, Block 3
- B** U2-1 South Urban Park, Block 1
- C** U7 Peelar Park, Block 1
- D** S2 Portage Square
- E** S6 Millway Promenade North
- F** S7 Millway Promenade South
- G** S11 White Elm Square
- H** S12 Freshway Square
- I** S13 BCR Square
- J** D1 The Village Park

- A** U1-1 North Urban Park, Block 1
- B** U1-2 North Urban Park, Block 2
- C** U2-2 South Urban Park, Block 2
- D** U2-4 South Urban Park, Block 4
- E** U4 Colossus Park
- F** U10 BCR Park West
- G** S0 TTC Plaza & Transit Square
- H** S5 Edgeley Park/Strata Park
- I** S8 Millway Square
- J** S9 Millway Avenue Linear Park

- Environmental Open Space
- Parks & Open Space Open by 2051
- Area With Potential Underground SWM Facility
- Parks & Open Space Opened before 2042

Figure 87 - Total Parks & Open Space in Use (2051)

5.2.5 Post-2051: Long-Term Vision

The Master Plan recognizes that parkland development and facility provision will likely continue to lag behind population growth, necessitating long-range planning beyond 2051. Post-2051 plans include the acquisition of an additional 18.18 hectares of parkland, including Underpass Park, Commerce Park, and a potential 14.35-hectare North District Park identified within the North Lands.

The timing of these acquisitions is influenced by various factors beyond mere cost considerations. For instance, the 1.88-hectare Underpass Park’s acquisition timeline is contingent on the Colossus overpass construction schedule, location, and land acquisition strategy, as well as uncertainties surrounding local stormwater management approaches and total area requirements. Similarly, Commerce Park’s development is a long-term prospect, as IKEA intends to maintain its current operations without immediate redevelopment plans.

The North Adjacent Lands, currently occupied by active industrial and commercial businesses, are viewed as a long-term, post-2051 prospect for parkland development. Despite the existing land-use challenges, the substantial size and strategic location of these parcels make them crucial to the VMC’s long-term park planning strategy.

Realistically, it is not expected that parkland will fully meet the demands of VMC residents until after 2051. However, the plan envisions that by this time, the City of Vaughan may have acquired the necessary land for adjacent parks in the north, as well as additional lands within the VMC that are currently subject to long-term leases.

To realize the full vision of this Master Plan, the City should prioritize the acquisition of 100% of the required land for Active Parkland by, or soon after, 2051. This ambitious goal underscores the importance of proactive land acquisition and development strategies in creating a balanced, sustainable urban environment that meets the recreational needs of a growing population. By setting this target, the City demonstrates its commitment to long-term planning and the creation of adequate green spaces, even in the face of rapid urban development.

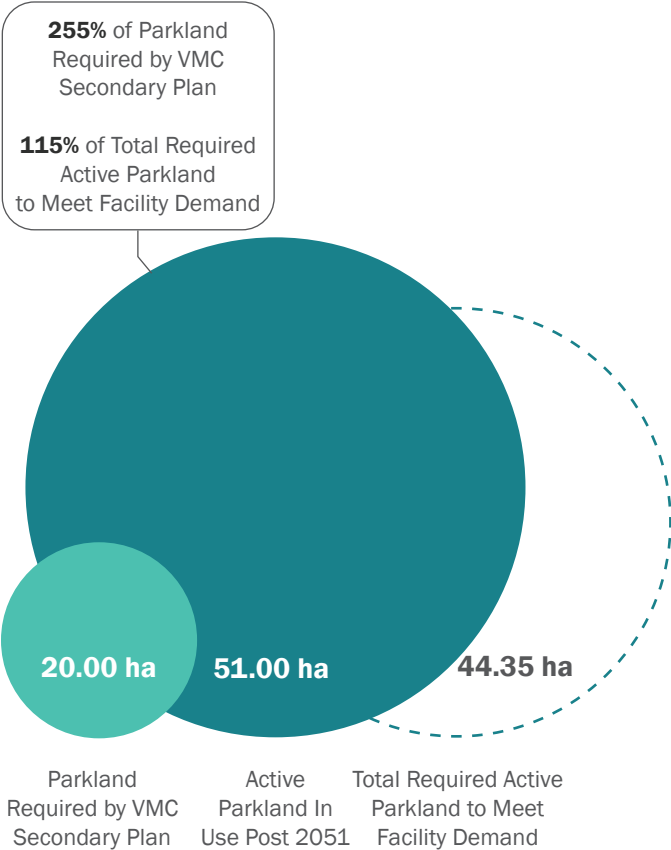
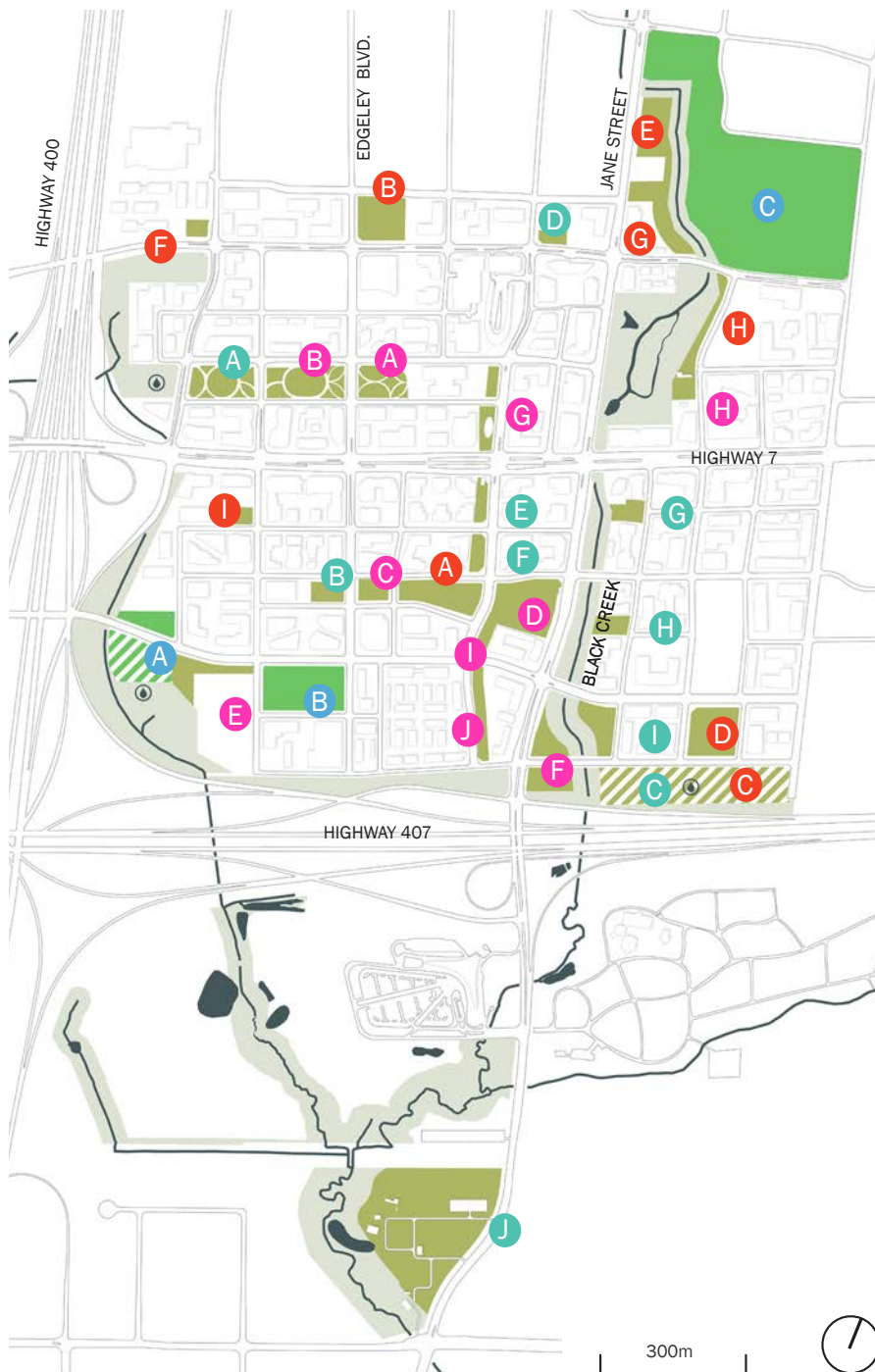


Figure 88 - Parkland Provision Post 2051



Active Parkland

- A U5 Underpass Park
- B U6 Commerce Park
- C D2 North District Park
- A U2-3 South Urban Park, Block 3
- B U3 North Boundary Park
- C U8 Peelar Park, Block 2
- D U9 Maplecrete Park
- E U11 Black Creek North Park
- F S1 Applewood Square
- G S3 Black Creek North Square
- H S4 Black Creek Greenway
- I S10 Block 1 Square
- A U1-3 North Urban Park, Block 3
- B U2-1 South Urban Park, Block 1
- C U7 Peelar Park, Block 1
- D S2 Portage Square
- E S6 Millway Promenade North
- F S7 Millway Promenade South
- G S11 White Elm Square
- H S12 Freshway Square
- I S13 BCR Square
- J D1 The Village Park
- A U1-1 North Urban Park, Block 1
- B U1-2 North Urban Park, Block 2
- C U2-2 South Urban Park, Block 2
- D U2-4 South Urban Park, Block 4
- E U4 Colossus Park
- F U10 BCR Park West
- G S0 TTC Plaza & Transit Square
- H S5 Edgeley Park/Strata Park
- I S8 Millway Square
- J S9 Millway Avenue Linear Park

- Environmental Open Space
- Parks & Open Space Open post 2051
- Area With Potential Underground SWM Facility

Figure 89 - Total Parks & Open Space in Use (post 2051)

5.3 Parkland Acquisition & Development Gaps

5.3.1 Parkland Acquisition Gap

The parkland acquisition strategy for the VMC demonstrates a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to meeting the green space needs of a rapidly growing urban area. The PWMP aims to significantly increase parkland in the VMC to meet the needs of its growing population. By 2031, with a projected population of 63,000, the plan targets 12.1 hectares of Active Parkland (out of 14.91 hectares of city-owned land), resulting in a parkland ratio of 0.19 hectares per 1,000 residents. At full build-out in 2051, with an estimated population of 128,000, the plan envisions 32.82 hectares of Active Parkland, maintaining a ratio of 0.26 hectares per 1,000 people.

While these ratios are lower than traditional suburban standards, they reflect the realities of high-density urban development and the need for innovative approaches to park provision in Strategic Growth Areas. The PWMP compensates for these lower ratios by emphasizing high-quality, multi-functional, densely programmed parks and improved connectivity to larger open spaces and trail networks outside the VMC boundary.

The strategy also addresses the asynchronous nature of land acquisition and parkland development in the earlier phases. Given the trend of increasing land values, the recommended approach is to acquire parkland as early as possible, developing these lands as funds become available while maintaining a sufficient parkland-to-resident ratio. The initial phase (2024-2031) heavily emphasizes land conveyance, capitalizing on ongoing development projects. This strategy was integral to the Master Plan's development, with parkland locations optimized to leverage active development applications for the fastest possible park delivery. Later phases (2032-2041 & 2042-2051) shift more prominently towards payment-in-lieu (PIL) parkland purchases, anticipating a decrease in the availability of suitable land for direct conveyance as the VMC develops.

This strategy allows the City to leverage developer contributions effectively while maintaining flexibility in parkland placement. The increasing reliance on PIL purchases reflects the challenges of acquiring large parcels of land in a densifying urban core and enables the City to strategically locate parks where they will best serve the community. The phased approach also allows for adaptive management, enabling the City to respond to changing demographics, development patterns, and community needs over time.

It must be noted that the VMC's parkland acquisition strategy faces significant challenges in meeting its pre-2051 targets. The plan identifies a total parkland need of 32.82 hectares by 2051, but current projections indicate that only 83% of this goal can be achieved through existing means, namely parkland dedication and PIL. This includes 10 hectares of existing City-owned land, 5.69 hectares to be conveyed through development applications, 5.78 hectares to be purchased through PIL contributions, and 7.04 hectares available through partnership with the TRCA. This leaves a substantial gap of 4.31 hectares without a current funding source.

This shortfall stems largely from recent provincial policy changes, notably Bills 23 and 109. These bills limit the City's ability to secure parkland or receive payment-in-lieu through development applications by capping parkland dedication based on site size rather than vertical density. Consequently, high-rise developments, which introduce a substantial influx of residents, are not required to contribute proportionally more parkland. This creates an imbalance in high-density areas like the VMC, where the provision of parkland is increasingly lagging behind the pace of urban development and where the City's funding tools for parkland acquisition are severely restricted just as the VMC is set for rapid growth.

This situation highlights the pressing need for the City to explore and implement innovative funding strategies, forge new partnerships, and potentially revise policies to bridge this gap. The success of the VMC's vision for a comprehensive and accessible park system hinges on finding creative solutions to secure these remaining hectares, ensuring that green space provision keeps pace with the area's intense urban development.



Figure 91 - Sheikha Fatima Park, Abu Dhabi, UAE. Design By: Cracknell, London.

2024-2031	4.72 ha conveyance, 0.19 ha CIL	4.91 ha
2032-2041	0.83 ha conveyance, 2.55 ha CIL *	10.42 ha
2042-2051	0.14 ha conveyance, 7.35 ha CIL	7.49 ha

*An additional 7.04 hectares may be available through partnership opportunities, such as land owned by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

Figure 90 - Phased parkland acquisition

5.3.2 Parkland Development Funding Gap

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for park development and construction over a 30-year period from 2024 to 2051, divided into three phases. This ambitious plan aims to create high-quality park spaces in a rapidly densifying urban environment, aligning park development with projected population growth while balancing costs and available funding.

The plan found varying levels of financial stability and available funding support across its three phases. Park development costs are significantly front-loaded, with higher expenditures in the first two phases due to the need to establish core park infrastructure earlier in the development process and catch up on active facility provisions to serve the existing and future population.

Funding for these costs relies heavily on Development Charges, which are expected to contribute about 71% of the total cost. This significant reliance on DCs underscores the importance of carefully calibrated DC rates that balance infrastructure funding needs with the potential impact on development pace. The phasing of DC contributions aligns well with the overall cost phasing, suggesting a thoughtful approach to matching funding with expenditure needs over time.

Section 37 funding provides an important supplement for park enhancements. While this funding allows for the creation of distinctive, high-quality public spaces, the transition away from Section 37 agreements to a new Community Benefits Charge system may introduce some uncertainty in future funding availability.

Despite these funding sources, a projected funding gap remains. This gap is not evenly distributed across the phases, with the middle phase (2032-2041)

showing the largest shortfall. This uneven distribution of the funding gap could pose challenges for consistent implementation of the plan over time. It highlights the need for innovative funding strategies, potential public-private partnerships, and possibly the exploration of alternative revenue sources to ensure the full realization of the park system as envisioned.

It is important to note that these projections are based on an Order of Magnitude Class “D” cost estimate, which has a wide accuracy range; regular reassessment and adjustment of both costs and funding strategies will be crucial as the project progresses. This flexibility will be key to navigating the uncertainties inherent in long-term urban development planning and ensuring the successful implementation of the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan.

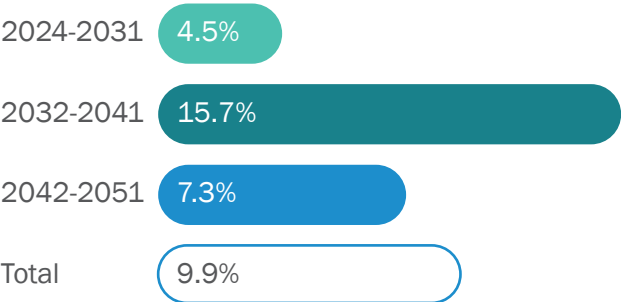


Figure 92 - Phased Park Development and Construction Funding Gap



Figure 93 - Millennium Park, Creve Coeur, Missouri

5.4 Implementation Strategy

5.4.1 Implementation

Section 5.2 outlines the anticipated timeline for Active Parkland to become available to VMC residents. While this plan establishes targets based on available and projected funding, the pace of development is expected to outstrip parkland creation. As the VMC's population grows, the demand for existing parks will intensify. It's projected that the VMC will face a shortage of both open spaces and facilities needed to serve its residents until beyond 2051.

Compounding these challenges are the parkland acquisition and development gaps identified in the plan. The acquisition gap, resulting from recent provincial policy changes, limits the City's ability to secure adequate parkland through development applications. This shortfall in land acquisition directly impacts the quantity and distribution of future parks. Simultaneously, the development funding gap, particularly pronounced in the middle phase of the plan, poses risks to the timely construction and enhancement of park spaces that are critical for the growing community.

To address these multifaceted challenges, the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan implementation strategy is designed to be adaptable and responsive to development rates, funding constraints, and land availability. The strategy recognizes the need for innovative approaches to both acquire and develop parkland in a rapidly urbanizing environment where traditional methods may fall short.

Key strategies and approaches designed to ensure the successful realization of the plan are outlined below. These strategies not only aim to maximize the use of available resources but also explore alternative methods to bridge the identified gaps in parkland acquisition and development funding. The focus is on creating a resilient and flexible framework that can adjust to the dynamic nature of urban development while still progressing towards the ultimate goal of providing adequate, high-quality park spaces for VMC residents.

Phased Approach

The parkland acquisition and development strategy is divided into three distinct phases that align with projected growth in the VMC and with available funding:

1. 2024-2031 Foundation and Early Growth
2. 2032-2041 Expansion and Diversity
3. 2042-2051 Refinement and Completion

In addition to the above phases, the implementation strategy accounts for parkland anticipated to be online in 2024 as a base service level and projects which parkland may become available post 2051.

Prioritization of Quick Wins

This Master Plan and the proposed implementation plan recognize that parkland acquisition and development is a process that is complicated by many factors, including negotiation related to land acquisition, securing funding and adapting to policy changes.

In order to ensure that residents of the VMC gain access to much needed parkland in the short term, the implementation strategy places an emphasis on completing parks on land the City currently owns. This strategy ensures that parkland and facilities can be delivered more quickly and with less risk.

Balanced Acquisition Methods

Where new land is required, the strategy is to strike a balance with acquisition methods, utilizing both land conveyance and cash-in-lieu to secure parkland. This balanced strategy provides the necessary flexibility to respond to development opportunities when they arise.

Exploration of Partnerships

This Master Plan recognizes that parkland provision and operation within the VMC will not solely come from the City. From parkland and funding provision, to facility development park operation, there are numerous potential benefits that can be unlocked through the establishment of external partnerships.

These partnerships can involve private developers, community organizations, and other stakeholders to bridge funding gaps and enhance park programming. Details of how these partnerships can be established and structured are provided in great detail in both Section 6, Park Governance, and in Appendix 5, which presents the Park Governance Report in its entirety.

Adaptive Design

The demands on modern day park spaces are rapidly evolving under social and political pressures. In the VMC, the demands on parkland will continue to rapidly evolve as the VMC grows and its residents demographics become better known and as they change over time.

In order to ensure that parkland is well suited to serve the population of the VMC in the long term, this Master Plan proposes to incorporate flexible design principles in park development wherever possible. This will allow for future adaptation to changing community needs. Flexibility can come in the form of multi-use spaces and courts, open spaces designed for unprogrammed play, and the provision of infrastructure and services that can adapt and be modified to support a variety of programs.

Integration with Broader City Systems

A core component of the Master Plan and its implementation is the connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as transit users, to broader city-wide park systems. This will ensure that residents

who live in the VMC will have the opportunity to visit, explore and use parks and open spaces beyond the immediate VMC community boundaries.

Connections to, through and beyond the VMC should prioritize links to natural areas, adjacent parkland and the broader network of trails that is both existing and planned to connect the City of Vaughan and beyond.

Regular Review and Adjustment

Similar to, and building off of the notion of Adaptive Design, described earlier, the process of regularly reviewing and adjusting parkland plans and programs will ensure that parks adequately serve the needs of the VMC residents. This process of reviewing and adjusting involves continuously monitoring development progress, population growth, demographic profiles and changing community needs. This knowledge will allow the City to adjust the implementation strategy for future parkland however may be necessary.

5.4.2 Maximizing Utility in a High-Density Context

Given the high-density urban context of the VMC and the limited availability of land for parks, it is crucial to maximize the utility and impact of each park space and ensure equitable access to parks across the VMC. There are a number of strategies that can be used to achieve these goals - some of which are outlined in detail below. These strategies build off of the implementation strategies noted in the previous section, and provide a more fine grained level of detail for how parks should be implemented in the VMC.

Park Design and Programming

When designing new parks in the VMC, emphasis should be placed on creating flexible spaces that can serve multiple purposes. This will ensure that investments in parkland are protected and the spaces that are created will serve the diverse, rapidly changing population of the VMC.

In addition to being flexible, parks should be designed to incorporate a robust programming schedule to ensure parks are well-used throughout the day and across all seasons. Park programming can be enhanced and administered by the city directly or through the establishment of innovative park governance structures and the development of relationships with local institutions, businesses, or community groups to provide unique amenities or programming that expand the utility of the space. The programming of parks should be designed to cater to diverse user groups and interests.

Park usage and access patterns should be regularly assessed and programming adjustments should be made to ensure equitable access and responsive open space design as the VMC develops.

Park Distribution and Connectivity

New parks should be phased and developed in locations that ensure all residents are ultimately within a 5-10 minute walk of a green space. This will ensure equal access and opportunity for residents across the VMC to use and enjoy the parks.

In addition to distribution, connecting people to parks will be critical to ensuring their success. As parkland implementation across the VMC will be a long term, phased process, each park must be well-connected to the broader open space network via a comprehensive pedestrian and cycling network. This connectivity will ensure parks are easily accessible from all parts of the VMC, enhancing their accessibility and the perceived size of the network.

Connectivity is especially important during the first phases of implementation when the full provision of parkland will not be available, so access to those parks that do exist must be made safe, convenient and accessible.

Park and Open Space Typologies

Providing a range of park types (e.g., urban parks, public squares, district and destination parks) will help to ensure that varied community needs are met and that a wide range of programs can be facilitated within available spaces.

Until larger parks are acquired and developed across the VMC, cities can leverage alternative spaces to enhance recreational opportunities. School yards, mews, streetscapes, and Environmental Open Spaces offer valuable potential to expand the urban recreational network. By reimagining these existing areas, cities can create a more interconnected and accessible recreational landscape. School yards can serve dual purposes, functioning as educational spaces during school hours and community parks outside of school times. Mews and streetscapes can be transformed into pedestrian-friendly green corridors, providing opportunities for active transportation and casual recreation. Environmental Open Spaces, where feasible, can be carefully integrated into the recreational framework, offering nature-based experiences and educational opportunities.

In the interim, while the formal park system is being developed, there is also a further need for interim privately owned open spaces to help meet the recreational demands of the community.

By implementing temporary park spaces or pop-up parks in areas awaiting permanent park development, as well as in underused surface parking lots slated for future development, access to open space and park-like facilities can be ensured during all phases of VMC growth. These interim solutions provide flexibility and maximize the use of available space while permanent park infrastructure is being planned and constructed.

Park Access and Inclusivity

All parks must be designed to ensure that they are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Additionally, parks must incorporate diverse cultural elements and flexible spaces that can accommodate a variety of cultural activities and events. Incorporating flexible spaces that can accommodate programming and events that encourage and celebrate cultural diversity will ensure that the VMC becomes a vibrant place to live, work and visit.

Regularly engaging with the community virtually and in-person to understand changing needs and preferences and adjusting planning strategies accordingly will further enhance the quality of parks and will ensure that parks are designed to benefit all residents of the VMC.

Ecosystem Services

In addition to traditional park typologies and facilities, it is important that parks be designed to provide maximum environmental benefits, including stormwater management, urban heat island mitigation, and biodiversity support. Ecosystem services are particularly important in densely populated areas because they help counteract the negative environmental impacts of urbanization while

enhancing the overall quality of life for residents. In cases where higher levels of stormwater management are necessary, exploring below-grade storage options can ensure that the surface area of parks remains available for diverse uses, allowing these spaces to achieve their highest and best use while still providing critical environmental functions.

Technological Integration

Utilizing smart city technologies, such as adaptive lighting, interactive play equipment, or augmented reality features, can enhance park functionality, efficiency, safety and long term resiliency. The City should actively seek to integrate technologies into parks that ensure that they stay relevant and adaptive as technology changes. Opportunities for technological integration may be further enhanced through partnerships and relationships developed through a range of alternative and innovative park governance structures, which are outlined in Section 6.

By implementing the strategies outlined in this section, the City can create high-impact park spaces that provide significant value to the community. This value can be unlocked despite size constraints and can result in the creation of a park system that is accessible and beneficial to all VMC residents and visitors, regardless of the phase of development or their location within the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.



Park Governance

6.1 Park Governance Decision-Making Framework

VMC Parks Governance Decision-making Framework

Final Report

Prepared by Park People for the City of Vaughan
October 2021

Figure 94 - VMC Parks Governance Decision-Making Framework, Park People, 2021

In order to guide the decision making process that will be required to both plan for and operate future parks and open spaces in the VMC, Janet Rosenberg & Studio Inc. and the City of Vaughan worked collaboratively with Park People to develop a Park Governance Decision Making Framework. Park People “is a registered, independent, charitable non-profit that supports and mobilizes people to help them activate the power of parks to improve quality of life in cities across Canada.”

The following text is both derived and, in some cases, quoted from the VMC Parks Governance Decision-making Framework final report, prepared by Park People. This section is intended to provide a summary of key points found in the Park People report. For a full understanding of park governance and how its various models can be applied in the VMC, please refer to the original VMC Parks Governance Decision-making Framework report, found in Appendix 5.

6.1.1 Using the Decision-Making Framework

The decision-making framework prepared by Park People can be used to “guide and define conversations about relevant and best-serving park governance models, but it is not meant as a “prescriptive tool”. The framework is intended to assist the City in determining which models can best serve each individual park planned for the VMC.

In order to streamline this process of selecting a model, the framework is summarized in the Decision-Making Matrix, presented in Figure 94. The matrix breaks down, in detail, the risks, rewards

and responsibilities that are associated with the different park governance models that are available. It also provides insight into the details of potential partnerships that may be explored.

The matrix is only one component of a larger tool kit that is included in the broader framework, which also includes a Park Governance Model Scale, Guiding Questions and Case Studies.

6.1.2 Park Governance Model Typologies

1

City-Led

- Municipal Parks Department Led
- No Additional Policies/Structures Required
- Dependent on City Operations Budget

2

Specialized Unit

- Specialized Unit in Parks Department
- Provides Specialized Care & Programming
- Dependent on City Operations Budget

3

Multiple Parties / Partners

- Municipality + External Partner(s)
- Broader Community Reach/Engagement
- Partner Groups can Bring in Funding
- May Involve Competing Interests

4

Hybrid

- Municipality + One non-governmental organization
- Single Partner Brings Clarity & Funding
- City Typically Funds Operations & Maintenance

5

Independent Entity

- NGO or Arms Length Government Entity
- Partner Largely Assumes All Park Operations
- Maintains Coherent Identity & Funding
- Risk of Feeling Private
- Requires Oversight (ex. Board of Directors)

Figure 95 - Park Governance Model Types

Within the Decision-Making Framework, there are 5 Governance Model Typologies that are discussed, as shown above. These typologies and their defining characteristics are listed, in part, above, and are explored in further detail in the full report.

The key difference between each typology is the structure and type of partnership, if any, that is involved. Typologies range from City-led, where total public control is maintained, to Independent Entity, where, aside from an oversight structure, control is entirely within the hands of a Non Profit or Agency

of the City. In evaluating which model to select, the roles, responsibilities and implications for each must be weighed. Further insight into these ramifications is provided in the form of Park Governance Model Scales, which are described in the following section.

6.1.3 Park Governance Model Scales

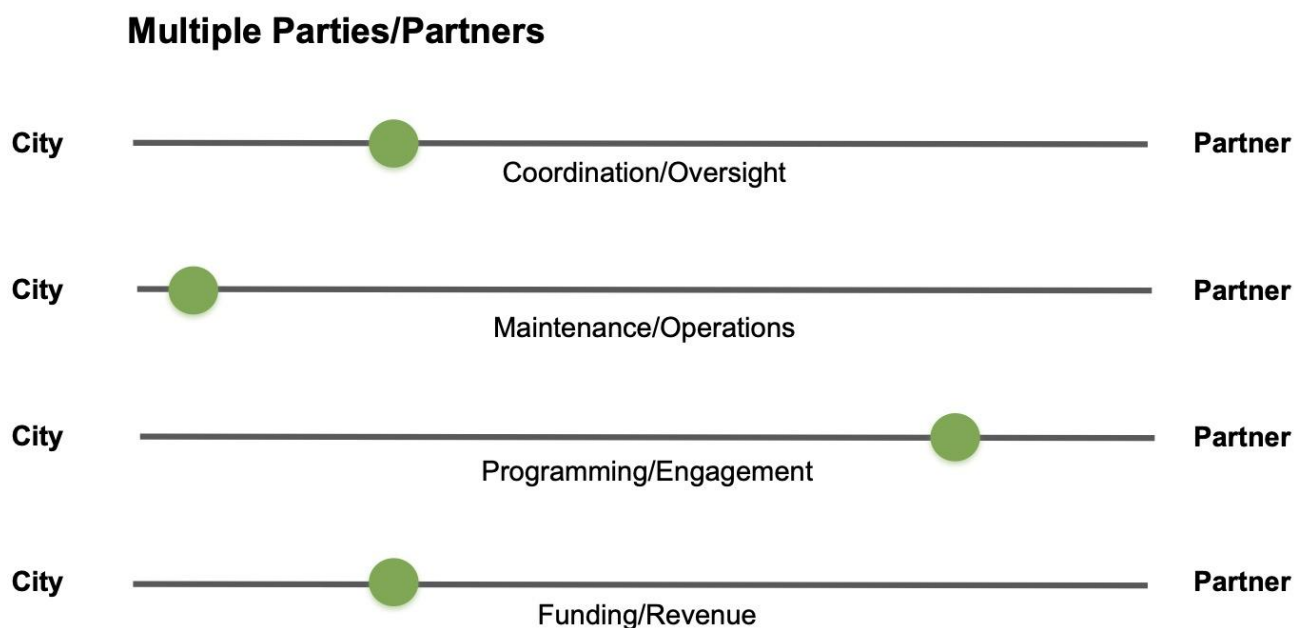


Figure 96 - Park Governance Model Scale - Multiple Parties / Partners

The Park Governance Model Scale presents each Governance Model Typology and provides insight into roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in each. For example, the chart above shows the level of involvement anticipated by the City vs. partner organizations. These scales can be used as a quick check to confirm whether one typology is a clear preference over another. Use of the scales should be paired with a review of the Guiding Questions, found in the full report, which “serve as a discussion guide for City Staff when developing a strategy for park governance and partnerships”.

6.1.4 Park Governance Decision-Making Matrix

PART 1 OF 2

MODEL	PARTIES INVOLVED	ADVANTAGES	RISKS/DRAWBACKS	Coordination/ Oversight
City-led	Municipal parks department	- No special setup or additional policies/structures required. - Maintains total public control.	- Lacks single focus and coherent identity, which may not serve destination and other special-purpose parks in either maintenance needs or programming needs. - Lacks flexibility and locally-responsive benefits of more focused and non-government structures in terms of service delivery and fundraising. - Dependent on city operation budgets for all activities.	Who: City Advantages: - Simplified coordination - no external partners to liaise with. - City able to retain high level of control/influence over park. - Does not require creation of new staff structures within city parks department (compared to Specialized Unit model). Drawbacks: - City must invest staff resources in planning service delivery.
Specialized unit	Specialized unit within municipal parks department	- Dedicated parks team can provide specialized care, programming and focus. - Maintains total public control.	- Requires the creation of a new internal structure. - Potentially requires specialized training. - Lacks flexibility of non-government structures in terms of fundraising. - Dependent on city operational budgets for all activities.	Who: City Advantages: - Simplified coordination - no external partners to liaise with. - City able to retain high level of control/influence over park. - Creation of designated staff team allows for clear delineation of roles and responsibilities as well as a specialized focus on a particular park. Drawbacks: - Requires creation of new staffing structure within parks department. - City must invest staff resources in planning service delivery.
Multiple parties/partners	Municipal parks department + one or more external partners (e.g. non-profits, park friends groups, BIAs, etc.)	- Builds engagement with multiple groups and thus potentially reaches more community members with different types of programming and avenues for participation. - Partner groups can bring their own funding and programming to the park. - Maintains public control over park operations.	- Challenges with coordinating multiple groups and potentially competing interests. - Dependent on city operational budgets for maintenance. - Multiple partners may mean lack of coherent identity for park and confusion amongst the public of who is "in charge."	Who: City or partner organization Advantages: - Roles and responsibilities can be tailored to each partner's strength. - Less formal structure (e.g., licensing agreements, permitting) can allow for flexibility and evolution over time. Drawbacks: - Less formal structure can mean coordinating multiple partners' activities in a space can be complex and time-consuming - need clear oversight structures in place. - Involvement of multiple parties can sometimes create communication challenges and/or lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities as well as competing interests.
Hybrid model	Municipal parks department + one non-governmental organization	- City and partner organization can each bring their own unique strengths. - Single partner reduces administrative burden and creates opportunity for clarity between city, partner organization, and the public on roles and responsibilities. - Partner can bring programming and other expertise as well as provide fundraising not as accessible to a city (e.g., government grants, private donations, sponsorships). - Partner can help provide coherent identity and specialized focus.	- Risk of city and partner clashes if upfront work defining shared values/goals and processes for decision-making are not clarified. - City usually still needs to provide funding for operations and maintenance, though a partner may bring their own funding to top these up.	Who: City or partner organization Advantages: - Roles and responsibilities can be tailored to each partner's strength. - Agreement with single partner can provide decision-making clarity. Drawbacks: - If clear roles/responsibilities are not outlined, can result in overlap, conflicts, and/or confusion in who is ultimately "responsible" for a particular area. - Can be less clear to the public who is in charge of what if not communicated properly.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

Figure 97 - Park Governance Decision-making Matrix

PART 2 OF 2

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES		
Maintenance/ Operations	Programming/ Engagement	Funding/Fundraising
Who: City Advantages: - City can maintain park to city standards. Drawbacks: - Specialized plantings and amenities may require additional training or higher levels of maintenance, depending on the park. - Additional operating budget pressures.	Who: City Advantages: - City can maintain control over identity of the space by curating programming. Drawbacks: - Budget demands and costs of maintaining programming. - Depending on programming, City may not have in-house capacity or expertise (e.g., arts and culture programming).	Who: City Advantages: - Lack of private partnerships helps to maintain public feel. Drawbacks: - Little ability to bring in external revenue--largely funded through municipal parks budget. - Public entity means less flexibility around revenue options (e.g., bringing in private donations, applying for grants).
Who: City Advantages: - Dedicated crew with skills to meet unique maintenance needs of new signature parks. Drawbacks: - May be public perception of VMC parks receiving "special treatment".	Who: City Advantages: - City can maintain control over identity of the space by curating programming. - City unit can create locally-responsive programming. Drawbacks: - Budget demands and costs of maintaining programming. - Operational costs of developing/acquiring in-house programming expertise.	Who: City Advantages: - Lack of private partnerships helps to maintain public feel. - Specialized unit could develop unique fundraising/earned revenue models for the park. Drawbacks: - Largely funded through municipal parks budget. - Public entity means less flexibility around revenue options (e.g., bringing in private donations, applying for grants).
Who: City or partner organization Advantages: - City can retain maintenance responsibilities and maintain park to city standards. - Depending on agreements, a partner may contribute capacity or funding to "top-up" maintenance above and beyond city standards (e.g., for special amenities). Drawbacks: - Regardless of whether operations/maintenance is provided by the city or a partner entity, the city will likely need to contribute to funding.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - City can continue to run city programs in the park. - Partners can deliver locally-responsive and creative programming. - Partners can bring already funded and created programming to a space (e.g., day camps they may run in other parks). - City may not have to contribute funding, but could contribute in-kind (e.g., free or reduced cost indoor/outdoor space). Drawbacks: - Requires coordination by the city otherwise could result in programming conflicts and confusion between parties. - Could create administrative burdens through managing permits and/or licensing agreements for multiple parties. - Potential for lack of cohesive programming plan and park identity.	Who: City and partner organizations Advantages: - Non-profit partners can help generate funding for the park through fundraising (e.g. grant writing) or on-site revenue generation (e.g. concessions). - Fundraising usually goes towards supporting creative, local programming and/or "top-up" maintenance needs. Drawbacks: - Multiple partners and lack of overall structure means fundraising may lack cohesiveness, with each group fundraising for their own activities in the space. - City usually still funding park operations and maintenance through municipal budget.
Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - City can retain maintenance responsibilities and maintain park to city standards, or can contract this to the non-profit partner. - Depending on agreements, a partner may contribute capacity or funding to "top-up" maintenance above and beyond city standards (e.g., for special amenities). Drawbacks: - Regardless of whether operations/maintenance is provided by the city or a partner entity, the city will likely need to contribute to funding.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - Partner can deliver locally-responsive and creative programming. - Single entity can deliver cohesive programming plan and maintain public identity for the park. - City may not have to contribute funding, but could contribute in-kind (e.g., free or reduced cost indoor/outdoor space). Drawbacks: - City may have less control over programming or ability to run city programs in the park depending on agreement. - May lack clarity from the public on who to contact to get involved, depending on how roles/responsibilities are divided between City and partner.	Who: City and partner organizations Advantages: - Single partner retains greater flexibility in pursuing funding sources depending on agreements with the City, such as entering into sponsorship agreements, applying for government and foundation grants, running private giving campaigns, assessment revenues (if a BIA), and other earned income such as concessions and events. - Can contribute in-kind resources, such as space within park buildings. Drawbacks: - Municipal policies around earned revenue, sponsorship, and events could limit revenue generating opportunities of an independent entity. - Could result in an unbalanced private/public feel if an overall framework is not established between City and entity about what is appropriate/allowed. - City still needs to provide base funding, usually for maintenance.

6.1.5 Recommended Next Steps

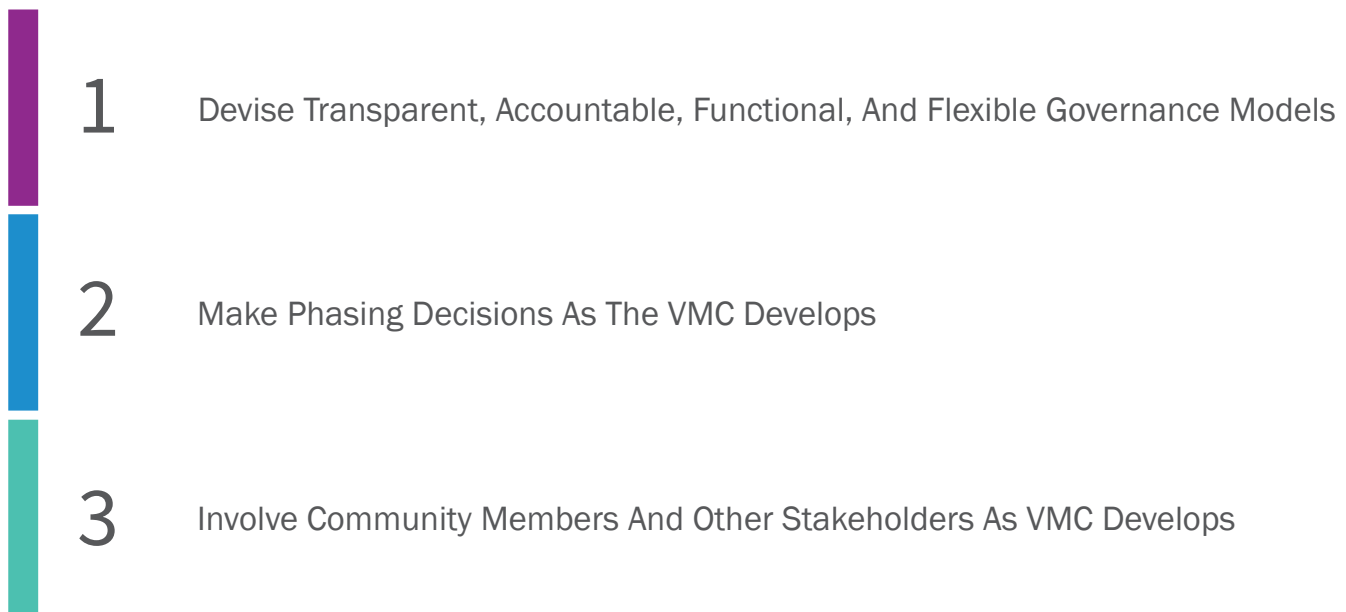


Figure 98 - Park Governance Next Steps

Moving forward, there are three key next steps, described above, that will help the City to develop appropriate governance models for the future parks of the VMC. Specifically it will be important for the City to:

- “Build partnerships by starting with a shared values-based framework that ensures each partner—City, private and/or non-profit—are aligned and expectations are clear.
- Design governance models as two-year pilots and include evaluation criteria (e.g., type/amount of programming, community involvement/representation, financial reporting, maintenance standards, etc.) that allows the City and partners to monitor progress and collectively understand what is working and what may need refreshing.
- Build partnership and governance planning into the park engagement process at the start of new park builds, as the City would with park design and amenities, including consultations with potential partners and the public.

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7

Strategies

7.1 Realizing the Vision of this Master Plan

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan sets out an ambitious vision for a world class network of parks and open space for current and future residents of the VMC to use and enjoy. The plan is built on the understanding that the VMC is on track to become one of the most densely populated urban centres in North America.

In order to achieve the vision set out in the Master Plan and to deliver the parkland and facilities that will be needed by current and future residents, a number of strategies will need to be employed. These strategies, outlined below, are drawn from the many sections that make up the full Master Plan and this report.

It is important to note that the strategies outlined below are not an exhaustive list; in addition to those listed, the City of Vaughan should utilize the entire VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan as a tool and a guide to ensure that the VMC has a vibrant, diverse and accessible network of Parks and Open Spaces for all to enjoy.

Strategy 1: Acquire the Necessary Land

Recognizing that the land required to meet the anticipated facility and parkland requirements of the VMC is larger than the available or planned parkland within the current VMC Secondary Plan Area, the City of Vaughan should **prioritize the acquisition of parkland within the VMC and its expansion area boundary as well as within adjacent lands that are within walking and cycling distance of the VMC.**

Strategy 2: Enhance Connectivity

In order to access potential trails and parkland outside of the VMC, it is critical that the City of Vaughan **ensure that roads do not create barriers to accessing parkland.**

In order to achieve this, the City of Vaughan must **actively work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that a Highway 407 pedestrian crossing is established in the near future and that pedestrian and cyclist connections between the VMC and The Village at Black Creek be improved.**

Strategy 3: Ensure Facilities Reflect Demand and Demographics

When selecting and designing the parkland, open space, and facility distribution, it is essential to consider not only current demographics but also anticipate future community needs. It would be inappropriate to assume that the future VMC population will have the same demands or demographics as the rest of the City; therefore, the City of Vaughan must **consider the different demographics that are projected for the VMC when making decisions related to facility demand, funding, and planning.**

Strategy 4: Create Innovative, Flexible Park Spaces

In order to ensure that VMC parks and open spaces are successful in the long term, the City of Vaughan must **implement innovative, flexible, and adaptive parks and open spaces, the design and programming of which must work to achieve planning goals.**

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Appendices

Appendix 1.0 Demographic Analysis Methodology & Calculations

The following appendix has been extracted from the Assessment Report, but has been included in this Master Plan as an Appendix as the findings were instrumental in shaping the proposed parks and facilities presented in this Master Plan. For a more full understanding of the background analysis that was conducted prior to the creation of this Master Plan, it is recommended that the Assessment Report be read in its entirety.

With the majority of the lands within the VMC yet to be developed, it was not possible to conduct a detailed review of the demographics of the VMC. In order to facilitate an assessment of planned facilities, parks and open spaces, a projected demographic for the VMC had to be established.

Understanding the projected demographics of the VMC was critical for understanding not only how much park space would be required, but also which facility types will be needed and how many must be built. The process for establishing a projected population and demographic make up for the VMC is described in detail on the following pages.

Step 1 – Demographic Analysis

1. VMC development trends and projections (provided by City of Vaughan) were analyzed
 - a. Key trends were identified, including projected unit mixes, proportion of units that will be in towers, and the rate of anticipated development (i.e. how long is the build out anticipated to take).
 - b. We found that:
 - i. For Bedroom Counts:
 1. 0% of proposed / anticipated units will have No Bedrooms
 2. 56% of proposed / anticipated units will be 1 Bedroom
 3. 42% of proposed / anticipated units will be 2 Bedroom
 4. 2% of proposed / anticipated units will be 3 Bedroom
 5. 0% of proposed / anticipated units will be 4 or more Bedroom
 - ii. For change in population over a short period of time, population is expected to increase by nearly 100% compared to existing conditions.
 - iii. For type of buildings:
 - 1.98% of new units will be in buildings over 5 storeys
 - c. To summarize – VMC is projected to be a fast growing, tower dominant, 1 & 2 Bedroom community
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 - i. For Bedroom Counts:
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 - ii. For change in population over a short period of time, population is expected to increase by nearly 100% compared to existing conditions.
 - iii. For type of buildings:
 - 1.98% of new units will be in buildings over 5 storeys
 - c. To summarize – VMC is projected to be a fast growing, tower dominant, 1 & 2 Bedroom community
2. Google Earth satellite imagery was used to identify tower dominant neighbourhoods in relatively similar settings

a. Census information for the identified areas were obtained from Stats Canada for both 2011 and 2016

b. Census information was used to confirm that the selected neighbourhoods matched the profile of VMC (fast growing (2011-2016), 1 and 2 bedroom dominant and vast majority of units in buildings over 5 storeys.)

c. 8 locations that most closely aligned with VMC development trends were selected:

i. Highway 401 and Kennedy Road (North East Corner), Humber Bay Shores, City Place, Downtown Markham, Sheppard Ave E, between Leslie Street and Bayview Avenue and Highway 401, Kipling and Dundas (South West Corner), Yonge and Finch (South East Corner) and Yonge and Sheppard (North East Corner)

3. Population / Demographic information for each of the selected locations was downloaded from Stats Canada and analyzed

a. Statistics analyzed included age, immigrant population, bedroom count per unit, and percent of dwellings in buildings over 5 storeys.

4. Population / Demographic information was also analyzed for the entire City of Toronto and City of Vaughan to set an average benchmark against which the growth areas could be contrasted

a. It was found that the selected growth areas had a distinct demographic when compared to the average demographics of both Toronto and Vaughan.

b. Some notable trends include:

i. Similar number of children aged 0-4 in growth

centres when compared to city wide averages

ii. Significantly Less people aged 5-19 in growth centres when compared to city wide averages

iii. Similar number of adults aged 20-24 in growth centres when compared to city wide averages

iv. Significantly more people aged 25-39 in growth centres when compared to city wide averages

v. Less people aged 40-59 in growth centres when compared to city wide averages

vi. Similar but lower number of people aged 65+ in growth centres when compared to city wide averages

c. In summary, the growth centres are primarily home to young adults, many of which fall outside of the age range that is typical for most organized sports facilities (based on ATMP identified user groups and “youth” participants).

5. Age group demographic data for growth centres was averaged to identify a typical or anticipated population

a. A typical percentage for each age bracket was identified, which was then applied to the anticipated population that has been projected for VMC.

b. It is our hypothesis that this approach is flexible and can be applied to various population projections as long as the base trends remain the same (i.e. one and two bedroom, fast growing, tower dominant).

Step 2 – Facility Projections

1. The City of Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan was reviewed to understand participation rates and ages for various sports and activities.
2. Where no participation rate was provided, facility provision per resident or per age bracket was used.
3. Facility provision rates were then applied against their relevant, anticipated age groups that were identified during the previous demographic analysis step.
4. The typical area for each facility type was multiplied by the total number of anticipated facilities in order to generate a park land requirement, dedicated entirely to facility provision.

Summary

The above process identified areas that are similar in nature to what VMC will become from a built form perspective.

These areas were found to have a consistent and, therefore, predictable demographic.

This typical demographic was applied to the VMC's anticipated population.

Facility provision rates identified in the Active Together Master Plan were applied to the anticipated demographic makeup of VMC which resulted in an anticipated facility and park land requirement.

The below table shows the population and residential unit characteristics that were pulled from 2016 Statistics Canada data. This information was used to identify potential trends and commonalities between areas of growth.

Population & Residential Dwelling Unit Characteristics in Observed Areas of Growth										
	City of Vaughan	Toronto CMA	HWY 401 & Kennedy (NE)	Humber Bay Shores	City Place	Downtown Markham	Sheppard - Bayview to Leslie (S)	Kipling & Dundas (SW)	Yonge and Finch (SE)	Yonge and Sheppard (NE)
2016 Population	306,233	5,928,040	3,987	11,390	11,658	6,141	9,133	6,045	11,479	7,035
Change in population 2011-2016	6.22%	6.18%	161.61%	117.53%	97.23%	77.90%	72.91%	43.11%	22.05%	12.09%
Immigrants	140,960	2,705,550	2,405	4,565	4,345	3,700	5,405	2,780	7,040	4,445
Non-Immigrants	159,300	3,020,405	1,250	6,360	6,010	1,965	2,680	2,830	3,065	1,710
Percentage Population Immigrants	46.03%	45.64%	60.32%	40.08%	37.27%	60.25%	59.18%	45.99%	61.33%	63.18%
Percent of Dwellings in Buildings over 5 Storeys	10.40%	29.35%	89.10%	99.14%	99.06%	79.70%	87.76%	94.25%	77.93%	98.36%
No Bedrooms	145	24,165	10	55	100	30	55	25	235	80
1 Bedroom	5,120	384,275	550	3,530	4,240	1,455	2,940	1,220	1,885	1,230
2 Bedroom	9,200	452,930	820	3,095	2,110	870	1,550	1,630	2,440	1,775
3 Bedroom	28,455	627,365	400	295	380	375	190	160	650	255
4 or More Bedroom	51,330	647,170	65	35	50	295	90	75	370	0
No Bedrooms (%)	0.15%	1.13%	0.51%	0.78%	1.45%	1.01%	1.14%	0.80%	3.96%	2.38%
1 Bedroom (%)	5.43%	17.99%	28.00%	50.32%	61.63%	48.83%	61.00%	38.98%	31.73%	36.61%
2 Bedroom (%)	9.76%	21.21%	41.75%	44.12%	30.67%	29.19%	32.16%	52.08%	41.07%	52.83%
3 Bedroom (%)	30.19%	29.37%	20.37%	4.21%	5.52%	12.58%	3.94%	5.11%	10.94%	7.59%
4 or More Bedroom (%)	54.46%	30.30%	3.31%	0.50%	0.73%	9.90%	1.87%	2.40%	6.23%	0.00%

The below tables show the count and percentage of each age bracket that comprises the total population of the areas of growth that were studied. The percentage that each age bracket represents was used to establish a profile for a typical area of growth, which was then applied to the projected population of the VMC. The projected population of each age

bracket was used in conjunction with the City of Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan to determine potential projected facility demand in the VMC.

	Age Breakdown (Count)										
	City of Vaughan	Toronto CMA	HWY 401 & Kennedy (NE)	Humber Bay Shores	City Place	Downtown Markham	Sheppard - Bayview to Leslie (S)	Kipling & Dundas (SW)	Yonge and Finch (SE)	Yonge and Sheppard (NE)	
0 to 19 years	78810	1352135	685	885	1050	895	1095	675	1455	1020	
0 to 14 years	57525	985615	515	695	785	685	855	530	980	695	
0 to 4 years	16265	310070	285	340	420	330	410	305	480	320	
5 to 9 years	19965	338320	125	185	220	190	260	135	305	210	
10 to 14 years	21300	337220	105	165	150	160	190	95	200	175	
15 to 64 years	205235	4083850	3140	9085	10470	4620	7095	4660	8145	5300	
15 to 19 years	21280	366525	170	195	260	215	235	140	470	315	
20 to 24 years	20285	411945	355	650	1585	455	680	355	1105	590	
25 to 29 years	17105	424345	555	1685	3370	890	1370	775	1305	835	
30 to 34 years	16825	419845	575	1765	2350	760	1475	910	1255	825	
35 to 39 years	19430	406175	375	1170	1090	500	985	650	885	580	
40 to 44 years	23345	414490	220	795	565	330	655	455	655	450	
45 to 49 years	25440	440145	250	700	395	340	500	375	580	470	
50 to 54 years	24480	460465	245	770	335	370	445	350	655	475	
55 to 59 years	20805	407175	200	740	300	415	395	355	620	410	
60 to 64 years	16250	332740	195	620	210	340	360	300	620	345	
65 years and over	43470	858580	340	1610	400	835	1180	855	2350	1035	
65 to 69 years	14645	280910	145	545	160	290	310	255	620	290	
70 to 74 years	9645	197490	65	430	105	185	205	160	465	225	
75 to 79 years	8165	151925	65	285	65	145	185	160	420	215	
80 to 84 years	5680	113220	35	185	50	100	220	125	375	150	
85 years and over	5340	115030	25	170	25	115	265	165	465	155	
85 to 89 years	3335	72340	15	125	20	60	150	85	285	110	
90 to 94 years	1585	33400	5	40	5	40	95	55	145	40	
95 to 99 years	375	8030	0	5	0	10	15	15	25	5	
100 years and over	45	1270	0	0	0	5	0	5	10	0	

Age Breakdown (Percentage)

	City of Vaughan	Toronto CMA	HWY 401 & Kennedy (NE)	Humber Bay Shores	City Place	Downtown Markham	Sheppard - Bayview to Leslie (S)	Kipling & Dundas (SW)	Yonge and Finch (SE)	Yonge and Sheppard (NE)
0 to 19 years	25.74%	22.81%	17.18%	7.77%	9.01%	14.57%	11.99%	11.17%	12.68%	14.50%
0 to 14 years	18.78%	16.63%	12.92%	6.10%	6.73%	11.15%	9.36%	8.77%	8.54%	9.88%
0 to 4 years	5.31%	5.23%	7.15%	2.99%	3.60%	5.37%	4.49%	5.05%	4.18%	4.55%
5 to 9 years	6.52%	5.71%	3.14%	1.62%	1.89%	3.09%	2.85%	2.23%	2.66%	2.99%
10 to 14 years	6.96%	5.69%	2.63%	1.45%	1.29%	2.61%	2.08%	1.57%	1.74%	2.49%
15 to 64 years	67.02%	68.89%	78.76%	79.76%	89.81%	75.23%	77.69%	77.09%	70.96%	75.34%
15 to 19 years	6.95%	6.18%	4.26%	1.71%	2.23%	3.50%	2.57%	2.32%	4.09%	4.48%
20 to 24 years	6.62%	6.95%	8.90%	5.71%	13.60%	7.41%	7.45%	5.87%	9.63%	8.39%
25 to 29 years	5.59%	7.16%	13.92%	14.79%	28.91%	14.49%	15.00%	12.82%	11.37%	11.87%
30 to 34 years	5.49%	7.08%	14.42%	15.50%	20.16%	12.38%	16.15%	15.05%	10.93%	11.73%
35 to 39 years	6.34%	6.85%	9.41%	10.27%	9.35%	8.14%	10.79%	10.75%	7.71%	8.24%
40 to 44 years	7.62%	6.99%	5.52%	6.98%	4.85%	5.37%	7.17%	7.53%	5.71%	6.40%
45 to 49 years	8.31%	7.42%	6.27%	6.15%	3.39%	5.54%	5.47%	6.20%	5.05%	6.68%
50 to 54 years	7.99%	7.77%	6.14%	6.76%	2.87%	6.03%	4.87%	5.79%	5.71%	6.75%
55 to 59 years	6.79%	6.87%	5.02%	6.50%	2.57%	6.76%	4.32%	5.87%	5.40%	5.83%
60 to 64 years	5.31%	5.61%	4.89%	5.44%	1.80%	5.54%	3.94%	4.96%	5.40%	4.90%
65 years and over	14.20%	14.48%	8.53%	14.14%	3.43%	13.60%	12.92%	14.14%	20.47%	14.71%
65 to 69 years	4.78%	4.74%	3.64%	4.78%	1.37%	4.72%	3.39%	4.22%	5.40%	4.12%
70 to 74 years	3.15%	3.33%	1.63%	3.78%	0.90%	3.01%	2.24%	2.65%	4.05%	3.20%
75 to 79 years	2.67%	2.56%	1.63%	2.50%	0.56%	2.36%	2.03%	2.65%	3.66%	3.06%
80 to 84 years	1.85%	1.91%	0.88%	1.62%	0.43%	1.63%	2.41%	2.07%	3.27%	2.13%
85 years and over	1.74%	1.94%	0.63%	1.49%	0.21%	1.87%	2.90%	2.73%	4.05%	2.20%
85 to 89 years	1.09%	1.22%	0.38%	1.10%	0.17%	0.98%	1.64%	1.41%	2.48%	1.56%
90 to 94 years	0.52%	0.56%	0.13%	0.35%	0.04%	0.65%	1.04%	0.91%	1.26%	0.57%
95 to 99 years	0.12%	0.14%	0.00%	0.04%	0.00%	0.16%	0.16%	0.25%	0.22%	0.07%
100 years and over	0.01%	0.02%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.08%	0.00%	0.08%	0.09%	0.00%

The below tables show the results of this study and establish a projected population and demographic for the VMC. The projected population of each age bracket was used in conjunction with the City of Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan to determine potential projected facility demand in the VMC.

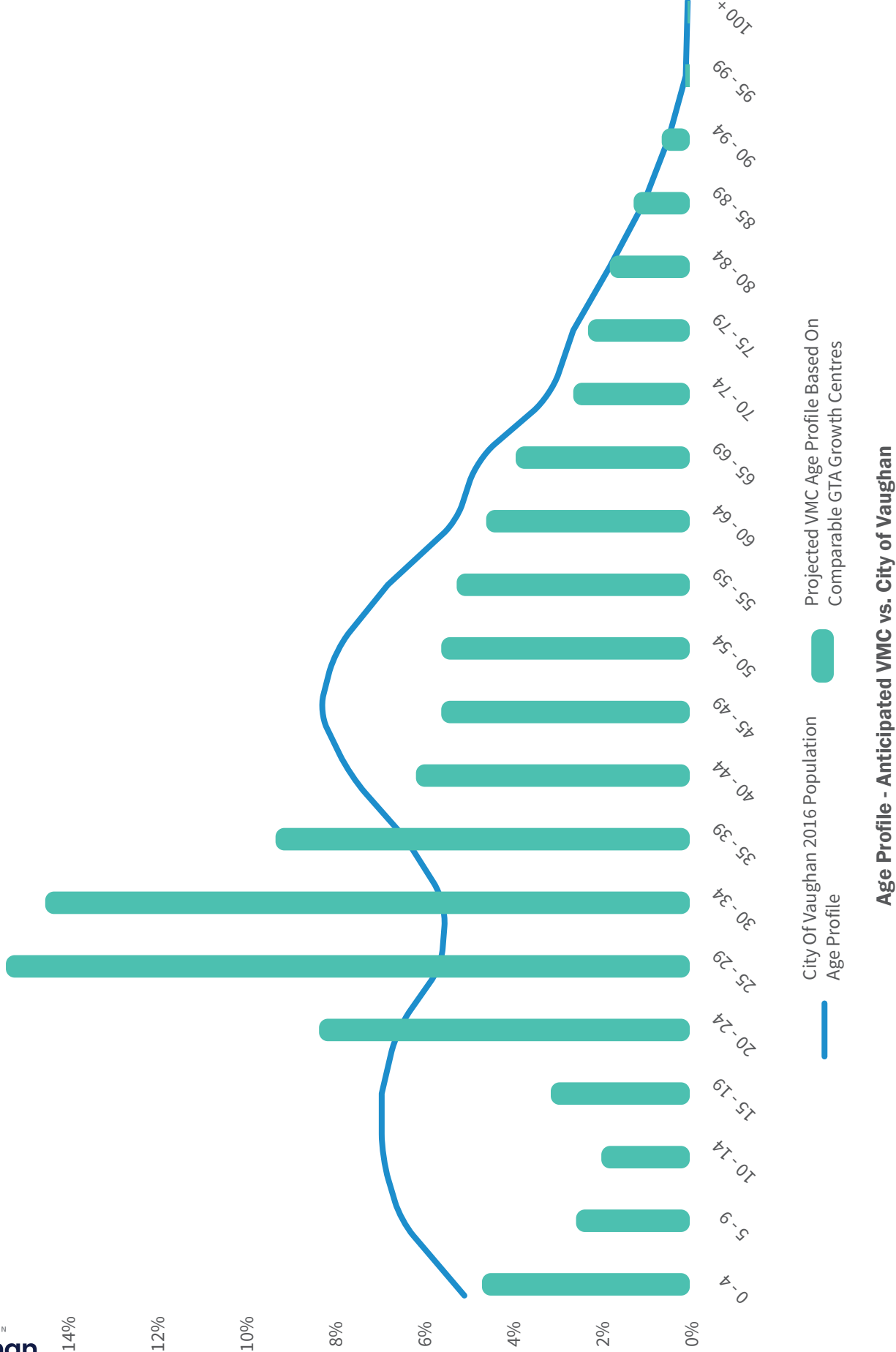
VMC Projected Population (Planned / As of Right)		Parkland Per 1000 Based on SP
Anticipated VMC Population 2031	25,000	0.80
Anticipated VMC Population (Full Build)	50,000	0.40
As of Right Population (Full Build)	72,000	0.28

VMC Projected Parkland (Actual / Observed Trend)		Parkland Per 1000 Based on SP
Anticipated VMC Population 2031	63,366	0.32
Anticipated VMC Population (Full Build)	127,627	0.16

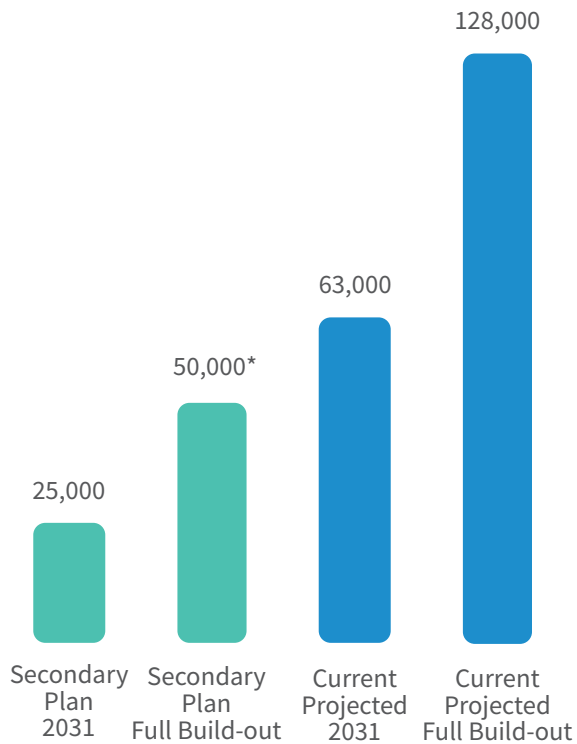
VMC Planned Parkland (ha)		Parkland Per 1000 Based on Anticipated Full Build Population of 127,627
Secondary Plan Required Parkland	20	0.16
Currently Planned Parkland	17.6	0.14
Planned Under VMC PWMP (Original VMC Boundary)	22.01	0.17
Planned Under VMC PWMP (Original VMC Boundary + SP Expansion Areas)	34.79	0.27
Planned Under VMC PWMP (VMC + SP Expansion Areas + Beyond VMC)	73.54	0.58

Analysis & Trends				
Average Age Distribution for Apartment Dominant Communities Growing Faster than City Wide Average	City of Vaughan Population By Age Group 2016	Difference Between Typical Growth Centre and City of Vaughan	Anticipated VMC Population By Age Group 2031	Anticipated VMC Population By Age Group (Full Build)
12.36%	25.74%	-13.38%	7,831	15,772
9.18%	18.78%	-9.60%	5,818	11,718
4.67%	5.31%	-0.64%	2,960	5,963
2.56%	6.52%	-3.96%	1,621	3,264
1.98%	6.96%	-4.97%	1,256	2,530
78.08%	67.02%	11.06%	49,475	99,649
3.15%	6.95%	-3.80%	1,994	4,015
8.37%	6.62%	1.74%	5,303	10,680
15.40%	5.59%	9.81%	9,756	19,650
14.54%	5.49%	9.05%	9,213	18,556
9.33%	6.34%	2.99%	5,914	11,911
6.19%	7.62%	-1.43%	3,922	7,900
5.59%	8.31%	-2.71%	3,545	7,140
5.62%	7.99%	-2.38%	3,558	7,167
5.28%	6.79%	-1.51%	3,348	6,744
4.61%	5.31%	-0.70%	2,921	5,884
12.74%	14.20%	-1.45%	8,074	16,263
3.96%	4.78%	-0.83%	2,507	5,050
2.68%	3.15%	-0.47%	1,700	3,423
2.30%	2.67%	-0.36%	1,460	2,942
1.80%	1.85%	-0.05%	1,143	2,303
2.01%	1.74%	0.27%	1,275	2,567
1.21%	1.09%	0.13%	770	1,550
0.62%	0.52%	0.10%	392	790
0.11%	0.12%	-0.01%	72	145
0.03%	0.01%	0.02%	20	40

The below figure and figures on the next page show the age profile of VMC/City of Vaughan, the population projection of VMC, as well as the population density of VMC compared to representative areas in City of Toronto and New York City.

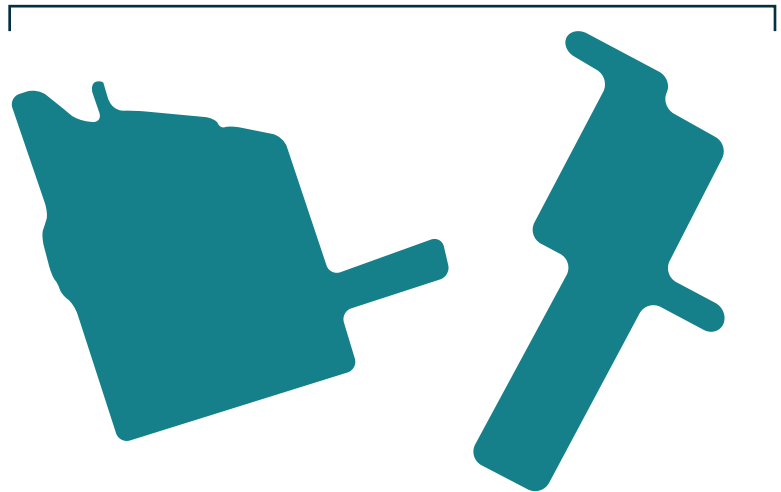


VMC Resident Population Projections



*Revised to 72,000 in 2017.

Urban Areas with Greatest Population Density (Residents per hectare - not to scale)



210

Canada

St. Jamestown, Toronto

684

United States

Upper East Side, New York

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre



640

Canada

VMC, Vaughan

Appendix 2.0 Facility Demand & Analysis

The following appendix has been extracted from the Assessment Report, but has been included in this Master Plan as an Appendix as the findings were instrumental in shaping the proposed parks and facilities presented in this Master Plan. For a more full understanding of the background analysis that was conducted prior to the creation of this Master Plan, it is recommended that the Assessment Report be read in its entirety. Note that figures in this Appendix have been updated to align with the current Master Plan.

With the majority of the lands within the VMC yet to be developed, it was not possible to conduct a detailed review of the demographics of the VMC. In order to facilitate an assessment of planned facilities, parks and open spaces, a projected demographic for the VMC had to be established.

Understanding the projected demographics of the VMC was critical for understanding not only how much park space would be required, but also which facility types will be needed and how many must be built. The process for establishing a projected population and demographic make up for the VMC is described in detail on the following pages.

Step 1 – Demographic Analysis

1. In order to understand facility demand, the potential future demographics of the VMC were projected and analyzed using Statistics Canada data and active development application information provided by the City of Vaughan. The process for establishing the projected population of the VMC is outlined in Appendix E of the Assessment Report - Demographic Analysis Methodology & Calculations.

2. The demographic analysis resulted in an anticipated population for all age groups. This information was used to identify user group population sizes for various facilities. User groups were defined based on the descriptions and criteria outlined in the City of Vaughan's 2018 Active Together Master Plan.

3. Where the Active Together Master Plan did not provide sufficient detail on user group age ranges, groups were identified using best practices, knowledge and advice, in cooperation with City of Vaughan staff.

Step 2 – Facility Participation & Provision Rate Analysis

1. Facility provision rates were established in part through a review of current participation rates, as described in the 2018 ATMP. The participation rates in the 2018 ATMP were generated based on responses to an online survey, conducted by the City of Vaughan in 2017. Additionally, the City of Vaughan conducted Intercept Surveys for the ATMP, which asked respondents "what park amenity did you use the most?". These responses provided insight into facility preference and potential household participation rates.

2. In addition to participation rates and amenity use preferences identified through online and intercept surveys, facility provision rates were analyzed on a per-person basis. This was done by taking the total count of a specific facility, as identified in the 2018 ATMP, and dividing it by the, then current, 2031 City of Vaughan population projection of 424,500.

3. Per-person provision rates, on a city wide basis, provide valuable insight into potential facility use and demand, however, this method does not account for the fact that the VMC will represent a very different, more urban and more dense development typology than the City of Vaughan is traditionally made up of. In order to determine the anticipated facility demand of the future population of the VMC, provision rates and participation rates based on user group age brackets were analyzed. Where user groups were specifically identified in the ATMP, the associated provision rate was calculated and used as a more accurate means of determining required facility counts.

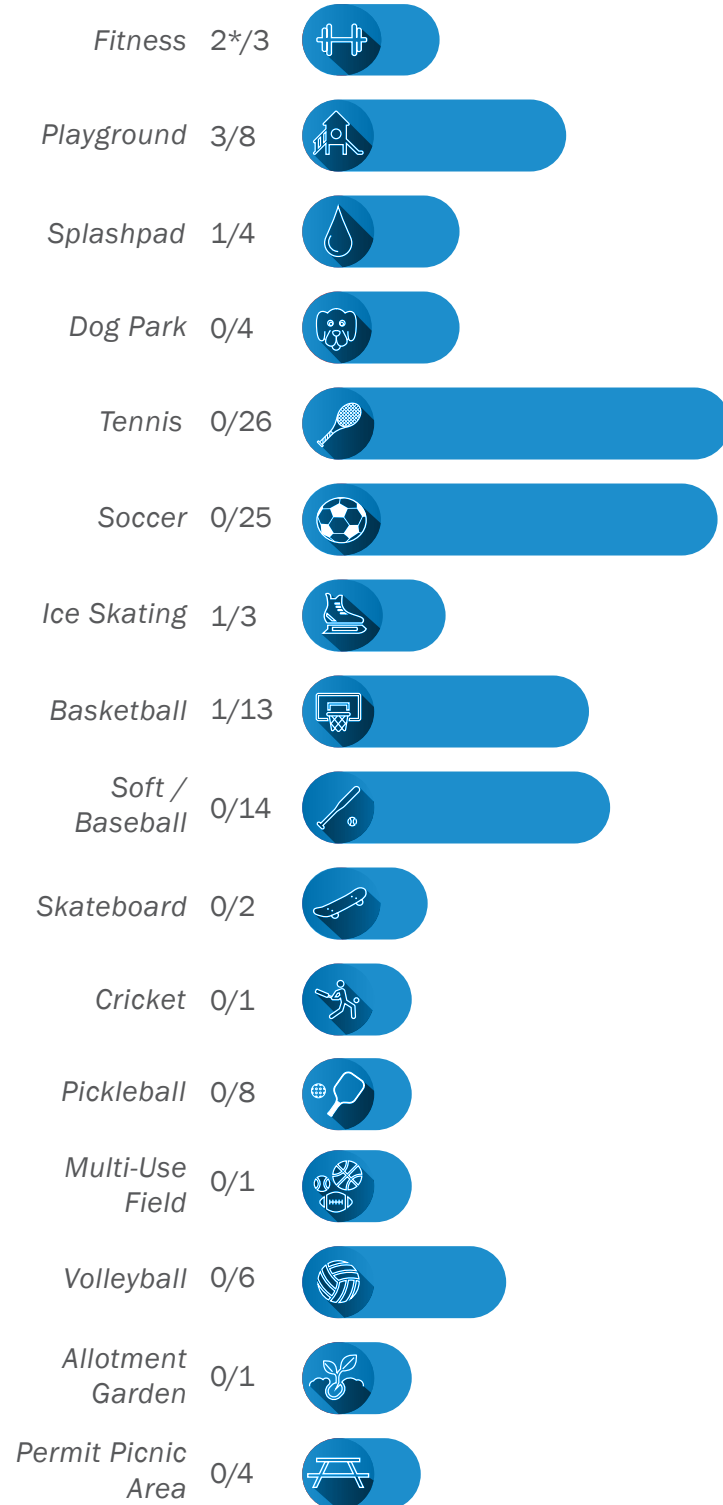
Step 3 – Determining the Anticipated Facility Requirements of the VMC

1. In order to determine and quantify the anticipated facility requirements of the projected future population of the VMC, the facility provision rates identified in Step 2, above, were applied to the projected demographics identified in Step 1.

2. For the majority of facility types, this process produced requirements that were in line with anticipated rates and best practices; however, for some facility types, this process resulted in provision rates that were not realistic or recommended for an urban environment.

One example of a facility type that produced unrealistic or unsupportable provision rates was playgrounds. When city-wide, per person provision rates were used, the VMC would be expected to require 42 playgrounds, which is far too high for such a dense, urban environment. When the ATMP recommended distribution of 1 playground within 500m of residents was used, this also produced unrealistic results indicating that the VMC would only require 4 playgrounds, which is far too low to suppose the anticipated population size. For these reasons, the number of playgrounds recommended for the VMC was determined by studying precedents, reviewing other dense urban environments, and using best practices.

The other facility type that could not be projected using existing ATMP provision rates is off leash dog parks. While the City of Vaughan has conducted significant research into the development and deployment of off leash dog parks, those studies remain more applicable to the suburban areas of the city than the urban environments that are expected at the VMC. Similar to the process for playgrounds, the number of off leash dog parks required in the VMC was projected using precedent studies, reviewing other dense urban environments, and using best practices.



**Outdoor Recreation Facilities -
Current vs. Required**

The chart shown below and on the following page contains a sample of the worksheet that was developed and used to study and identify anticipated facility demand. The worksheet contains typical, common activities that are expected to be required, as well as facility counts, provision rates and participation rates identified in the City of Vaughan's 2018 Active Together Master Plan.

The left side of the chart displays facility provision rates with anticipated facility demands in the VMC. On the right side of the chart, provision rates are broken down in a more granular way, with rates identified based on registered youth players, users, or distribution.

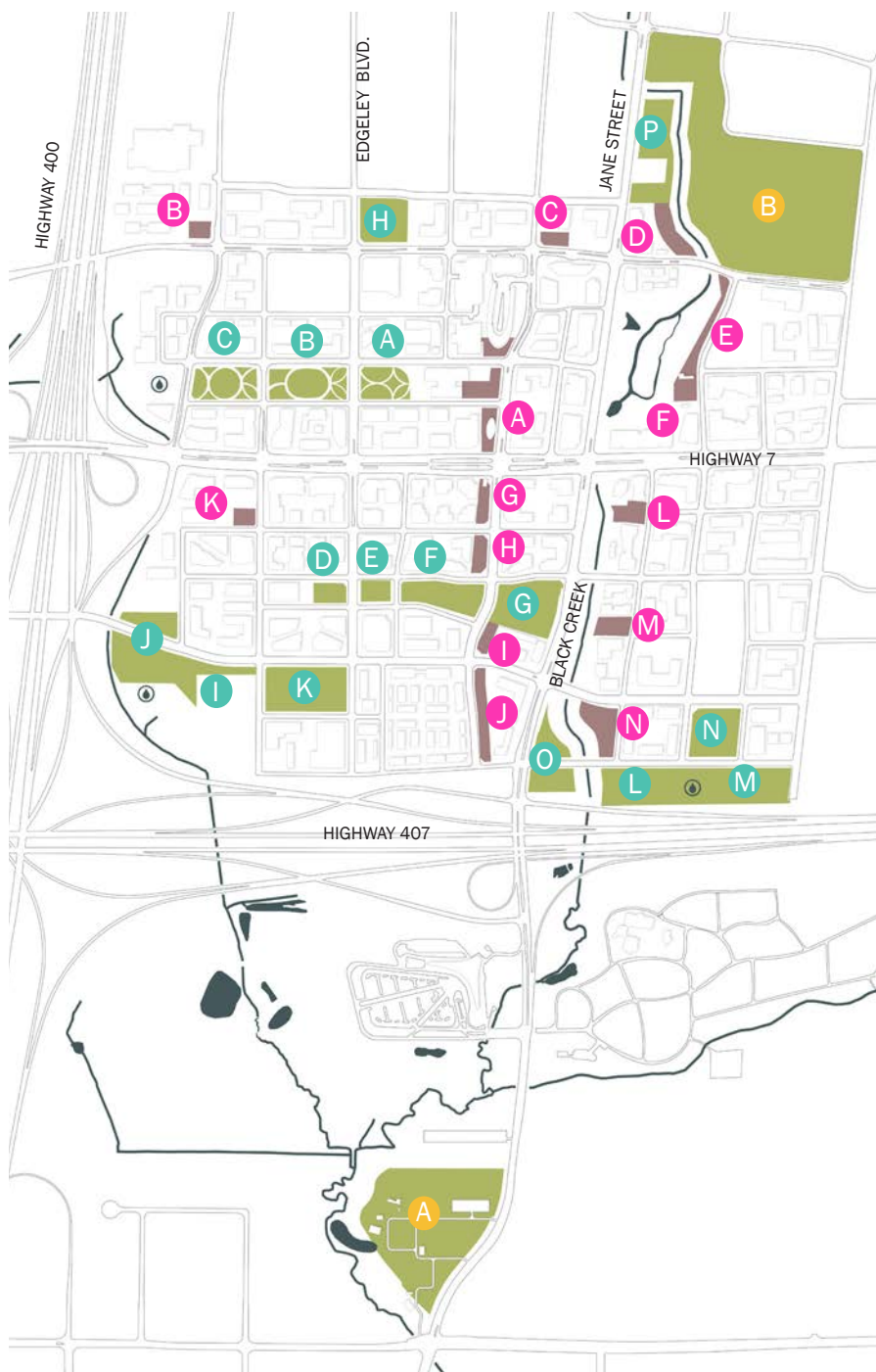
While the anticipated facility demand is largely the same between the two sides of the chart, based on two slightly different methods of calculating the demand, the more granular calculation on the right hand side is what was ultimately deemed to be a more accurate representation and thus is what was used in this Assessment Report.

As described in the steps on the previous page, where provision rates or anticipated demand did not produce realistic or desirable results, anticipated demand was determined based on precedent studies, reviewing other dense urban environments, and using best practices.

Activity	ATMP Participation Rate (household)	2031 City of Vaughan Facility Count	ATMP Provision Rate (per person) Based on 2031 Planned Facilities and Population Projection of 424,500
Individual Fitness or Weight Training	40%	9	0.000021
Playgrounds	26%	164	NA
Splash Pads (water play)	22%	32	0.000075
Offleash Dog Area	NA	2	0.000005
Tennis	18%	150	0.000353
Outdoor Soccer	18%	158	0.000372
Outdoor Ice Skating	17%	10	0.000024
Outdoor Basketball	16%	86	0.000203
Softball or Baseball	12%	91	0.000213
Skateboarding	5%	12	0.000028
Cricket	NA	3	0.000007
Beach Volleyball	NA	0	NA
Multi-use Fields	NA	2	0.000005

ATMP Provision Rate (per person that is a member of a specific user group)	Projected Facility Demand of the VMC (Full Build Out) Based on Current ATMP Provision Rate	Projected Facility Demand of the VMC (2031) Based on Current ATMP Provision Rate	ATMP Recommended Provision Rate (per registered youth players, users or distribution)	Required Facilities Based on ATMP Provision Rate (2031)	Required Facilities Based on ATMP Provision Rate (Full Build Out)	Facilities shown in Current Park Designs in the VMC
NA	3	1	0.000021	1	3	3
0.004525	42	21	<i>within 500m of</i>	4	4	4
NA	10	5	0.000469263	2	4	2
NA	1	0	NA	2	4	3
NA	45	22	0.0002	13	26	0
NA	48	24	0.0125	12	25	0
NA	3	1	0.000024	1	3	2
NA	26	13	0.002	6	13	0
NA	27	14	0.025	7	14	0
NA	4	2	0.000285714	1	2	0
NA	1	0	0.000007	0	1	0
NA	NA	NA	NA	6	NA	1
NA	1	0	0.000005	0	1	0

Appendix 3.0 VMC Park Atlas



Active Parkland

Public Squares

- A** S0 TTC Plaza & Transit Square
- B** S1 Applewood Square
- C** S2 Portage Square
- D** S3 Black Creek North Square
- E** S4 Black Creek Greenway
- F** S5 Edgeley Park/Strata Park
- G** S6 Millway Promenade North
- H** S7 Millway Promenade South
- I** S8 Millway Square
- J** S9 Millway Avenue Linear Park
- K** S10 Block 1 Square
- L** S11 White Elm Square
- M** S12 Freshway Square
- N** S13 BCR Square

Urban Parks

- A** U1-1 North Urban Park, Block 1
- B** U1-2 North Urban Park, Block 2
- C** U1-3 North Urban Park, Block 3
- D** U2-1 South Urban Park, Block 1
- E** U2-2 South Urban Park, Block 2
- F** U2-3 South Urban Park, Block 3
- G** U2-4 South Urban Park, Block 4
- H** U3 North Boundary Park
- I** U4 Colossus Park
- J** U5 Underpass Park
- K** U6 Commerce Park
- L** U7 Peelar Park, Block 1
- M** U8 Peelar Park, Block 2
- N** U9 Maplecrete Park
- O** U10 BCR Park West
- P** U11 Black Creek North Park

District & Destination Parks

- A** D1 The Village Park
- B** D2 North District Park

300m



Figure 99 - Parks Atlas Location Key



Transit Square, VMC. Design by: CCxA, Montreal.



TTC Plaza, VMC. Design by: CCxA, Montreal.

Park Name: **Transit Square**

Location Code: **S0**

Size: **0.298 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

A vibrant civic space in the heart of the VMC, offering a dynamic platform for cultural expression and gathering. With its innovative sound installations and striking geometric paving, Transit Square has evolved into a visual and auditory landmark, whose motifs have come to define the surrounding area, weaving the square's identity into the fabric of the VMC. This transformative space invites visitors alike to connect, celebrate, and find inspiration in the urban landscape.

Archetypes: **Orchard**

Canopy Coverage Target: **30%**

Facilities: **Gathering Area**

Park Name: **TTC Plaza**

Location Code: **S0**

Size: **0.176 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

A gateway into the VMC and abuzz from the TTC station centred within the plaza, this public square is a vibrant, active transit hub. Commuters, locals and visitors are welcome to relax, linger and converse on the seat walls that wrap around the two large swaths of native planting, which double as innovative storm-water infiltration features.

Archetypes: **Orchard
Wetlands**

Canopy Coverage Target: **25%**

Facilities: **TBD**



Precedent - East Village London – Plot 5 Playspace, London UK. Design by: CARVE, Amsterdam.

Park Name: **Applewood Square**

Location Code: **S1**

Size: **0.20 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

This compact square along Portage Parkway is distinct in its sophisticated design, characterized by innovative architectural elements and high quality materials. The space aims to provide a tranquil yet engaging environment for passersby and visitors alike, offering a moment of respite in the bustling cityscape.

Archetypes: **Orchard**

Canopy Coverage Target: **30%**

Facilities: **Playground
Splash Pad**

Park Name: **Portage Square**

Location Code: **S2**

Size: **0.20 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

Seamlessly blending the bustling pace of city life with the needs of the community for recreation and retreat, this park transforms a high-traffic area into an urban haven. Employing thoughtful, creative visual and acoustic techniques and design to create a sense of welcomeness and serenity. Refreshing and contemporary, visitors are invited to play, linger and relax.

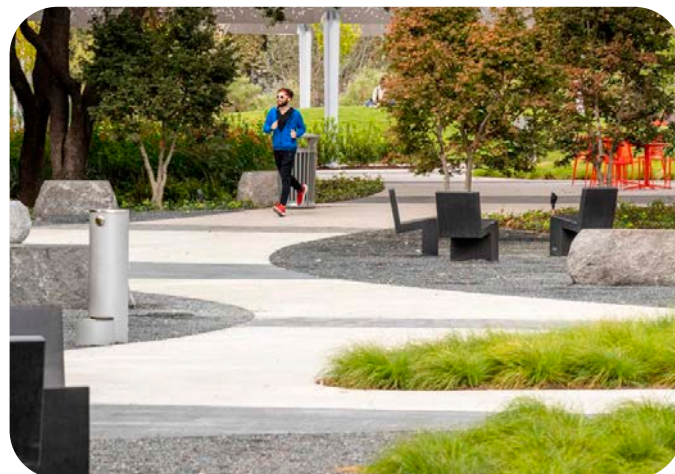
Archetypes: **Orchard**

Canopy Coverage Target: **30%**

Facilities: **Fitness Stations
Playground
Splash Pad**



*Precedent - Lakkegata Recreation Park, Oslo NORW.
Design by: Asplan Viak, Sandvika.*



*Precedent - Pacific Plaza, Dallas TX.
Design by: SWA Group, Dallas.*

Park Name: **Black Creek North Square**

Location Code: **S3**

Size: **0.37 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

Serving as a serene transition between the Black Creek corridor and neighboring community, visitors to this public square find themselves under the cover of a lush deciduous canopy, creating a laid-back atmosphere that nods to the natural heritage of the VMC. Amenities are located thoughtfully, blending seamlessly with their natural surroundings, encouraging time spent connecting with nature.

Archetypes: Woodland Grove

Canopy Coverage Target: 60%

Facilities: Barbeque Stations
Playground
Splash Pad

Park Name: **Black Creek Greenway**

Location Code: **S4**

Size: **0.41 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

Black Creek Greenway envisions an enhanced vegetated buffer that protects the creek's ecosystem while providing a scenic walking path for visitors. The park incorporates urban agriculture initiatives, fostering connection within the local community and promoting sustainable food practices. A compact, linear dog park will offer a dedicated space for pet owners, ensuring that all visitors can enjoy the park's natural surroundings.

Archetypes: Woodland Grove

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Dog Park
Fitness Stations



*Edgeley Park/Strata Park, VMC.
Design by: DTAH, Toronto.*



*Precedent - Evanston Fountain Square, Evanston IL.
Design by: Teska Associates, Inc., Evanston.*

Park Name:	Edgeley Park/Strata Park
Location Code:	S5
Size:	0.34 ha
Classification:	Public Square

Compact yet lively, Edgeley Park acts as a focal point for the community and a gateway into the greater Edgeley Pond and Black Creek corridor. Despite its unique strata condition, the park maximizes its potential, providing diverse recreational opportunities, including a seasonal skating loop, destination playground and park pavilion capable of hosting events. It stands as a testament to innovative urban design, blending play, nature, and civic use.

Archetypes:	Mixed Deciduous Forest Meadow, Grasslands
Canopy Coverage Target:	40%
Facilities:	Park Pavilion Playground Seasonal Rink Splash Pad

Park Name:	Millway Promenade North
Location Code:	S6
Size:	0.25 ha
Classification:	Public Square

Arts and culture are front and centre in this hive of activity and integral section of the Millway Avenue Promenade. Unique in its approach, architectural landscape solutions engage visitors and create a landmark space. Seasonality is taken advantage of here, with attention-capturing facilities present ion all weather. With direct access to the TTC subway extension, the park serves as a crucial connection point, and opportunity to create a unique destination and sense of place within the VMC.

Archetypes:	Orchard Meadow, Grasslands
Canopy Coverage Target:	25%
Facilities:	Skating Rink Splash Pad



Precedent - RMIT New Academic Street, Melbourne AUS. Design by: TCL, Melbourne.



Precedent - Streetscape Improvements. Design by: PWL Partnership, Vancouver.

Park Name: Millway Promenade South

Location Code: S7

Size: 0.28 ha

Classification: Public Square

Seamlessly integrating the spirit of the South Urban Park into the fabric of Millway Avenue, this imaginative block offers a transitional design from highly-urban plaza into an area of lush respite. Captivating and interactive art installations, distinctive landscape treatments, and a strong retail edges welcome visitors to slow down, stay, and engage with their surroundings.

Archetypes: Meadow, Grasslands
Mixed Deciduous Forest
Orchard

Canopy Coverage Target: 30%

Facilities: Gathering Area
Playground

Park Name: Millway Square

Location Code: S8

Size: 0.2 ha

Classification: Public Square

A dynamic, transitional public square that serves as a vital connection between the Millway Avenue Promenade and the South Urban Park. Featuring an enhanced promenade, pedestrians are offered a seamless and engaging journey through the VMC. Curated streetscape elements transform this compact space into a lively hub within the urban landscape.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
Meadow, Grasslands

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Gathering Area
Playground
Splash Pad



Precedent - St. Andrew's Playground Park, Toronto.
Design by: DTAH, Toronto.

Park Name:	Millway Linear Park
Location Code:	S9
Size:	0.54 ha
Classification:	Public Square

Millway Avenue Promenade’s southernmost section stands as a dynamic greenspace servicing the local community and rewarding visitors who have traveled to the end of the promenade. At its heart, a distinctive basketball installation serves as both a community gathering point and a symbol of the park’s innovative spirit. Defined by strong geometrical lines, this park offers a variety of opportunities for activity, from leisurely strolls to energetic sport.

Archetypes:	Mixed Deciduous Forest
Canopy Coverage Target:	40%
Facilities:	Basketball (Half Court) Gathering Area Playground



Park Name:	Block 1 Square
Location Code:	S10
Size:	0.20 ha
Classification:	Public Square

A buzzing hub despite its compact size, QuadReal Square offers a space where locals can gather, relax, and connect. With its innovative paving and eye-catching public art, the plaza transforms the cityscape into a canvas of creativity. Essential amenities are tailored to the neighborhood’s needs, creating a dynamic space that reflects and celebrates the spirit of its surroundings.

Archetypes:	Mixed Deciduous Forest Meadow, Grasslands
Canopy Coverage Target:	40%
Facilities:	Fitness Stations Playground Splash Pad



Precedent - Ketcheson Neighbourhood Park, Vancouver BC. Design by: PWL Partnership, Vancouver.

Park Name: **White Elm Square**

Location Code: **S11**

Size: **0.37 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

This square serves as a vital gateway to the Black Creek Corridor, mixing recreational opportunities with the VMC's natural heritage. The park's compact design maximizes its appeal, with well-considered active facilities that encourage gathering and play. With its emphasis on native planting, the square not only advocates for biodiversity but also creates a serene retreat for locals as well.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
The Creek

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Basketball Court
Gathering Area
Playground

Park Name: **Freshway Square**

Location Code: **S12**

Size: **0.35 ha**

Classification: **Public Square**

Visitors are beckoned into this sanctuary in the heart of the city through its inviting picnic areas and natural playground. A refreshing escape from city life, Omega Public Square is a vital connection point to the Black Creek corridor, connecting nature with the adjacent development. This green haven offers a feeling of privacy and tranquility where residents can relax, play and reconnect with the natural environment.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
The Creek

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Fitness Stations
Picnic Area
Playground
Splash Pad



Precedent - Drammen Park, Drammen NORW.
Design by: Grindaker, Oslo.



Park Name:	BCR Square
Location Code:	S13
Size:	0.70 ha
Classification:	Public Square

The park serves as a serene transition between the Black Creek corridor and neighboring urban areas, offering a refreshing retreat from city life. With its blend of active recreational spaces and tranquil picnic spots, it provides visitors a chance to reconnect with nature and find respite from the daily hustle. This green sanctuary aims to enhance well-being by fostering a connection between urban living and the natural landscape.

Archetypes:	Mixed Deciduous Forest The Creek
Canopy Coverage Target:	40%
Facilities:	Fitness Stations Playground Picnic Area

Park Name:	North Urban Park - Block 1
Location Code:	U1-1
Size:	0.86 ha
Classification:	Urban Park

Harmoniously blending form and function, Block 1 is characterized by strong lines and symmetry, creating a motif that carries through the remainder of the park. The inclusion of whimsical, playful elements entices families and office workers alike. Bold topographical design becomes an iconic characteristic of the space, doubling as an opportunity for casual seating and performance. The continuation of paving patterns that define Transit Square integrate this innovative block into the fabric of the VMC.

Archetypes:	Orchard Meadow, Grasslands
Canopy Coverage Target:	25%
Facilities:	Picnic Area Playground



*Precedent - Sjödalsparken, Stockholm SE.
Design by: LAND arkitektur, Stockholm.*

Park Name: North Urban Park - Block 2

Location Code: U1-2

Size: 1.28 ha

Classification: Urban Park

This central block of the North Urban Park envisions a harmonious blend of activity and tranquility. Visitors are welcomed to gather, relax and play on the large field in the heart of the park. In the periphery, smaller active facilities are carefully placed to provide a balanced, inviting space that caters to the whole community.

Archetypes: Orchard
Meadow, Grasslands

Canopy Coverage Target: 25%

Facilities: Basketball Court
Fitness Stations
Gathering Area
Multi-Court
Park Pavilion
Picnic Area
Playground
Splash Pad

Park Name: North Urban Park - Block 3

Location Code: U1-3

Size: 1.04 ha

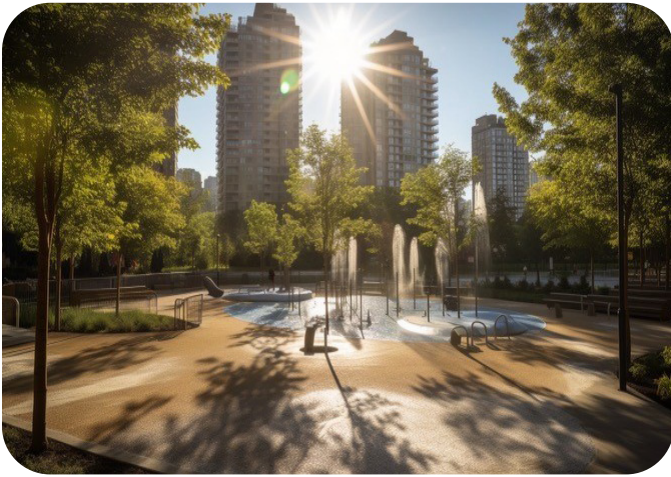
Classification: Urban Park

In this block of the North Urban Park, visitors find themselves under a protective canopy of deciduous trees as they walk through and enjoy amenities that take advantage of a pastoral landscape. Fostering social interaction and a connection to nature, this block caters towards the daily needs of the residents of the VMC. A serene retreat from urban life, this space remains a functional, essential resource for the community.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest

Canopy Coverage Target: 50%

Facilities: Dog Park
Picnic Area
Pickleball Courts
Playground



Park Name: **South Urban Park - Block 1**

Location Code: **U2-1**

Size: **0.55 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

This dynamic, energetic urban square nestled in the heart of the VMC offers versatile space for events and gathering in a convenient central location. A flexible canvas for diverse programming, Block 1 fosters connection, cultural expression and celebration of the arts within Vaughan. The park stands as a testament to urban vitality, inviting residents and visitors alike to gather and experience the essence of city living in a compact yet impactful setting.

Archetypes: Orchard

Canopy Coverage Target: 30%

Facilities: Gathering Area
Picnic Area

Park Name: **South Urban Park - Block 2**

Location Code: **U2-2**

Size: **0.33 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

This park envisions a spirited landscape where children’s imaginations can run wild through an interactive and engaging play environment. It provides a destination that captivates young adventurers while providing amenities that ensure the comfort of parents and guardians overseeing the fun. Here there are opportunities to nurture a child’s artistic spirit, celebrate cultural diversity, and strengthen community bonds through shared experiences and creative expression.

Archetypes: Orchard

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Playground
Picnic Area
Splash Pad



Park Name: **South Urban Park - Block 3**

Location Code: **U2-3**

Size: **1.13 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

Block 3 Park stands as a dynamic hub of community life, pulsing with energy year-round. This inclusive space draws residents of all ages and backgrounds, fostering connections through an array of engaging recreational opportunities. The park serves as a catalyst for shared experiences, promoting health, joy, and unity among neighbors as they come together to play, relax, and create lasting memories in this spirited urban sanctuary.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
Orchard
Grasslands, Meadows

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Basketball Court
Fitness Stations
Multi-Court
Park Pavilion
Picnic Area
Skating Rink

Park Name: **South Urban Park - Block 4**

Location Code: **U2-4**

Size: **1.67 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

In the most bucolic section of the South Urban Park, visitors are invited to step away from the fast pace of the city and take a stroll in the park. Sprawling green fields give way to smaller private forested areas where friends and family can gather to relax and enjoy a picnic. Locals and visitors can stretch their legs playing in the sports facilities or bring their dogs along to experience the off-leash dog park. With its prime location, this block offers a much-needed break from the bustle of urban life.

Archetypes: The Creek
Mixed Deciduous Forest

Canopy Coverage Target: 60%

Facilities: Dog Park
Pickleball Courts
Picnic Area
Soccer Field



*Precedent - Dorrian Green, Columbus OH.
Design by: MKSK, Columbus.*



*Precedent - Gröna Stugans Park, Stockholm SE.
Design by: LAND arkitektur, Stockholm.*

Park Name: **North Boundary Park**

Location Code: **U3**

Size: **1.12 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

A harmonious blend of traditional charm and modern facilities, this versatile civic space aims to become a cherished community cornerstone. With a diverse range of amenities with wide-ranging appeal, visitors of all ages are invited to gather, play and stay engaged in all seasons, fostering connection and enhancing the quality of life in the northernmost part of the VMC.

Park Name: **Colossus Park**

Location Code: **U4**

Size: **0.77 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

This park envisions an urban oasis and a confluence of energy that seamlessly links the community and school site with the adjacent EOS lands and Underpass Park, with active facilities to compliment its surrounding. It aims to create a safe, accessible haven where children and families can play, cool off, and connect with nature, fostering community bonds and promoting active lifestyles.

Archetypes: **Mixed Deciduous Forest
Meadow**

Canopy Coverage Target: **40%**

Facilities: **Park Pavilion
Picnic Area
Playground
Seasonal Rink
Tennis Courts**

Archetypes: **Mixed Deciduous Forest**

Canopy Coverage Target: **40%**

Facilities: **Multi-Court
Playground
Splash Pad**



*Precedent - Sport- und Bürgerpark, Baesweiler GER.
Design by: DTP, Essen.*



*Precedent - Bogaardplein Rijswijk, The Hague NL.
Design by: DELVA, Amsterdam.*

Park Name: **Underpass Park**

Location Code: **U5**

Size: **1.88 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

Embracing the pulse of the city and the architecture of the adjacent infrastructure, Colossus Underpass Park artfully balances the raw urban landscape with nature. Bold, colourful, and buzzing with activity, visitors are treated to a sensory experience as dynamic art installations and innovative lighting transform the park into a living canvas. A wide breadth of facilities provided are a celebration of movement and exploration.

Park Name: **Commerce Park**

Location Code: **U6**

Size: **1.95 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

A quintessential civic space, this centrally located park embodies the spirit of timeless, classic design while offering modern amenities. Ingraining itself into the daily lives of the local community, this space serves as a versatile hub for relaxation, social interaction, and healthy living. Commerce Park carries the timeless appeal of a classic public park while meeting the evolving needs of the VMC.

Archetypes: **Mixed Deciduous Forest**

Canopy Coverage Target: **30%**

Facilities:

- Pickleball Courts
- Dog Park
- Picnic Area
- Fitness Stations
- Playground
- Multi-Court
- Skate Park
- Multi-use Field
- Tennis Courts
- Park Pavilion

Archetypes: **Mixed Deciduous Forest
Meadow, Grasslands**

Canopy Coverage Target: **40%**

Facilities:

- Amphitheatre
- Basketball Courts
- Gathering Area
- Playground
- Soccer
- Tennis Courts



Precedent - South Surrey Athletic Park, Surrey BC.



Precedent - Bear Valley Tennis and Pickleball Courts, Denver CO. Design by: Design Concepts, Lafayette.

Park Name: **Peelar Park, Block 1**

Location Code: **U7**

Size: **1.85 ha**

Classification: **EOS/Urban Park**

A hub for soccer within the VMC, where visitors can experience spirited sports matches and tranquil nature. Here, you can explore a restored ecological landscape that also performs functions in stormwater management, as a wildlife corridor, and a buffer to Highway 407. This pastoral space not only nurtures athletes but also fosters a deep connection with the community’s natural surroundings.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
Meadow, Grasslands
The Creek

Canopy Coverage Target: 30%

Facilities: Picnic Area
Soccer Fields

Park Name: **Peelar Park, Block 2**

Location Code: **U8**

Size: **1.91 ha**

Classification: **EOS/Urban Park**

A dynamic sports complex catering to the diverse recreational needs of the VMC, SE EOS Park is a hive of activity. Unapologetically loud and vibrant, visitors are encouraged to step out of their comfort zone and try something new. Underground stormwater tanks help the park double as functional infrastructure, exemplifying sustainable urban design. This multi-faceted space promises to be a cornerstone of the community.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
Meadow, Grasslands

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Picnic Area
Skate Park
Tennis Courts
Volleyball Courts



Precedent - Cherry Beach Clarke Beach Park, Toronto.

Park Name: **Maplecrete Park**

Location Code: **U9**

Size: **1.24 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

Versatile facilities that meet the daily needs of the immediate community define the program of expansive greenspace. Maplecrete Park seamlessly integrates with adjacent parkland to create a holistic parks network in the south east quadrant. A diverse array of amenities with wide-ranging appeal complement nearby offerings, transforming the area into a premier destination for recreation, relaxation, and social engagement.

Archetypes: Mixed Deciduous Forest
Woodland Grove
Meadow, Grasslands

Canopy Coverage Target: 30%

Facilities: Amphitheatre
Basketball Courts
Dog Park
Fitness Stations
Gathering Area
Playground

Park Name: **BCR Park West**

Location Code: **U10**

Size: **1.04 ha**

Classification: **Urban Park**

A lush, naturalized retreat providing visitors with a serene escape into nature. Creating a harmonious balance between recreational facilities and ecological preservation, this park offers picnic areas overlooking the tranquil Black Creek, basketball courts for active play, and a spacious dog park that draws pet owners from across the VMC. The BCR Park West is a multi-faceted hub encouraging connection with nature, and fostering a sense of community.

Archetypes: Woodland Grove
The Creek

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Dog Park
Multi-Court
Picnic Area



Precedent - Graceland Cemetery, Chicago IL.



Precedent - Table Rock State Park, Branson MO.

Park Name: Black Creek North Park

Location Code: U11

Size: 1.51 ha

Classification: Urban Park

Offering serenity and sanctuary, this park blends history and nature in the northern edge of the VMC, preserving the legacy of Edgeley Cemetery while offering spaces for reflection and connection. With its naturalized edge along Black Creek, the park embraces and enhances the local ecosystem. Through its passive amenities, visitors are invited to unwind, explore, and find solace in tranquil surroundings.

Archetypes: The Creek
Meadows, Grasslands + Hedgerows

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Barbeque Stations
Dog Park
Fitness Stations

Park Name: The Village Park

Location Code: D1

Size: 7.04 ha

Classification: Destination Park

Blending active amenities and historical preservation, this park is a dynamic and inviting space that honors the area’s cultural roots and natural legacy. Here, modern facilities seamlessly integrate with heritage structures, offering visitors a unique environment to play, explore and relax. With a resonating sense of place, the community is invited to celebrate the rich history and bright future of the VMC.

Archetypes: The Creek
Mixed Deciduous Forest Orchard

Canopy Coverage Target: 40%

Facilities: Gathering Area
Park Pavilion
Playground
Picnic Area
Splash Pad



*Precedent - Heerenschürli Sport Complex, Zürich CHE.
Design by: Topotek1, Berlin.*

Park Name:	North District Park
Location Code:	D2
Size:	14.35 ha
Classification:	District Park

A destination sports complex servicing the VMC and broader Vaughan community, this park offers state-of-the-art athletic facilities while embracing the natural beauty of the Black Creek Corridor. Thoughtfully-chosen native planting schemes provide a harmonious integration with the creek’s ecosystem. Active space transitions to passive recreation areas, creating a balanced environment where sports enthusiasts and nature lovers alike can thrive.

Archetypes:	Mixed Deciduous Forest The Creek
Canopy Coverage Target:	30%
Facilities:	Park Pavilion
Barbeque Stations	Picnic Area
Baseball Diamonds	Playground
Cricket Pitch	Soccer Fields
Fitness Stations	Tennis Courts
Gathering Area	

Appendix 4.0 VMC Planting Palette

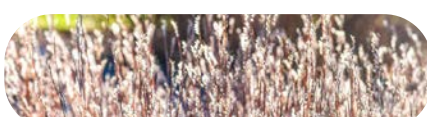
Mixed Deciduous Forest Archetype

		Bloom Season							
Plant Name		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
Fragrant Sumac <i>Rhus aromatica</i> 		4m 							
Bitternut Hickory <i>Carya cordiformis</i> 		20m							
Canadian Serviceberry <i>Amelanchier canadensis</i> 		4m							
Mapleleaf Viburnum <i>Viburnum acerifolium</i> 		1.5m							
Foam Flower <i>Tiarella cordifolia</i> 		30cm							
Wild Columbine <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i> 		50cm							
Basswood <i>Tilia americana</i> 		25m							
Bush Honeysuckle <i>Diervilla lonicera</i> 		1m							
Purple Flowering Raspberry <i>Rubus odoratus</i> 		1.8m							
Woodland Sunflower <i>Helianthus divaricatus</i> 		1m							
Additional Recommended Species: native species tolerant of wet soil salt tolerant drought tolerant wildlife/insect value									
		Pinus strobus	20m						
		Quercus macrocarpa	20m						
		Populus tremuloides	15m						

Woodland Grove Archetype

		Bloom Season							
Plant Name		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
Allegheny Serviceberry Amelanchier laevis	4m								
Black Chokeberry Aronia melanocarpa	1m								
Ninebark Physocarpus opulifolius	1.2m								
Butterflyweed Asclepias tuberosa	50cm								
Tufted Hair Grass Deschampsia cespitosa	60cm								
Anise Hyssop Agastache foeniculum	1.2m								
Rozanne Geranium Geranium x 'Rozanne'	1m								
Wild Bergamot Monarda fistulosa	1m								
Zigzag Goldenrod Solidago flexicaulis	1m								
Common Witchhazel Hamamelis virginiana	4m								
native species tolerant of wet soil salt tolerant drought tolerant wildlife/insect value		Additional Recommended Species: Tsuga canadensis 18m Quercus rubra 20m Quercus bicolor 15m							

Meadows, Grasslands + Hedgerows Archetype

		Bloom Season						
Plant Name		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
Prairie Smoke Geum triflorum	20cm							
Nannyberry Viburnum lentago	3m							
Staghorn Sumac Rhus typhina	3m							
Smooth Rose Rosa blanda	1.2m							
Purple Coneflower Echinacea purpurea	90cm							
Rattlesnake Master Eryngium yuccifolium	1m							
Purple Prairie Clover Dalea purpurea	40cm							
Dense Blazing Star Liatris spicata	80cm							
Prairie Dropseed Sporobolus heterolepis	60cm							
Little Bluestem Schizachyrium scoparium	1.2m							
		Additional Recommended Species:						
		Pinus resinosa		30m				
		Quercus alba		20m				
		Cerastium arvense ssp. strictum		1m				
		● native species ● tolerant of wet soil ● salt tolerant ● drought tolerant ● wildlife/insect value						

The Orchard Archetype

		Bloom Season							
Plant Name		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
Crabapple Malus spp.	6m								
Virginia Strawberry Fragaria virginiana	20cm								
Cotoneaster Cotoneaster spp.	(varies)								
Catmint Nepeta faassenii	45cm								
Shrubby Cinquefoil Potentilla fruticosa	1m								
Lavender Lavandula angustifolia	45cm								
Wild Bergamot Monarda fistulosa	1m								
Black Eyed Susan Rudbeckia hirta	80cm								
Russian Sage Perovskia atriplicifolia	1m								
Stonecrop Sedum spp.	(varies)								
native species		Additional Recommended Species:							
tolerant of wet soil		Prunus spp.	8m						
salt tolerant		Spiraea japonica	1m						
drought tolerant		Allium x ‘Millenium’	40cm						
wildlife/insect value									

Wetlands Archetype

		Bloom Season							
Plant Name		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
Pussywillow Salix discolor	6m								
Wild Ginger Asarum canadense	30cm								
Canadian Serviceberry Amelanchier canadensis	4m								
Stiff Dogwood Cornus foemina	3m								
Blue Flag Iris Iris versicolor	90cm								
Wild Geranium Geranium maculatum	45cm								
Swamp Rose Rosa palustris	1.5m								
American Elderberry Sambucus canadensis	3m								
Swamp Milkweed Asclepias incarnata	1m								
Swamp Aster Symphyotrichum puniceum	1m								
		Additional Recommended Species:					native species tolerant of wet soil salt tolerant drought tolerant wildlife/insect value		
		Thuja occidentalis		10m					
		Larix laricina		8m					
		Acer rubrum		12m					

The Creek Archetype

			Bloom Season						
Plant Name			April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
Peachleaf Willow Salix amygdaloides 6m									
Red Osier Dogwood Cornus sericea 2m									
Marsh Marigold Caltha palustris 30cm									
Morning Star Sedge Carex greyi 80cm									
Red Elderberry Sambucus racemosa 3m									
White Wild Indigo Baptisia alba 1m									
Blue Vervain Verbena hastata 90cm									
Joe Pye Weed Eupatorium maculatum 1.5m									
Turtlehead Chelone glabra 60cm									
New England Aster Symphyotrichum novae-angliae 1m									
Additional Recommended Species:									
			Alnus rugosa		10m				
			Acer saccharinum		18m				
			Acer rubrum		12m				

Appendix 5.0 Park Governance Report

VMC Parks Governance Decision-making Framework

Final Report

Prepared by Park People for the City of Vaughan
October 2021

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Introduction

Project context

To accompany the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan and the development and operation of parks and open spaces within the VMC area, Park People worked with Janet Rosenberg & Studios Inc., retained by the City of Vaughan, on park partnership and alternative governance models.

The goal of the project is to present the City with a decision-making framework that can guide discussions of park partnerships and governance models that best serve the variety of parks and open spaces that are planned for the VMC area, including Urban and Neighbourhood Parks, Public Squares and Environmental Open Spaces.

In particular, the tool aims to address the City's desire for an overview of park governance models and the multiple scales at which they exist, examples that focus on providing for an arts and culture experience in public spaces, and examples of phasing and flexibility to ensure proper implementation of governance models and partnerships over time as conditions may change.

Decision-making framework: what it is for and how it can be used

This decision-making framework can be used to guide and define conversations about relevant and best-serving park governance models, but is not meant as a prescriptive tool.

The framework includes several components:

- **Park Governance Model Scale:** Provides definitions for five governance model typologies, and a high-level overview of potential funding mechanisms.
- **Guiding Questions:** An exercise meant to guide conversation among the project team and potential partners, helping to uncover potential values, goals, opportunities, and concerns that can then be used to identify a best-serving model for a particular park context from the decision-making matrix. As an outcome of this exercise, the project team may fill out the accompanying Roles & Responsibilities Scale tool to locate the desired breakdown of City/partner involvement.
- **Decision-Making Matrix:** Outlines each governance model typology, including an analysis of the opportunities and risks associated with each to help inform decision-making.
- **Case Studies:** Accompanying the matrix are short case studies from Canada and U.S. models to illustrate how these models operate in real world circumstances, with a focus on key takeaways for the VMC context.

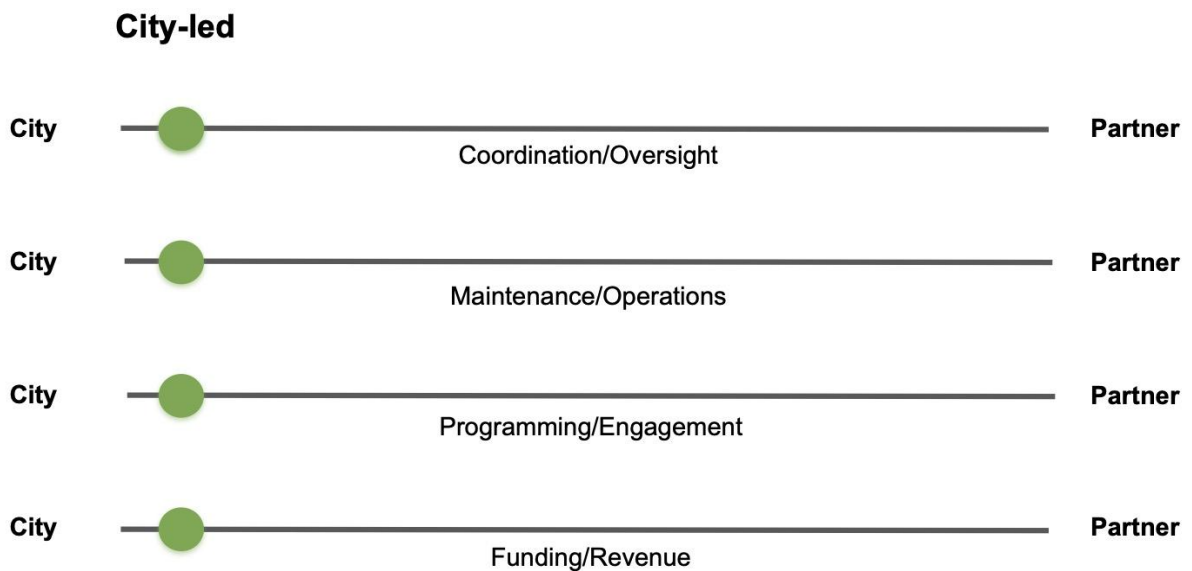
Park Governance Model Scale

This section provides definitions of each of the scales of possible governance models with a visualization meant to generally show where these models may typically fall within a division of roles and responsibilities.

Governance Model Typologies

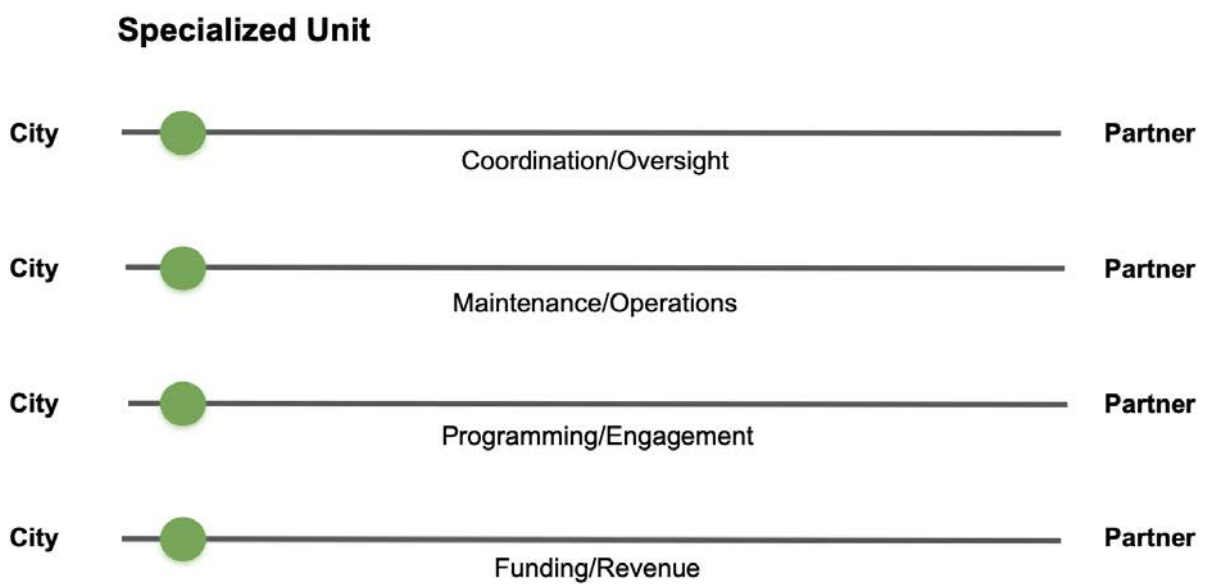
City-led

Maintenance, programming, operations, and other services are carried out by the municipal parks department.



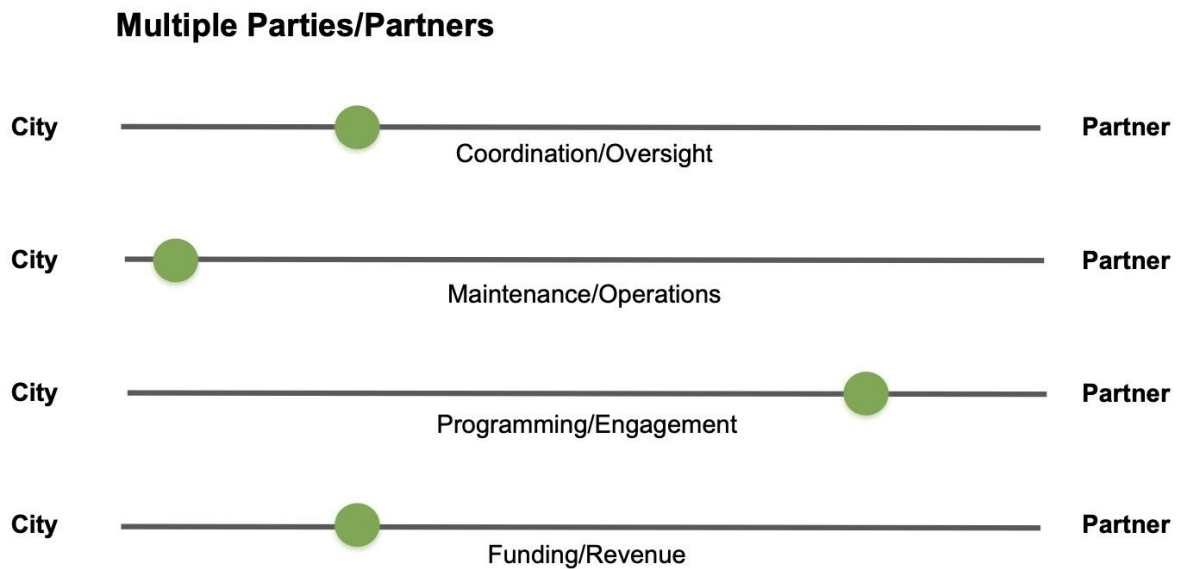
Specialized Unit

Maintenance, programming, operations, and other services are carried out by a specialized unit within the municipal parks department that is a dedicated team for a particular park or set of parks. This team could take on a variety of roles, including being specially trained on unique maintenance or stewardship practices to the site(s), leading programming, and acting as community liaison and visitor services. Some philanthropic donors may encourage this as a condition of a major gift.



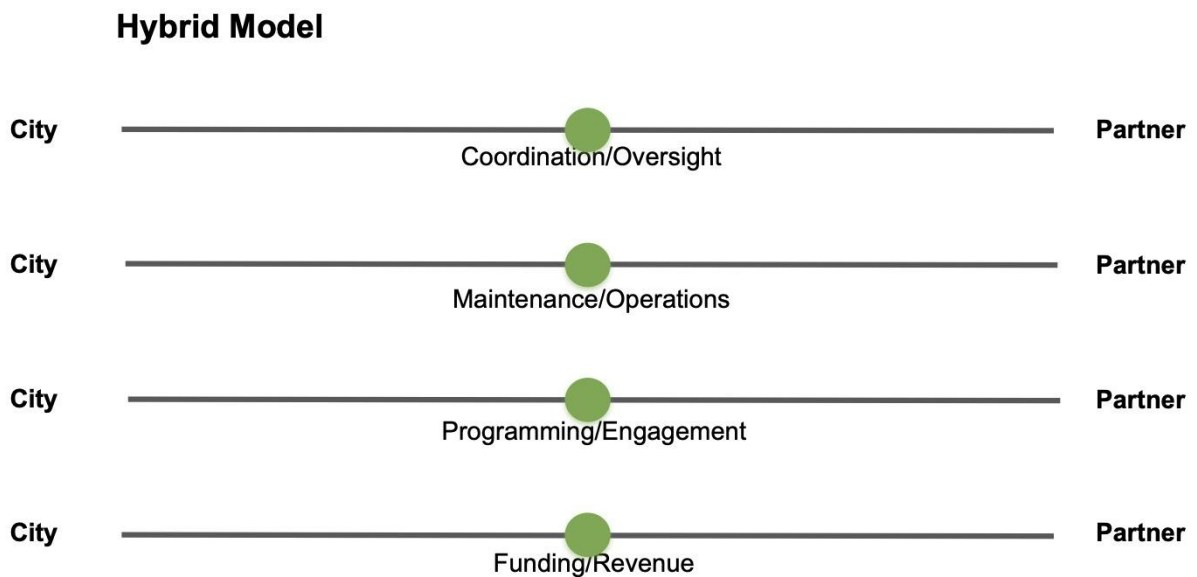
Multiple Parties/Partners

Municipal parks department enters into partnerships, either formal or informal, with one or more entities who perform certain services and functions within the park(s). These could include specialized maintenance, programming and events, community engagement, or other activities. Entities could have formal licensing and operating agreements, such as a non-profit delivering certain programming within the park, or operate more informally, such as a community park group that organizes clean-ups and community events.



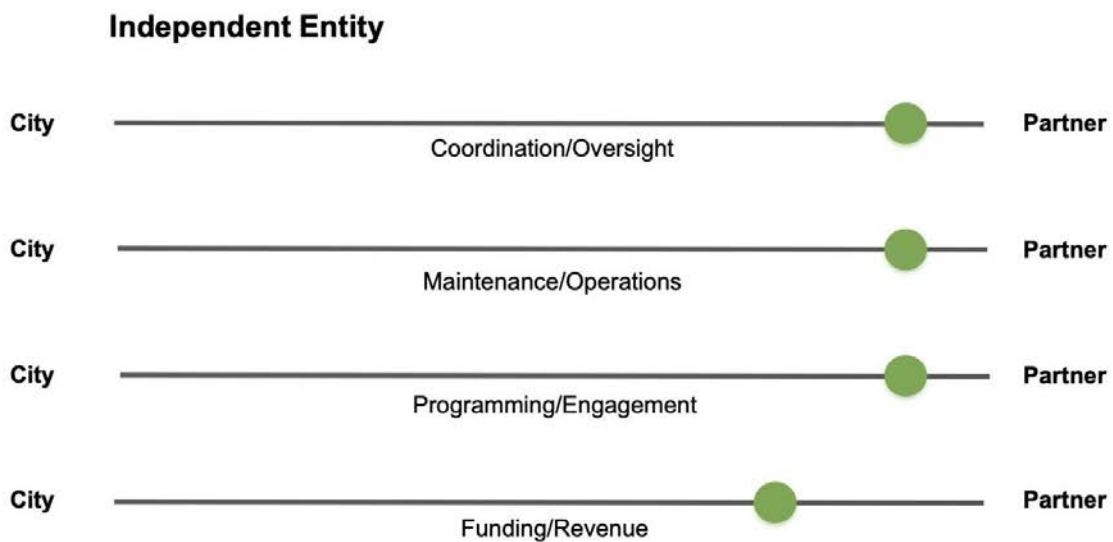
Hybrid

Municipal parks department enters into a formal agreement with a non-governmental organization to divide roles and responsibilities within one or more parks related to maintenance, programming, operations, and other services. This may include a direct service contract with the partner organization that includes municipal funding or other supports (e.g., office or event space), as well as outside fundraising and revenue generation to support partner activities. Though varied in its application, typically in this model a municipality would retain responsibility for maintenance and general operations while the partner organization would take on public-facing responsibilities such as programming, communications, and engagement.



Independent Entity

Municipal parks department enters into a formal agreement with a non-government organization to carry out maintenance, operations, programming and other services within a park. The city may retain membership on a Board of Directors and include financial accountability and transparency criteria. The independent entity becomes the “face” of the park, establishing a distinct identity and communications presence from the city and ensuring locally-responsive and creative programming. Municipality may provide funding or other supports to the independent entity, with the independent entity largely responsible for fundraising and budgeting. The independent entity may be an existing or newly formed non-profit or it may be an arms-length government entity, such as an agency that operates independently of the city.



Potential Funding Mechanisms

An overview of the most commonly used funding mechanisms for park partnerships:

- **Public funding**
 - Direct base funding from a municipal government
 - Government grants for certain activities or projects
- **Earned revenue**
 - Concessions (food and drink)
 - Programs and services (camps, tours, rentals)
 - Private events (space rentals—indoor and outdoor)
- **Philanthropic donations**
 - Foundation grants
 - Individual giving campaigns
- **Sponsorships**
 - Naming rights
 - Events and activations (public art display, annual festival)

Guiding Questions

These questions serve as a discussion guide for City staff when developing a strategy for park governance and partnerships. The answers to these questions can be used along with the accompanying framework to identify overall objectives and which governance models may be best suited to a particular park context. The questions can also be used to help guide conversations/negotiations with potential partners and surface both opportunities and challenges early on in the process.

Overall Goals and Motivations

- What is the motivation/goal for the City to enter into a partnership?
 - Consider: special expertise that is required for a site, a partner adding value in a certain area needed by the City, responding to a unique opportunity.
- What is the motivation and goal for a potential partner?
- How is the overall partnership maximizing what each partner can best bring to the table?
 - Consider: skills each partner brings, programmatic gaps that need to be filled, complementary areas.

Coordination/Oversight

- What is the level of public control the City hopes to retain over the park in terms of day to day decision-making abilities?
- What levels of policies, procedures, or formal/legal documentation would need to be in place to enable the partnership?
 - Consider: mechanisms to allow for a review of successes/challenges and evaluate progress, conflict resolution processes, oversight bodies/committees that may need to be created for transparency and community participation.

Maintenance/Operations

- Who is best suited to carry-out overall maintenance and operational needs? Are there any special requirements on the site that need to be considered?
 - Consider: new amenities/features, different landscaping and horticultural needs, higher levels of service expected/needed.

Programming/Engagement

- What are the goals for programming and community engagement and who might be best to serve those goals?
 - Consider: special programmatic needs (e.g., arts and culture identity), on-going work required to program the site (e.g., the desired scale of events/activations), existing partner or City-led events/activities/volunteer programs that can be brought to the site.

Funding/Fundraising

- What are the expectations for public funding and private funding?
- If private funding is expected, what level of balance is required/desired? How might different funding models affect comfort and access to the park for certain communities (e.g. lower income residents)?
 - Consider: the use of private events as a revenue generation mechanism, sponsored amenities/events, corporate logos/naming rights, financial accessibility (e.g., ticket prices, food sales).
- What tools or policies exist, or would need to exist, to enable a partner to raise private funding?
 - Consider: sponsorship policies, philanthropic donation policies, event permitting processes.

Roles & Responsibilities Scale

After completing the Guiding Questions exercise and while consulting the Decision-Making Matrix, use the scale below to locate desired City/partner roles and responsibilities.

Roles/Responsibilities Scale
Place a mark on the line to indicate more or less city/partner involvement

City	_____	Partner
	Coordination/Oversight	
City	_____	Partner
	Maintenance/Operations	
City	_____	Partner
	Programming/Engagement	
City	_____	Partner
	Funding/Revenue	

Decision-making Matrix

(See Appendix)

The decision-making matrix provides a breakdown of the pros and cons for each governance model under the categories of oversight/coordination, maintenance/operations, programming/engagement, and funding/fundraising. The accompanying Case Studies (next section) illustrate how these models may play out in practice.

Case Studies

This framework draws on learnings and examples from both Canadian and U.S. experience with park partnerships; however, it's important to recognize the different context in which U.S. park partnerships were formed and are sustained, as well as some of the critiques of widespread use of conservancy models and private funding within park management. Independent entities (i.e., park conservancies) with higher private fundraising ability are more prevalent in the U.S., whereas many Canadian park partnerships are more nascent and usually exist as hybrid models with high public involvement.

In the U.S., the growth of conservancies was fueled by a retreat in public funding for parks that caused a decline in park quality with private groups stepping in to fill a gap. This was how many park conservancies in New York were formed, including Bryant Park Corporation, Central Park Conservancy, and the Prospect Park Conservancy. Park budgets, while strained in Canada, have not seen the same drastic cuts as many U.S. cities.

Recent critiques of park conservancies and private park funding in the U.S., include concerns around big money donations distorting park planning towards donor visions as opposed to actual community needs, the potential to crowd-out public funding, and over-funding of showcase parks in affluent neighbourhoods—often with a higher proportion of white residents—than lower-income, racialized communities.

As a way to combat these, U.S. cities and park conservancies have turned to strategies that are designed to account for these challenges. This includes developing equity-based development and funding criteria ([High Line Network](#)), focusing on community engagement and planning processes ([Reimagining the Civic Commons](#)), and higher capacity conservancies helping to train/provide guidance to lower capacity park groups in other neighbourhoods (Central Park Conservancy's [Institute for Urban Parks](#).) While this case study review was not able to look in depth at these tools, they are worth further exploration as the VMC continues to develop.

Corktown Common, Toronto, ON

Partnership Type: Specialized City Parks Unit

Site Description: 7.3ha park with natural stormwater management features, playground, and open lawn

Website: <https://www.toronto.ca/data/parks/prd/facilities/complex/3499/index.html>



Takeaway for VMC

Certain parks may need specialized care for certain features or landscapes, which may best be done in-house by investing in training opportunities for park staff and through creating resources like new manuals and standards.

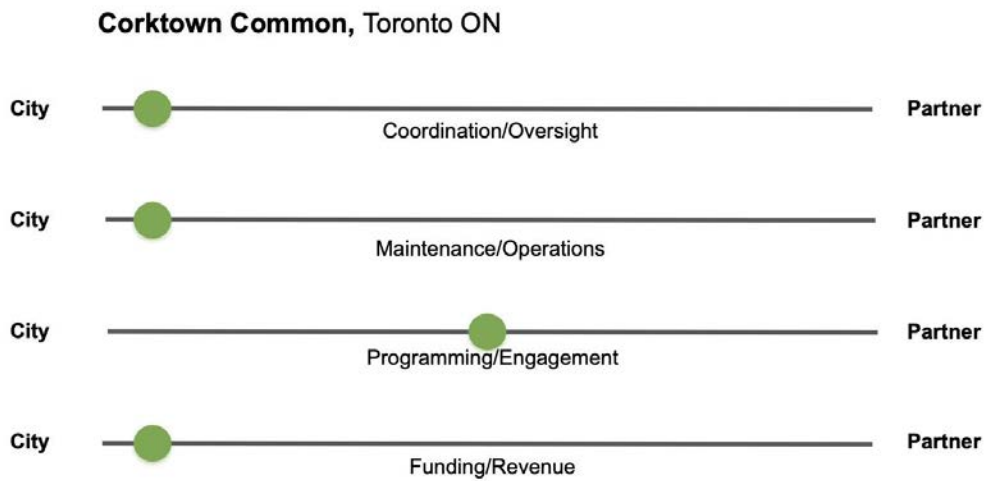
Overview

Located along the Don River, Corktown Common is a park that is also built as flood protection infrastructure, including a raised berm and wetland that can store stormwater. The park is also the first in Toronto that is designed to be managed entirely [using organic horticultural practices](#) and contains 700 different native tree species, thousands of native plants, and wildflowers to support pollinator habitats.

Learnings

The unique landscape of the park allowed the City the opportunity to curate a specially trained crew of city parks staff. Park managers were also offered the opportunity to train in an “Organic Horticultural Specialist” course at Humber College.

The City also worked with the landscape architects of the park, Michael van Valkenburgh Associates Inc., to put together an “Organic Landscape Maintenance” manual for the park, which provides an overview of practices and standards.



Terra Nova Rural Park, Richmond, BC

Partnership Type: Multiple Parties/Partners

Site Description: 25.5ha natural area park including playground and historic buildings

Website: <https://www.richmond.ca/parks/parks/SigParks/parkinfo/park.aspx?ID=80>



Takeaway for VMC

Involving multiple parties can help activate a park space by leveraging partners with existing program offerings; however, coordination can be complex and the multiple partners structure risks lacking a cohesive identity and strategy for the park.

Overview

Terra Nova Rural Park is a large natural area park including community gardens, an adventure playground, a caretaker building, and other historic buildings. The operations and maintenance of the park is carried out by the City of Richmond; however, the City has entered into a number of partnerships with local groups for programming.

There is also an indoor space available for use by community groups and other rentals called the Red Barn, which includes a commercial kitchen, though this operates on a cost recovery

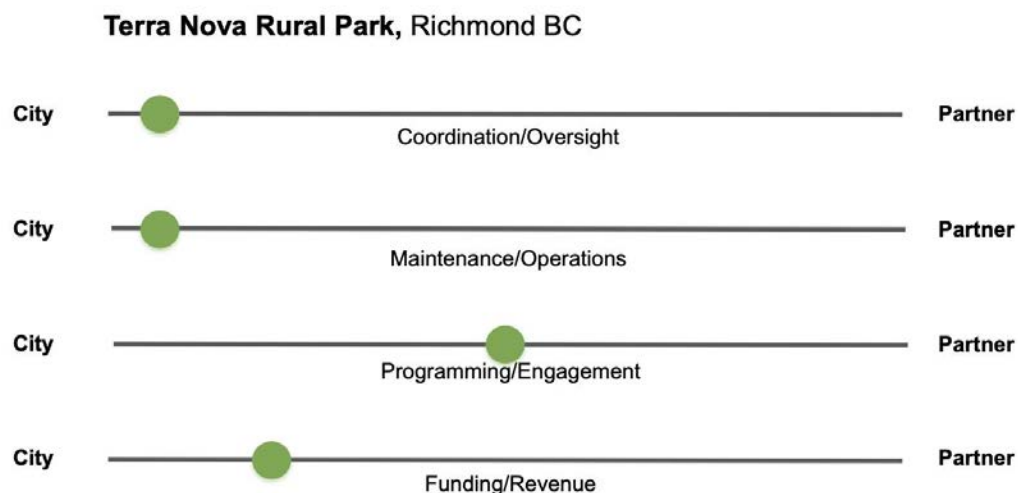
basis and is not a revenue generating tool for the City. The City also runs their own recreation programming such as yoga out of the barn.

In particular, there are three more formal partnerships with groups that operate out of buildings on-site, including the Thompson Community Association, Sharing Farm Society, and Richmond Food Security Society. These partnerships are governed through formal agreements, but there is no overarching governance or stakeholder body for the park as a whole.

Other partners include Parks Canada, which runs learn-to-camp programs for families, and Richmond Nature Park Society which runs programming such as nature walks in partnership with the City. The City also works with local volunteer groups who participate in stewardship activities such as invasive pulling and tree plantings through the City's Partners for Beautification program.

Learnings

Though there is no formal advisory council/stakeholder group in place, the City has tried in the past to initiate bringing together representatives of community partner organizations (i.e. groups that operate out of buildings on-site) into a unified group. The role/value of this group would be to coordinate programming to ensure it is complementary and strikes a balance between structured and unstructured park use, and to generate ideas about park-based initiatives and improvements. The City is developing a park management plan, and creating this group may be a part of that process.



Jim Deva Plaza, Vancouver, BC

Partnership Type: Hybrid Model

Site Description: 0.075ha (750sqm) plaza converted from roadway adjacent to busy downtown street.

Website: <https://westendbia.com/jim-deva-plaza/>



Takeaway for VMC

Using a pilot process to monitor a governance model can allow partners to refine as needed, respond to changing situations and pressures, and apply learnings more widely to other potential models.

Overview

Originally created by closing a roadway in the West End neighbourhood of downtown Vancouver, Jim Deva Plaza was part of a pilot program run by the City of Vancouver to trial different governance and stewardship models for public plazas as part of an overall Plaza Stewardship Strategy.

The Jim Deva Plaza model included a partnership between the City of Vancouver and the West End Business Improvement Association. While the City remained responsible for overall maintenance and garbage collection, the West End BIA played a role in day-to-day

management, programming, promotion, and micro-cleaning of the plazas as needed. The structure also included an Oversight Committee of community members and local organizations to provide input into decision-making.

The model was piloted for two years starting in 2015 with City staff [monitoring and refining the process](#) based on community feedback. This allowed the City to adjust based on learnings and feed those up into the larger Plaza Stewardship Strategy the City was creating.

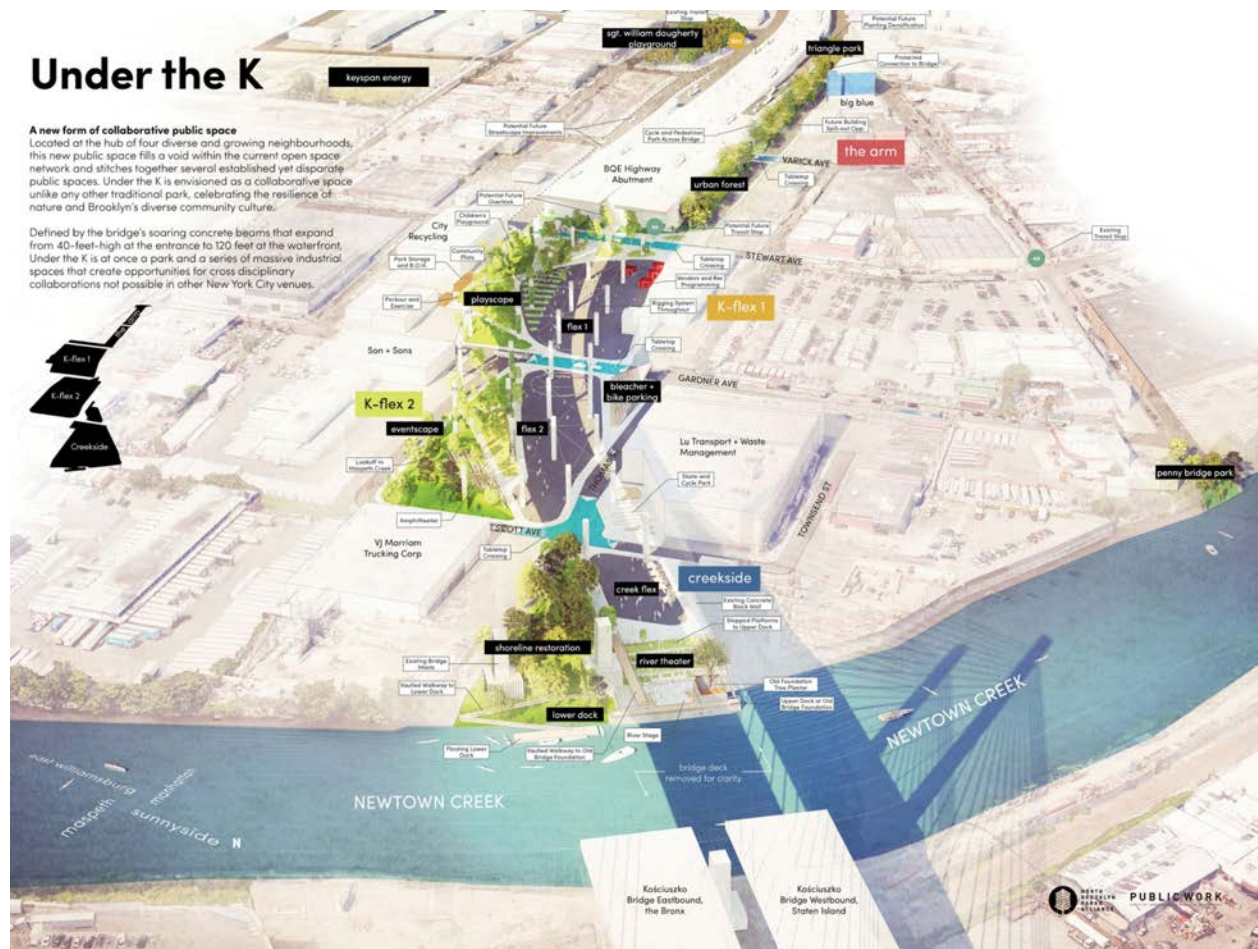
Learnings

Learnings included that the community partnership model required a lot of commitment from staff and partners; active use of the space required increased levels of maintenance, such as micro-cleaning that the West End BIA could take on; and that the community wanted to see a better balance between noisier special event programming and passive daily use.

Sustainable funding has also been a challenge. Results of a [2020 plaza stewardship workshop](#) held by the City found participants were mixed on potential funding tools that would allow for such models to be self-sustaining, such as sponsorships, private events, and marketing fees. Participants also wanted to see guidelines created on the frequency, size, and scale of events.



Website: <https://nbkparcs.org>



Rendering from Public Work of Under the K (Kosciuszko Bridge) project.

Takeaway for VMC

Establishing a park partnership that involves multiple parks in an area can help provide more even services and opportunities while helping to share resources and programming.

Overview

Formed in 2003, North Brooklyn Parks Alliance (NBK Parks) is a non-profit organization that grew out of the environmental justice movement with a mission to not focus on a single park, as is common with parks conservancies, but to steward all the parks within North Brooklyn District by driving both public and private investment into parks.

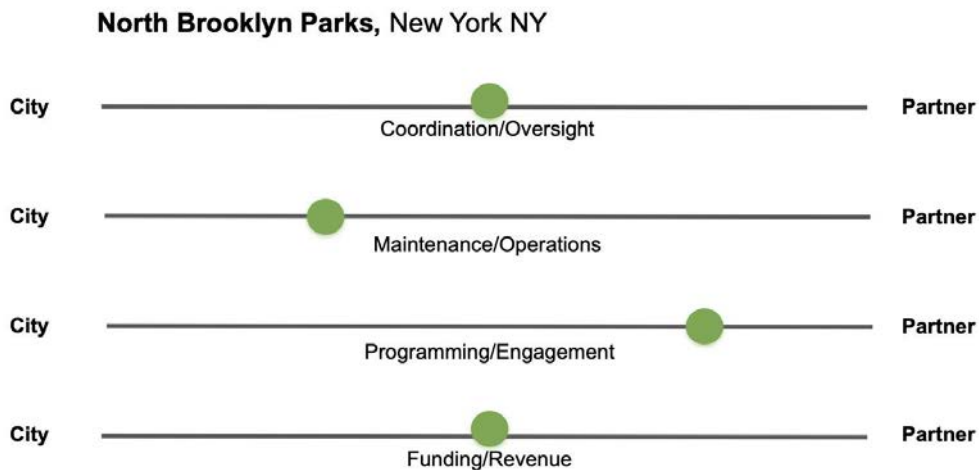
The group's annual budget includes contributions and grants, including from NYC Parks. The Board of Directors are also required to make financial contributions towards the group's operations each year and include both leaders from the community and business sector. The group has also set up a Community Committee of residents, which includes other community-based organisations and park friends groups in the area, that advise the Board.

NBK Parks has a number of different areas of work including growing the amount of open spaces in North Brooklyn, organizing volunteer work such as corporate clean-ups in parks, spearheading improvements such as farmer's markets and other amenities in parks, and programming pool parties, yoga, and concert series.

Recently, the group has lined up funding and started a design process for creating a new public space underneath the Kosciuszko Bridge as well as advocacy and community organizing around a proposal to deck over part of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway to create a park dubbed BQ Green.

Learnings

NBK Parks notes that their multi-park model “enables the organization to raise and distribute resources and funds across the neighborhood with the goal of building a more equitable neighborhood for all.”



Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, MA

Partnership Type: Independent Entity

Site Description: 7ha linear downtown park with several programmed areas, gardens, and open lawn

Revenue/Expenditures (2019): \$6,599,477 / \$6,238,352

Website: <https://www.rosekennedygreenway.org>



Takeaway for VMC

A highly programmed urban park is costly to maintain and often requires an ongoing stable source of operational funding either from a public entity, such as the City, or through the creation of another institution such as a Business Improvement Area.

Overview

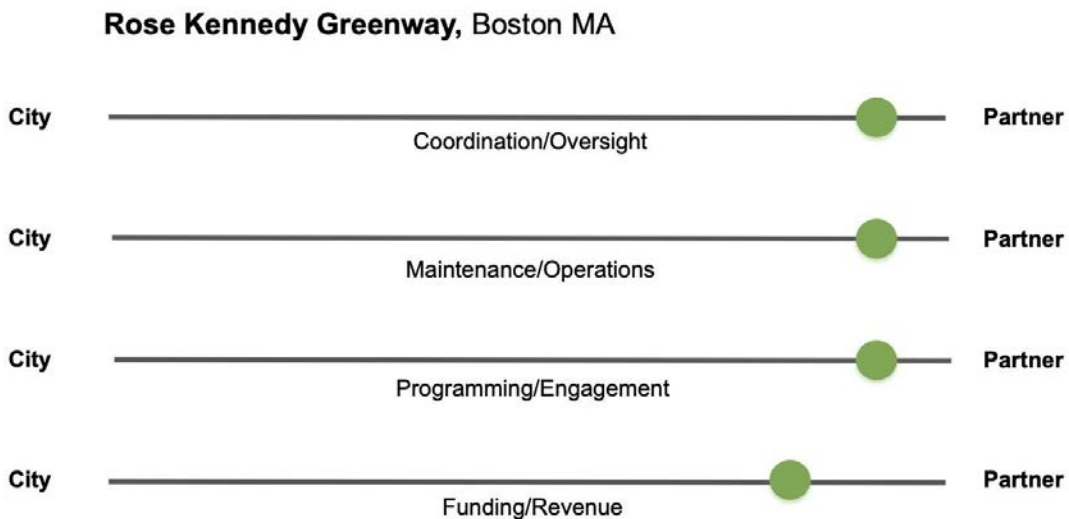
Opened in 2008, the Rose Kennedy Greenway is a 2.4km linear park through downtown Boston built atop a buried urban highway. The park is run by the Greenway Conservancy, which is an incorporated non-profit with a 20 member Board of Directors and a team of over 30 staff. The Conservancy is responsible for all operations, maintenance, and programming of the park and operates through multi-year lease agreements with the landowners (MASS Department of Transportation).

The Conservancy runs a lot of programming in the park, including arts programming. It employs several horticulture, programming, and public art staff and is assisted by a Public Art Advisory Group. In 2019, the Conservancy put on over 400 free events. The Conservancy also employs “Park Rangers” which provide visitor information and are trained to address the needs of park users that may require medical care or social services.

Learnings

Financial sustainability has been a challenge for the organization, as the highly programmed park is quite costly to run and maintain. Prior to 2018, the Conservancy had received large government contributions towards its operating budget in the realm of approximately \$2 million per year. However, once this [was threatened to be cut off](#), a new financial arrangement was created that included establishing a new Business Improvement District, which now supports a large part of the operational funding for the Conservancy. For example, [in 2019](#), the BID contribution to overall operations was nearly 20% of the overall budget at \$1.25 million.

The Conservancy also funds a large portion of its operations through earned income from concessions and attractions throughout the park, including beer gardens. In 2019, earned income made up 25% of the overall operating budget at \$1.64 million.



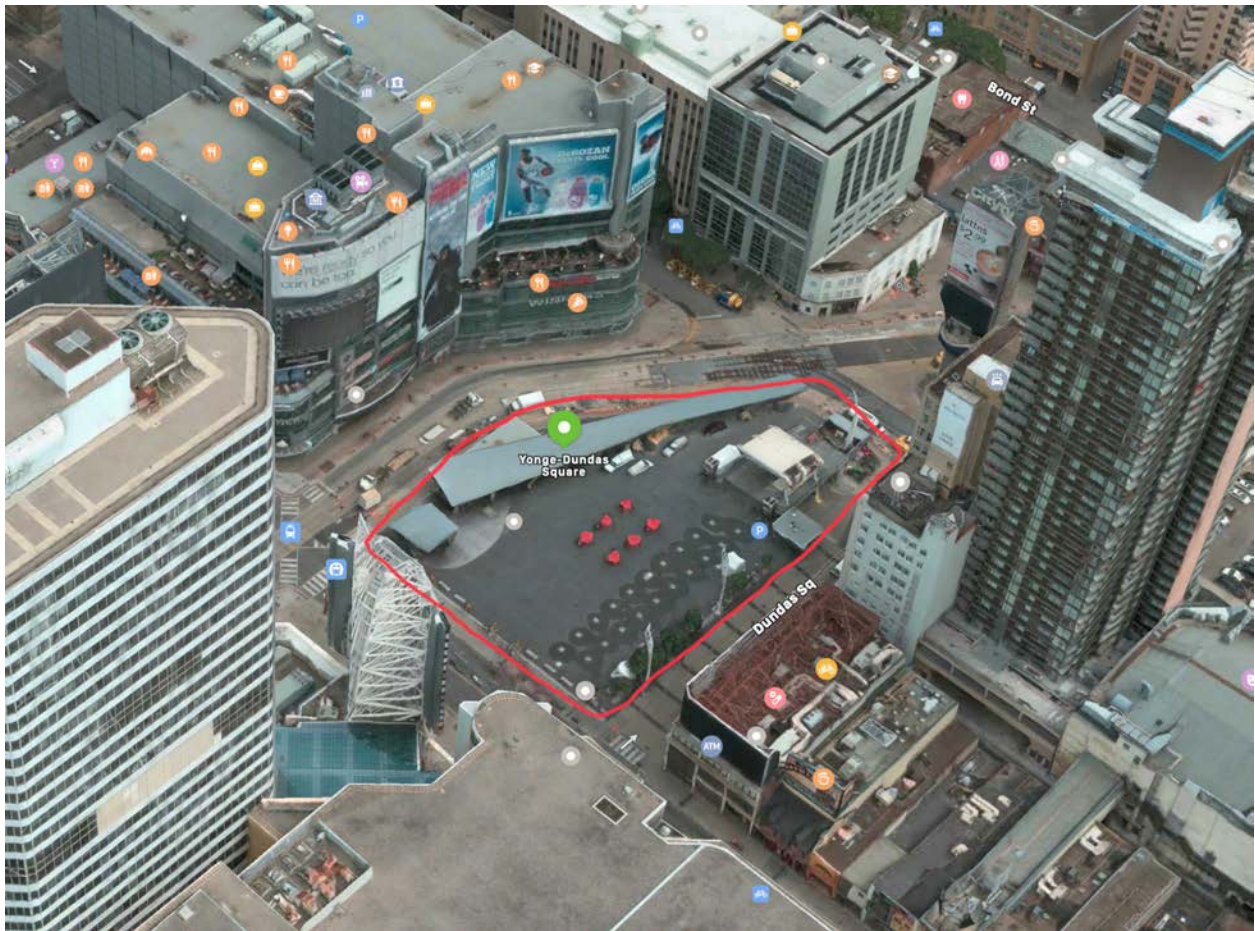
Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto, ON

Partnership Type: Independent Entity

Site Description: 0.4ha plaza in high-traffic downtown location

Revenue/Expenditures (2019): \$3,258,439 / \$3,350,227

Website: <https://www.ydsquare.ca>



Takeaway for VMC

The City can “create” its own non-profit structure to help manage a park through creating an arms-length agency, while retaining oversight through appointments on the board.

Overview

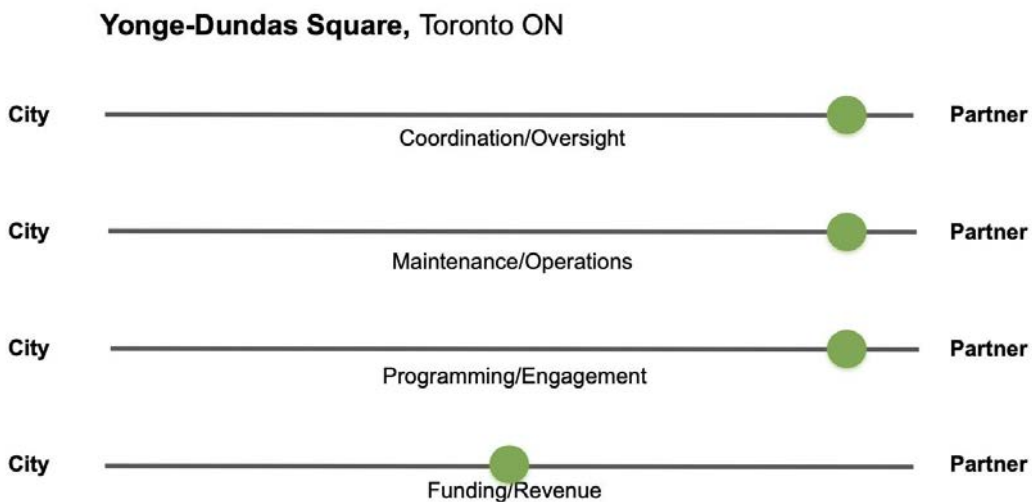
Yonge-Dundas Square is a popular urban square in downtown Toronto that is owned by the City, but operated, maintained and programmed by an arms-length board of management. The square accommodates approximately 240 events per year, some privately-run and some run by the Square itself through its in-house event management staff.

The Board of Directors is appointed by City Council and includes the local councillor, nearby businesses/institutions, and residents, and has delegated authority to create multi-year business plans and assessments for refurbishing the Square, establish booking and fee policies, and enter into sponsorship deals. The Square is managed by a staff of approximately eight, including a general manager.

Learnings

As a City-created agency, Yonge-Dundas Square is governed by a Relationship Framework that clearly outlines the division of responsibilities and roles between both the City and the Square. The framework provides the Square with the ability to maintain a lively event schedule of both in-house events as well as partner events that help provide funding and activate the space year round, providing a focal point for cultural activities in the downtown.

While the goal was for the Square to be financially self-sufficient, the City has contributed to its base operating funding each year. Prior to the pandemic, the City had forecasted the Square to be self-sufficient starting in 2020, but pandemic-related event cancellations has [set back this process](#) with the city continuing to contribute to the Square's operations.



The Bentway, Toronto, ON

Partnership Type: Independent Entity

Site Description: 4ha linear public space under elevated highway

Revenue/Expenditures (2018/9): \$4,100,600 / \$3,849,600

Website: <https://www.thebentway.ca>

Takeaway for VMC

Ensuring an entity has a clear objective, such as arts and cultural programming focus, can help distinguish a space, provide clarity on roles, and establish a unique identity for the public.

Overview

The Bentway is a 1.75km linear public space underneath the elevated Gardiner Expressway in the western portion of downtown Toronto. The project was spurred by a private donation of \$25 million, which included work to develop a new governance model to operate the unique space, envisioned as a highly programmed arts and culture corridor.

The model of a new non-profit was proposed and ultimately unanimously approved by Toronto City Council in 2016. Following, a “[use agreement](#)” that outlined the roles and responsibilities of the new Bentway Conservancy was approved.

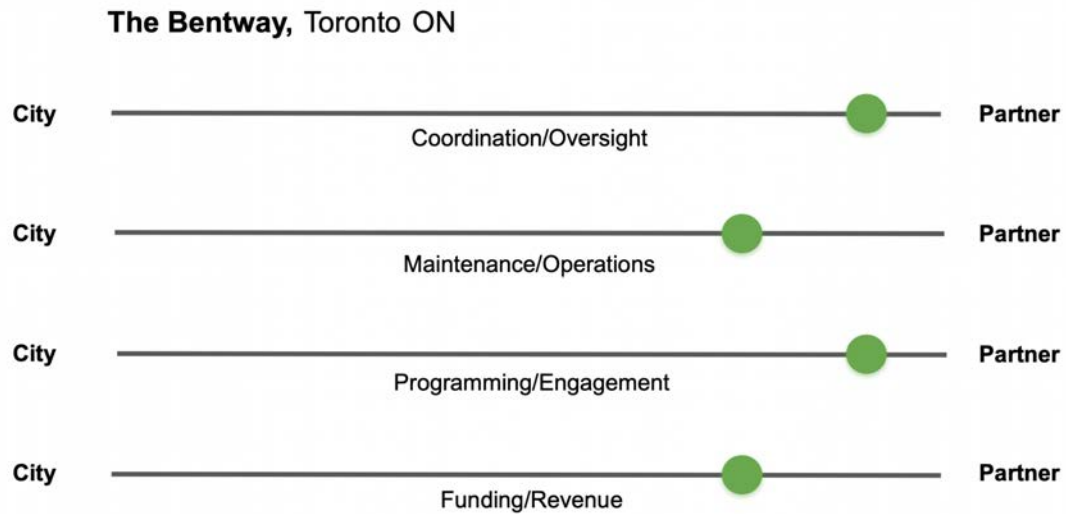
The Bentway hosts numerous cultural and arts events and programming year round and operates a skating loop. Programming includes funding for local Toronto artists, but also signature events that bring internationally recognized artists and performers to the space, such as 2019’s Museum of the Moon exhibit.

Currently the Bentway includes a staff of 21, including two Co-Executive Directors as well as staff in programming, development, marketing, and engagement. Staff are overseen by a Board of Directors that includes the local City Councillor.

Learnings

The Bentway has broad leeway for fundraising and partnership development within its lands, as set out by the use agreement with the City. It develops its own fundraising strategy, which includes grants, developing corporate sponsorships, and event-based revenues for use of the site by third parties. This last revenue generating tool has led to some controversy, such as over the use of the site for a [pop-up dining experience](#), ultimately leading Bentway staff to address equity-focused initiatives in future programming.

Key to the creation of the Bentway Conservancy was [a study commissioned](#) by Waterfront Toronto that was undertaken by HR&A Advisors and Park People to look at governance options as well as operational costs. This allowed for a robust review and discussion of different options for a governance structure as well as high-level cost-estimates for the public space's ultimate yearly operating budget and potential revenue sources and projections.



Recommended Next Steps and Further Work

- For devising transparent, accountable, functional, and flexible governance models:
 - Build partnerships by starting with a shared values-based framework that ensures each partner—City, private and/or non-profit—are aligned and expectations are clear.
- For phasing decisions as the VMC develops:
 - Design governance models as two-year pilots and include evaluation criteria (e.g., type/amount of programming, community involvement/representation, financial reporting, maintenance standards, etc.) that allows the City and partners to monitor progress and collectively understand what is working and what may need refreshing.
- For involving community members and other stakeholders as VMC develops (e.g., as residents and businesses move in):
 - Build partnership and governance planning into the park engagement process at the start of new park builds, as the City would with park design and amenities, including consultations with potential partners and the public.

MODEL	PARTIES INVOLVED	ADVANTAGES	RISKS/DRAWBACKS	Coordination/ Oversight
City-led	Municipal parks department	- No special setup or additional policies/structures required. - Maintains total public control.	- Lacks single focus and coherent identity, which may not serve destination and other special-purpose parks in either maintenance needs or programming needs. - Lacks flexibility and locally-responsive benefits of more focused and non-government structures in terms of service delivery and fundraising. - Dependent on city operation budgets for all activities.	Who: City Advantages: - Simplified coordination - no external partners to liaise with. - City able to retain high level of control/influence over park. - Does not require creation of new staff structures within city parks department (compared to Specialized Unit model). Drawbacks: - City must invest staff resources in planning service delivery.
Specialized unit	Specialized unit within municipal parks department	- Dedicated parks team can provide specialized care, programming and focus. - Maintains total public control.	- Requires the creation of a new internal structure. - Potentially requires specialized training. - Lacks flexibility of non-government structures in terms of fundraising. - Dependent on city operational budgets for all activities.	Who: City Advantages: - Simplified coordination - no external partners to liaise with. - City able to retain high level of control/influence over park. - Creation of designated staff team allows for clear delineation of roles and responsibilities as well as a specialized focus on a particular park. Drawbacks: - Requires creation of new staffing structure within parks department. - City must invest staff resources in planning service delivery.
Multiple parties/ partners	Municipal parks department + one or more external partners (e.g. non-profits, park friends groups, BIAs, etc.)	- Builds engagement with multiple groups and thus potentially reaches more community members with different types of programming and avenues for participation. - Partner groups can bring their own funding and programming to the park. - Maintains public control over park operations.	- Challenges with coordinating multiple groups and potentially competing interests. - Dependent on city operational budgets for maintenance. - Multiple partners may mean lack of coherent identity for park and confusion amongst the public of who is "in charge."	Who: City or partner organization Advantages: - Roles and responsibilities can be tailored to each partner's strength. - Less formal structure (e.g., licensing agreements, permitting) can allow for flexibility and evolution over time. Drawbacks: - Less formal structure can mean coordinating multiple partners' activities in a space can be complex and time-consuming - need clear oversight structures in place. - Involvement of multiple parties can sometimes create communication challenges and/or lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities as well as competing interests.
Hybrid model	Municipal parks department + one non-governmental organization	- City and partner organization can each bring their own unique strengths. - Single partner reduces administrative burden and creates opportunity for clarity between city, partner organization, and the public on roles and responsibilities. - Partner can bring programming and other expertise as well as provide fundraising not as accessible to a city (e.g., government grants, private donations, sponsorships). - Partner can help provide coherent identity and specialized focus.	- Risk of city and partner clashes if upfront work defining shared values/goals and processes for decision-making are not clarified. - City usually still needs to provide funding for operations and maintenance, though a partner may bring their own funding to top these up.	Who: City or partner organization Advantages: - Roles and responsibilities can be tailored to each partner's strength. - Agreement with single partner can provide decision-making clarity. Drawbacks: - If clear roles/responsibilities are not outlined, can result in overlap, conflicts, and/or confusion in who is ultimately "responsible" for a particular area. - Can be less clear to the public who is in charge of what if not communicated properly.
Independent entity (non profit or agency of the city)	Non-governmental or arms-length government entity	- Partner assumes responsibility for largely all park operations, programming and services. - Partner can provide greater flexibility in fundraising/earned revenue generation. - Partner can provide locally-responsive and nimble programming. - Partner can maintain a coherent public identity for the park, providing a clear entry point for community engagement, including the potential for community committees and other structures.	- Requires goals/values to be clarified up front between the city, public, and independent entity to ensure a shared vision. - Requires some level of accountability/oversight structures/policies to be put in place, such as board of directors/management with appointments from the city and public. - Risks of over-commercialization and creating a privatized feel if revenue generation and fundraising activities rely too heavily on sponsorships and earned income or is not done in a sensitive way. - As overall owner of public spaces, city may be on the hook for revenue shortfalls and should be prepared to support the independent entity with some level of base funding, especially in early years.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - Clarity internally and from the public on who is in charge in a particular park. - A single entity focused on a single park or set of parks can result in quick decision-making that can respond to the local context. - A board of directors/oversight committee can include members of the public, local politicians, and city staff. Drawbacks: - If transparency and community involvement mechanisms are not robust, may feel like decisions are being made privately in a public space. - City gives up sole decision-making power and a certain amount of control.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES		
Maintenance/ Operations	Programming/ Engagement	Funding/Fundraising
Who: City Advantages: - City can maintain park to city standards. Drawbacks: - Specialized plantings and amenities may require additional training or higher levels of maintenance, depending on the park. - Additional operating budget pressures.	Advantages: - City can maintain control over identity of the space by curating programming. Drawbacks: - Budget demands and costs of maintaining programming. - Depending on programming, City may not have in-house capacity or expertise (e.g., arts and culture programming).	Who: City Advantages: - Lack of private partnerships helps to maintain public feel. Drawbacks: - Little ability to bring in external revenue—largely funded through municipal parks budget. - Public entity means less flexibility around revenue options (e.g., bringing in private donations, applying for grants).
Who: City Advantages: - Dedicated crew with skills to meet unique maintenance needs of new signature parks. Drawbacks: - May be public perception of VMC parks receiving "special treatment".	Who: City Advantages: - City can maintain control over identity of the space by curating programming. - City unit can create locally-responsive programming. Drawbacks: - Budget demands and costs of maintaining programming. - Operational costs of developing/acquiring in-house programming expertise.	Who: City Advantages: - Lack of private partnerships helps to maintain public feel. - Specialized unit could develop unique fundraising/earned revenue models for the park. Drawbacks: - Largely funded through municipal parks budget. - Public entity means less flexibility around revenue options (e.g., bringing in private donations, applying for grants).
Who: City or partner organization Advantages: - City can retain maintenance responsibilities and maintain park to city standards. - Depending on agreements, a partner may contribute capacity or funding to "top-up" maintenance above and beyond city standards (e.g., for special amenities). Drawbacks: - Regardless of whether operations/maintenance is provided by the city or a partner entity, the city will likely need to contribute to funding.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - City can continue to run city programs in the park. - Partners can deliver locally-responsive and creative programming. - Partners can bring already funded and created programming to a space (e.g., day camps they may run in other parks). - City may not have to contribute funding, but could contribute in-kind (e.g., free or reduced cost indoor/outdoor space). Drawbacks: - Requires coordination by the city otherwise could result in programming conflicts and confusion between parties. - Could create administrative burdens through managing permits and/or licensing agreements for multiple parties. - Potential for lack of cohesive programming plan and park identity.	Who: City and partner organizations Advantages: - Non-profit partners can help generate funding for the park through fundraising (e.g. grant writing) or on-site revenue generation (e.g. concessions). - Fundraising usually goes towards supporting creative, local programming and/or "top-up" maintenance needs. Drawbacks: - Multiple partners and lack of overall structure means fundraising may lack cohesiveness, with each group fundraising for their own activities in the space. - City usually still funding park operations and maintenance through municipal budget.
Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - City can retain maintenance responsibilities and maintain park to city standards, or can contract this to the non-profit partner. - Depending on agreements, a partner may contribute capacity or funding to "top-up" maintenance above and beyond city standards (e.g., for special amenities). Drawbacks: - Regardless of whether operations/maintenance is provided by the city or a partner entity, the city will likely need to contribute to funding.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - Partner can deliver locally-responsive and creative programming. - Single entity can deliver cohesive programming plan and maintain public identity for the park. - City may not have to contribute funding, but could contribute in-kind (e.g., free or reduced cost indoor/outdoor space). Drawbacks: - City may have less control over programming or ability to run city programs in the park depending on agreement. - May lack clarity from the public on who to contact to get involved, depending on how roles/responsibilities are divided between City and partner.	Who: City and partner organizations Advantages: - Single partner retains greater flexibility in pursuing funding sources depending on agreements with the City, such as entering into sponsorship agreements, applying for government and foundation grants, running private giving campaigns, assessment revenues (if a BIA), and other earned income such as concessions and events. - Can contribute in-kind resources, such as space within park buildings. Drawbacks: - Municipal policies around earned revenue, sponsorship, and events could limit revenue generating opportunities of an independent entity. - Could result in an unbalanced private/public feel if an overall framework is not established between City and entity about what is appropriate/allowed. - City still needs to provide base funding, usually for maintenance.
Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - City does not need to staff maintenance usually. - Maintenance practices can be tailored to specific context and result in higher level of maintenance/specialized practices. Drawbacks: - Could result in perception of two-tiered maintenance in relation to other city parks. - Likely still requires operational funding to non-profit partner of some kind.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - Partner can deliver locally-responsive and creative programming. - Single entity can deliver cohesive programming plan and maintain public identity for the park. - Single entity means clarity for the public on who to contact to get involved. - City usually does not have to contribute funding. Drawbacks: - City may have less control over programming or ability to run city programs in the park depending on agreement.	Who: Usually partner organization Advantages: - Partner retains greater flexibility in pursuing funding sources, such as entering into sponsorship agreements, applying for government and foundation grants, running private giving campaigns, assessment revenues (if a BIA), and other earned income such as concessions and events. - Partner is able to respond in a more nimble way to changing circumstances if given decision-making authority and power to raise and budget funds. Drawbacks: - Municipal policies around earned revenue, sponsorship, and events could limit revenue generating opportunities of an independent entity. - Could result in an unbalanced private/public feel if an overall framework is not established between City and entity about what is appropriate/allowed. - Requires policies/procedures to ensure transparency and accountability within budgeting and also equitable and inclusive access (e.g., concessions used as revenue source are not priced high, any fees don't limit access to lower income community members, etc.). - City may still need to provide base funding, usually for maintenance, especially in the earlier years before the entity has matured.

Appendix 6.0 Public Engagement Report

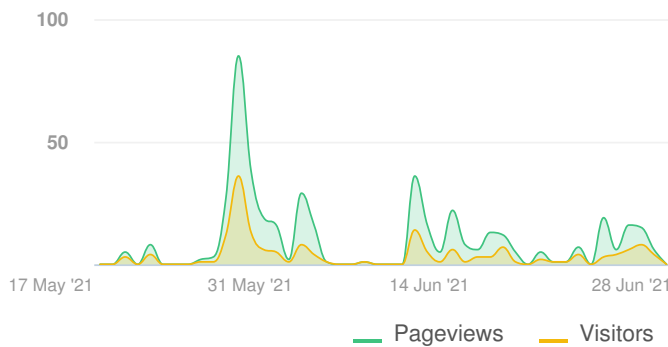
Project Report

17 May 2021 - 01 July 2021

Have Your Say Vaughan VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan



Visitors Summary

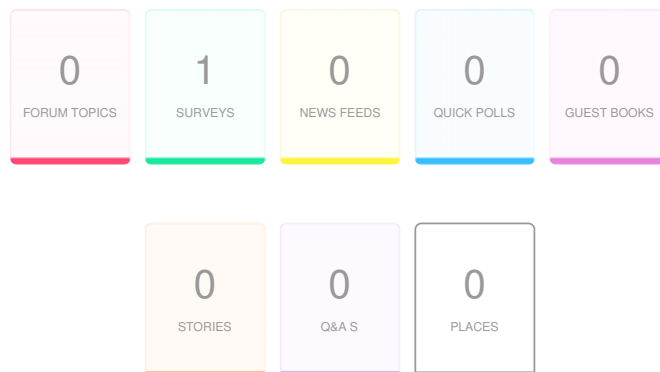


Highlights

TOTAL VISITS	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	
186	36	
NEW REGISTRATIONS		
0		
ENGAGED VISITORS	INFORMED VISITORS	AWARE VISITORS
131	155	211

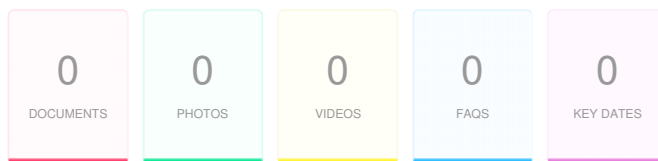
Aware Participants		211		Engaged Participants		131					
Aware Actions Performed		Participants		Engaged Actions Performed		Registered		Unverified		Anonymous	
Visited a Project or Tool Page		211									
Informed Participants		155		Contributed on Forums		0		0		0	
Informed Actions Performed		Participants		Participated in Surveys		2		2		115	
Viewed a video		0		Contributed to Newsfeeds		0		0		0	
Viewed a photo		0		Participated in Quick Polls		0		0		0	
Downloaded a document		0		Posted on Guestbooks		0		0		0	
Visited the Key Dates page		2		Contributed to Stories		0		0		0	
Visited an FAQ list Page		0		Asked Questions		0		0		0	
Visited Instagram Page		0		Placed Pins on Places		0		0		0	
Visited Multiple Project Pages		28		Contributed to Ideas		3		8		4	
Contributed to a tool (engaged)		131									

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



Tool Type	Engagement Tool Name	Tool Status	Visitors	Contributors		
				Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Survey Tool	VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan Survey	Archived	145	2	2	115
Ideas	What are the most important things that parks and open sp...	Archived	22	3	8	4

INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



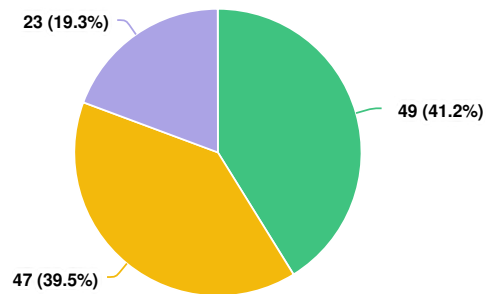
Widget Type	Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Views/Downloads
Key Dates	Key Date	2	3

ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan Survey

Visitors	145	Contributors	119	CONTRIBUTIONS	119
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Should the design, features and facilities within South Urban Park differ from North Urban Park?



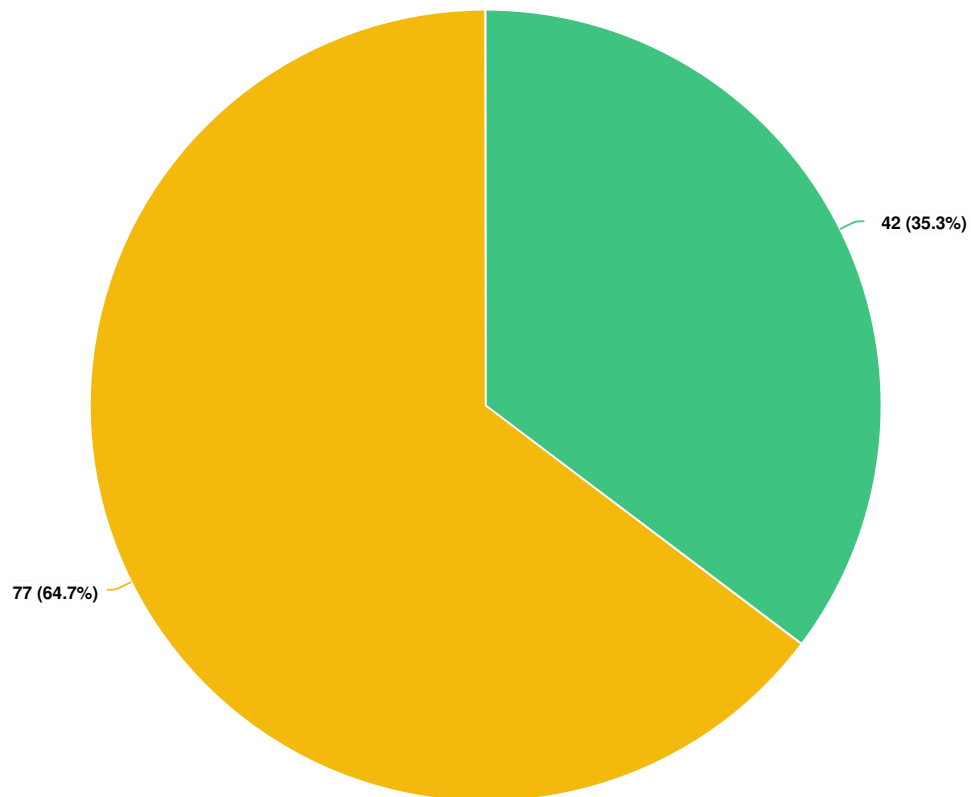
Question options

- Yes, the South Urban Park should have more spaces for markets, arts and cultural events.
- Yes, the South Urban Park should have more sports facilities (e.g. for basketball, volleyball, skate park, adult exercise).
- No, the South Urban Park shouldn't differ – I like the emphasis on leisure and flexible park spaces in North Urban Park.

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

Which approach would you take to designing neighbourhood parks in the VMC?



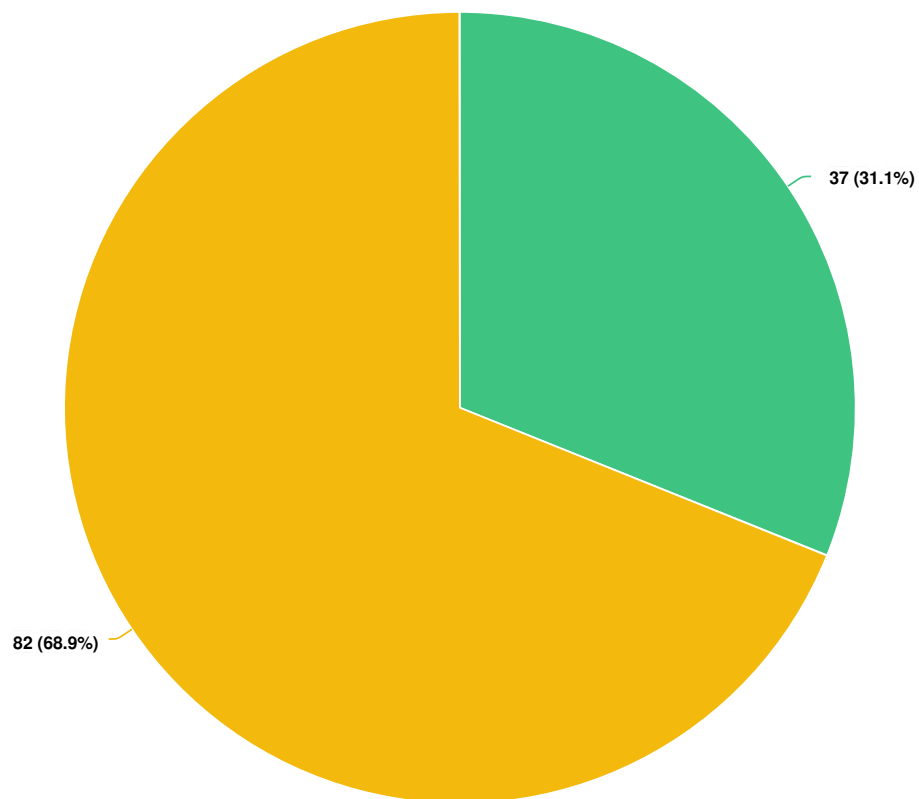
Question options

- ☐ I would prioritize facilities. ☐ I would prioritize green features.

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

In establishing parks close to the VMC, what matters most to you?



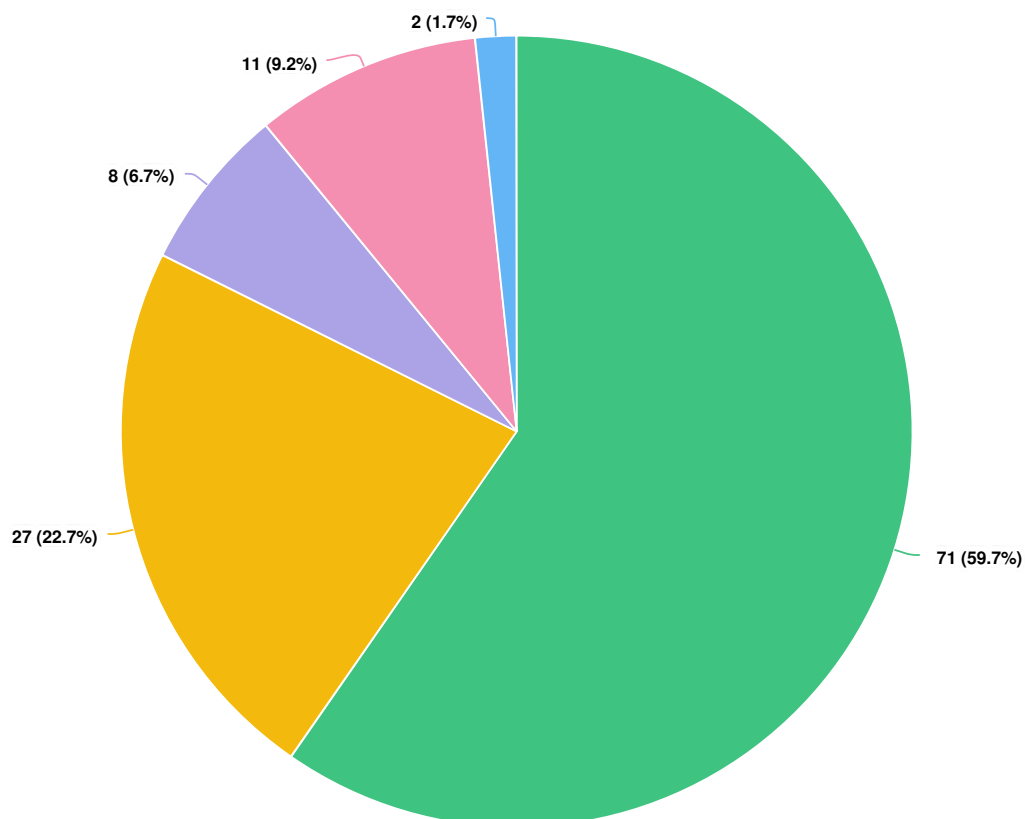
Question options

- ☐ The size of the park and number of facilities available. ☐ Convenient access by walking or cycling.

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

How important are separated cycling and pedestrian facilities on the Jane Street Bridge to your choice to walk or cycle to parks and open space south of the VMC?



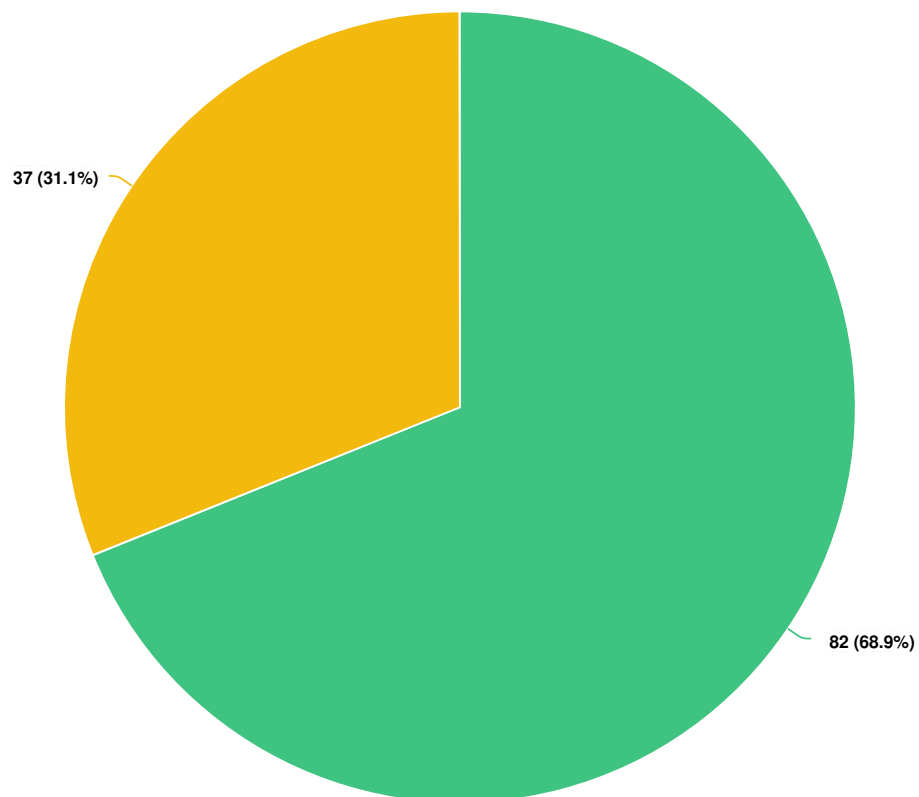
Question options

- Very important – I will only feel comfortable walking or cycling over the bridge if physically separated from traffic.
- Somewhat important – physical separation is ideal, but I feel comfortable using a standard sidewalk or bike lane.
- Not very important – I feel very comfortable using a standard sidewalk or bike lane.
- Not at all important – I am more likely to drive or take transit to any park south of the VMC.
- Not at all important – I don't see myself visiting a park south of the VMC.

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

How should the City design the environmental open spaces and stormwater ponds on the western side of the VMC?



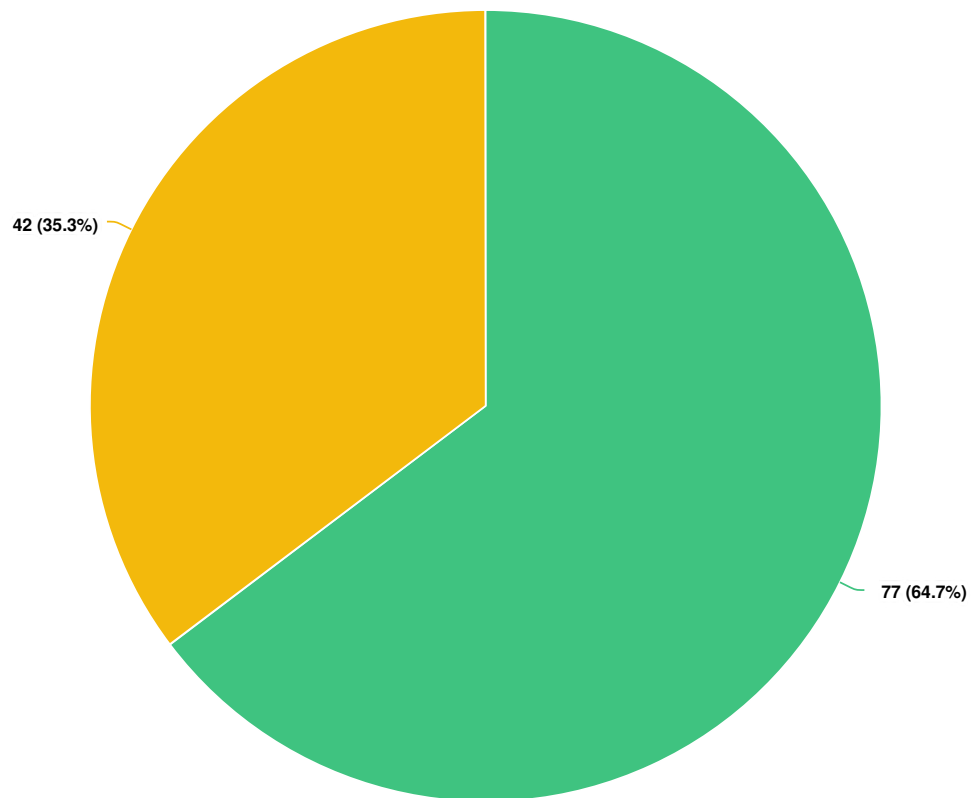
Question options

- ☒ Trails and lookouts meet my needs. ☐ I want bridges and decks that allow me to get next to the water.

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

South of Highway 7, would you prefer to see Millway Promenade designed as:



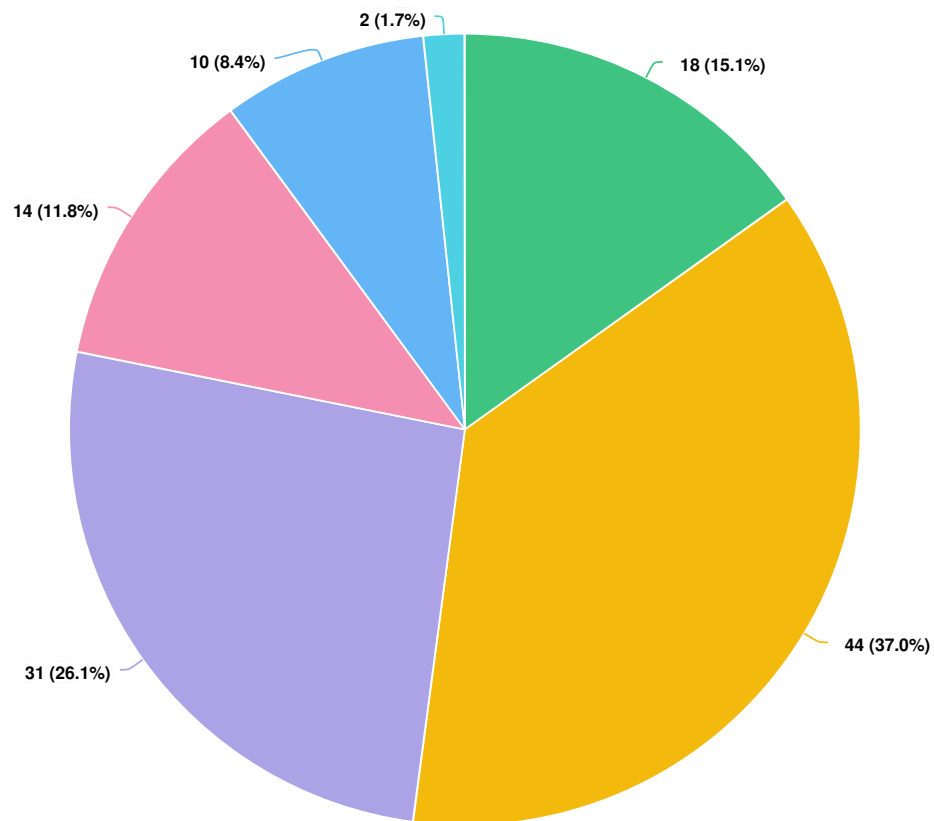
Question options

- ☒ An urban promenade, with a paved walkway and adjacent cafes and retail, like the original concept
- ☐ A linear green park, with more planting, trees and green features, with retail and cafes further away

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

What is your age?



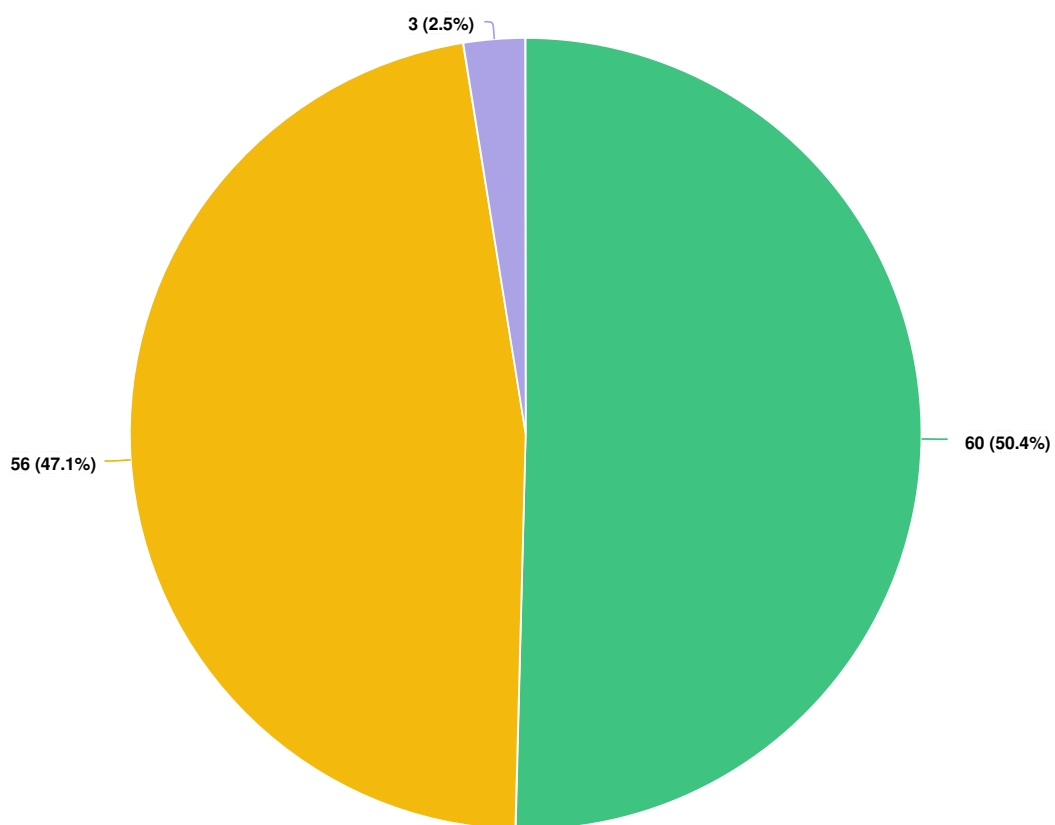
Question options

18-24 years old 25-34 years old 35-44 years old 45-54 years old 55-64 years old Prefer not to say

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

What is your gender?



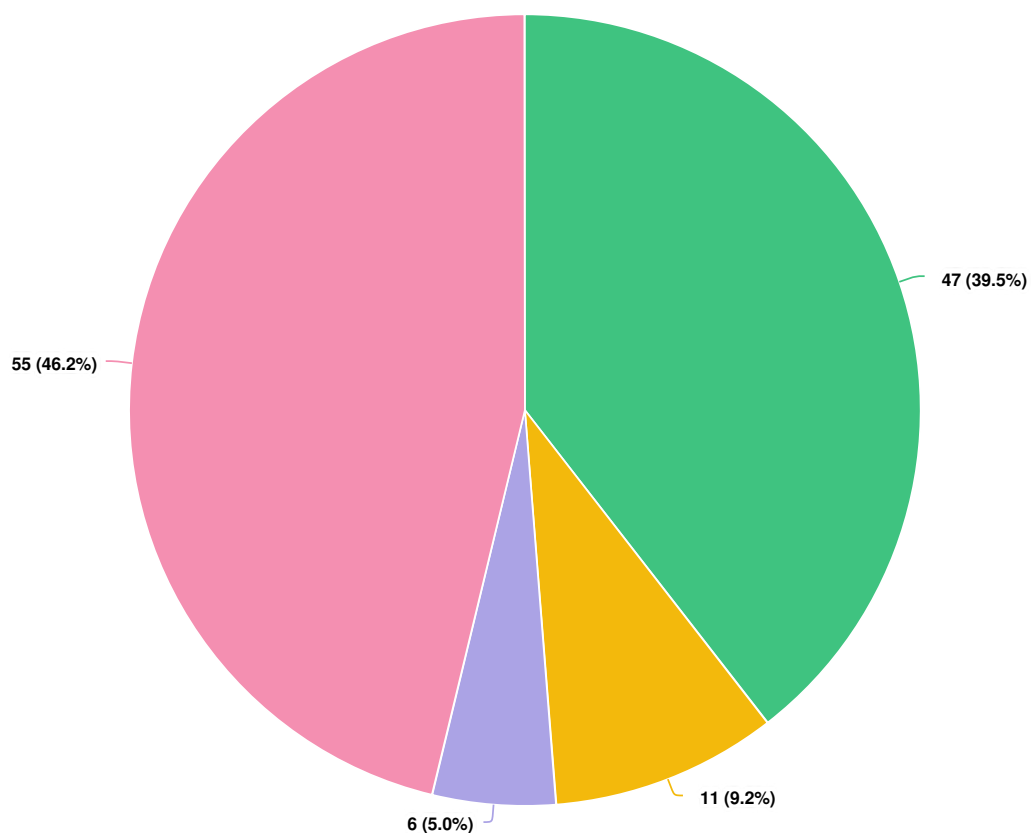
Question options

Female Male Prefer not to say

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

Would you like to be contacted by the City of Vaughan about other future conversations about City decisions or matters?



Question options

- Yes, I would like to be contacted about all future engagement opportunities on City-wide decisions or matters.
- Yes, I would like to be contacted, but only about future engagement opportunities on VMC-related matters.
- Yes, I would like to be contacted, but only about future engagement opportunities on parks and open space in the VMC.
- No thanks.

Mandatory Question (119 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

IDEAS

What are the most important things that parks and open space in the VMC must provide?

Visitors 22		Contributors 15	CONTRIBUTIONS 22
25 May 21 Josh		Outdoor pool. Outdoor trail for running, cycling. Outdoor off-leash dog park. Outdoor tennis courts, soccer field, baseball diamond. Outdoor pool. Outdoor trail for running, cycling. Outdoor off-leash dog park. Outdoor tennis courts, soccer field, baseball diamond.	
VOTES 0	UNVOTES 0		
25 May 21 Logan		Hidden road dividers e.g. large flower boxes to prevent cars from hopping the curb and driving into the park. Need to be diverse and not completely uniform	
VOTES 0	UNVOTES 0		
28 May 21 Nic		Piazza & Bike Lanes & Walking Paths Outdoor gathering area with restaurants, shops, bars, seating, possible market area. Bike lanes Walking paths Tennis Courts	
VOTES 1	UNVOTES 0		
08 June 21 theizreigs		Sanitization stations It would be amazing to have this as a post pandemic feature all around the park or high food traffic areas	
VOTES 0	UNVOTES 0		
10 June 21 Michael D		Adequate washrooms are needed, as well as proper bike lanes physically separated from the road, close cafes would also be ideal	
VOTES 0	UNVOTES 0		

IDEAS

What are the most important things that parks and open space in the VMC must provide?

11 June 21 LamotheB <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	1	0	Cricket? I'm not aware of any cricket pitches in Vaughan. They can double as large grass picnic areas when not being used for sport.
VOTES	UNVOTES				
1	0				
11 June 21 Rchive <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	4	0	Bevvies in the park Let's treat us like adults and provide space for picnics with some wine .
VOTES	UNVOTES				
4	0				
14 June 21 cjames10 <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	3	0	Ensure an active street life exists in Vaughan, Follow the European model of city centers - Patios, alcohol in public spaces, arts/culture
VOTES	UNVOTES				
3	0				
14 June 21 cjames10 <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	3	0	Ensure an active street life exists in Vaughan, Follow the European model of city centers - Patios, alcohol in parks and public spaces, Pedestrianized-streets, vendors and food trucks, gelato. Be inspired by Vaughan's Italian heritage and build a city that has a european, connected, People-centric approach. Parks should be a mix of relaxation, Live Music/performance, sports, market places, and culture. Parks/squares have a way of inspiring tourism and building identity. Whenever I visit Berlin, Rome or Places in Cuba it is squares that inspire character with people congregating and taking in a performance. Ensure that Squares have patios similar to Rome or London where people can sit down and share a drink or have a bite to eat - An open space in successful cities are more than just pavement and grass, Open-spaces have to have a 'feeling in the air', which is created by people, culture and their experiences. Ensure an active street life exists in Vaughan, It will enhance connectivity and inspire character, liveability and uniqueness
VOTES	UNVOTES				
3	0				
15 June 21 Mike G <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	1	0	Culture/Entertainment Parks need to be more than just green spaces and squares need to be more than standard asphalt - Ensuring that Vaughan becomes a city of live performance, music venues and fun things to do in these parks and open spaces will inspire young crowd to visit an perhaps inspire tourism from Toronto to visit Vaughan for something special. I think that alcohol consumption in parks is a step in the right direction, in the pandemic we have discovered that being cooped up in apartments and not having access to a backyard has just created unsafe situations where people congregate indoors. It is time to be socially progressive on issues like this, as well as being able to allow partial nudity as does Vancouver and Montreal and countries in Europe like France, Netherlands, Germany and Italy where people can make civil choices like this. Parks and public spaces need to come alive with arts/cultural/festival and culinary events - it is what creates a social scene and reputation of fun for a city.
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15 June 21 Mike G <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	1	0	
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24 June 21 swoosher <table border="1"> <tr> <td>VOTES</td> <td>UNVOTES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	VOTES	UNVOTES	0	0	Pickle Ball Courts In addition to tennis courts, add pickle ball and perhaps other racquet type courts to provide for a variety of racquet sports
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Appendix 7.0 VMC Engagement Summary Report

VMC Engagement Summary Report

DATE

June 9, 2022

PREPARED BY

Christina Bagatavicius
and Michael Esteras of
Bespoke Collective

Bespoke
CULTURAL COLLECTIVE



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of Engagement

The City is undertaking the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan (VMC PWMP) to prepare and implement the timely development of parks and open space, and a wayfinding strategy in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC). The City of Vaughan has engaged landscape architects Janet Rosenberg & Studio to develop the masterplan, and Bespoke Collective as sub-consultants to advise on the stakeholder and public engagement plan.

The VMC Engagement Plan was informed by an audit of existing communication material and strategic documents, pre-consultation stakeholder interviews, best practice research, and work sessions with the project team. The plan was also developed in alignment with the City of Vaughan's Covid-19 measures at the time. Throughout the duration and implementation of the engagement plan, in-person public gatherings were not allowed. Due to these circumstances, all engagement touchpoints were hosted or available online.

The engagement plan consists of the following components:

1. ONLINE SURVEY

The public survey aimed to gain an understanding of how residents, visitors, and employees will use future parks and open spaces in the VMC, and what the essential character of these spaces should be.

2. LANDOWNER MEETINGS

Two meetings were held to provide an update to VMC landowners regarding the VMC Secondary Plan Update, the VMC Transportation Master Plan Update, the VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Report, and the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan.

3. COMMUNITY SESSION

Residents of the Expo condominiums attended a virtual presentation and discussion.

4. FOCUS GROUPS

Two 90-minute Virtual Focus Groups were hosted to provide the public an opportunity to learn more about the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan, and to obtain public input on key elements of the master plan.

5. HAVE YOUR SAY #1

An interactive webpage titled "Have Your Say" was available to the public to view a virtual presentation and to provide input on key elements of the master plan. The page was developed as an extension of the focus group questionnaire.

6. HAVE YOUR SAY #2

An interactive webpage was created to provide an informational video and an opportunity to provide feedback for members of the public. The video provided an overview of the master plan and an update on the progress of the study to date.

7. STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Two City of Vaughan-led meetings were hosted with landowners and residents. The purpose of the meetings was to provide information on the progress of the study to date, an update and overview of the master plan, and an update on the development of signage options.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The VMC public and stakeholder engagement aligns with the City of Vaughan's engagement spectrum, which states the different levels of public participation in the master planning process:

1. SHARE INFORMATION

Provide the necessary context and background information in a timely manner.

2. LISTEN AND LEARN

Participants feel heard and the City understands the community narrative.

3. CONSULT

Citizens are offered a high-level opportunity to contribute.

Prior to public and stakeholder engagement, 14 stakeholders, including Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, local councillors and City staff, were interviewed to identify opportunities for public consultation, understand potential audiences, and design a plan that is tailored to the present-day context. The following five key actions were identified in the research and development of the engagement plan, and were guideposts for decision-making:

- Launch a public awareness campaign that rallies the public behind a unified vision;
- Engage a wider public and shareback on the community perspective;
- Focus on people who will live, work and commute in the VMC;
- Shift the narrative so that it connects the wider community; and
- Improve accessibility by balancing analogue with digital engagement tactics.

Engagement Reach

The engagement plan aimed to sustain and deepen relationships with stakeholders through their continued involvement in the planning of the VMC. These stakeholders include developers, landowners, planners, City Councillors, local businesses, the architecture and design community, prospective residential and commercial tenants and investors.

The engagement plan also aimed to reach segments of the public who have a vested interest in the VMC and have likely not yet been made aware of the current master planning process. These audiences are defined as members of the public who will live, work, commute, study, play and/or socialize at the VMC. In some instances, these audiences already interact with the VMC on a daily basis (i.e. commuters, students, employees, engaged citizens who are connected with City Councillors). In other instances, these audiences may engage with the VMC in the near future (i.e. soon-to-be residents, sports and recreational groups, frequent users of parks and recreational spaces).

CURRENT STAKEHOLDERS	PRIORITY AUDIENCES
Developers	Current Residents
Landowners	Future Residents
Planners	Commuters
Councillors	Workers in the VMC
Local Businesses	University Students
Architecture Community	Seniors (SAVI group)
Prospective Residential and Commercial Tenants	Engaged Citizens from Councillor Networks
Investors	Sports and Recreation Groups

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In total, over 984 people provided their views and comments via the online survey, focus groups, the “Have Your Say” webpage, and stakeholder meetings. The following are the numbers of participants engaged in public and stakeholder engagement:

984+

Total number of engaged individuals and stakeholders

528

Survey respondents

23

Focus group participants

309

Visitors to the “Have Your Say” page

124

Attendees in the stakeholder meetings

Key Insights

Overall, the public feedback we heard can be encompassed into the following key insights:

1. PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

Generally, participants support the creation of parks and green spaces at the VMC. In the survey, 9 out of 10 respondents cited parks and green spaces as an important factor when considering where to live (Source: Online Survey, Q7).

2. WALKING AND CYCLING

Across all engagement touchpoints, participants expressed strong support for walking and cycling paths or trails at the VMC. This finding is consistent across the survey, focus groups and the “Have Your Say” webpage.

3. CONNECTIVITY

There was a strong demand for safe and accessible paths across the VMC and on regional roads, and connections and signage to major parks and trails such as the Black Creek Parkland. There was also an emphasis on building connectivity through transit-oriented development.

4. FLEXIBLE SPACES

Members of the public expressed a strong preference for flexible and open public spaces in the VMC over programmed spaces. These include, but are not limited to, dog parks, social spaces for gathering, and family-friendly spaces.

5. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

In the survey, 9 out of 10 respondents believe that health and happiness is an important goal when it comes to the design of parks and open spaces in the VMC (Source: Online Survey, Q8). When asked why parks and open spaces were important, focus group participants’ responses were centered on the themes of physical activity and mental health, as well as access to the outdoors, community and safety (Source: Focus Groups).

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OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

This section of the report provides an overview and/or key findings of each engagement touchpoint: the online survey, two focus groups, the interactive “Have Your Say” webpage, and two stakeholder meetings.

Online Survey

OVERVIEW

As part of this master planning process, the VMC Parks Survey was developed to gain an understanding of how residents, visitors, and employees will use future parks and open spaces in the VMC, and what the essential character of these spaces should be. The VMC Parks Survey began its fielding period on October 16, 2020 and ended on November 30, 2020. The VMC Parks Survey is a component of a broader public and stakeholder engagement plan, which aims to inform and engage local communities and stakeholders at key moments in the master planning process.

METHODOLOGY

The VMC Parks Survey was produced on SurveyMonkey. The survey consists of 30 questions, including 9 demographic questions. The margin of error is 5% (relative to the 2016 census population of Vaughan).

The target audiences for the survey include current and future residents of the VMC, prospective residents and/or the VMC property buyers, public transit users in the VMC, employees and business owners in or near the VMC, engaged Vaughan citizens, seniors, and recreation and sports associations.

In an effort to reach these audiences, the City of Vaughan has utilized the following:

- Outreach to Mayor, Council, and Senior Leadership Team networks
- Outreach to major landowners, landowner-affiliated resident networks, and partners
- Outreach to sports and social organizations, engaged citizen networks, and seniors groups such as the Seniors Association of Vaughan Initiatives (S.A.V.I.)
- Outreach to students in Niagara University in Ontario
- City of Vaughan website
- Public Service Announcement
- City Update (to all registered citizens)
- Council eNewsletter content and social media
- Social media and paid social promotion

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The VMC Parks Survey has reached 528 respondents out of a population of 306,233 (2016 Census, Statistics Canada). This represents a margin of error of just 4% with a confidence level of 95%. The survey has surpassed the minimum target sample size of 384 (relative to the population figure above).

77% of respondents are current residents of Vaughan (Source: Q2). While the survey reached residents across the five wards of Vaughan, the majority of respondents live in Ward 4 or North Concord/Thornhill (49%; Source: Q23). Respondents also represent a range of users in the VMC, including current residents in the VMC (38%), public transit users in the VMC (20%), and employees in or near the VMC (11%) (Source: Q2).

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OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

The largest respondent age group is 25-34 (29%), followed by 35-44 (25%), 45-54 (21%), and 55-64 (10%) (Source: Q24). 32% of respondents have children under the age of 14 in their household (Source: Q26). The survey sample skews younger in comparison to Vaughan population demographics. The sample represents a higher percentage of persons aged 25-34 (29% vs. 11% in the 2016 census) and 35-44 (25% vs. 14%).

10% of respondents sometimes experience mobility issues (Source: Q28), and 4% of respondents identified as a person with a disability (Source: Q27).

CURRENT RESIDENTS IN THE VMC

38% of respondents (n=199) are current residents in the VMC. Among this group, 27% ride public transit in the VMC and 13% work in or near the VMC (Source: Q2). Age demographics are similar to the wider survey sample, as stated above. Only 15% of respondents who live in the VMC have children under the age of 14 in their household (vs. 32% for all respondents; Source: Q26). 54% have two bedrooms in their home (vs. 28%) and 31% have one bedroom or a studio (vs. 16%). For further contrast, only 5% of respondents who live in the VMC have four or more bedrooms in their home, compared to 34%, the top response, for all respondents (Source: Q25).

Please note: The key findings below state if the data collected from respondents who live in the VMC are consistent or significantly deviate from the wider group.

KEY FINDINGS

It is important to note that, at the time of fielding, Vaughan communities have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The collected data may or may not reflect changing attitudes or patterns of usage as it relates to parks and open spaces. The following are the key findings from the VMC Parks Survey:

1. 9 out of 10 respondents cited parks and green spaces as an important factor when considering where to live.

This is followed by convenience of driving and parking (77%), and convenience of public transit and active transportation (69%). This finding is consistent with respondents who live in the VMC, with slightly more importance given to convenience of driving and parking (84%; Source: Q7).

2. 9 out of 10 respondents believe that health and happiness is an important goal when it comes to the design of parks and open spaces in the VMC. This is followed by sustainability and climate resilience (81%), diversity and multiculturalism (49%), and commerce and economic prosperity (46%). This ranking is consistent with respondents who live in the VMC (Source: Q8).
3. 3 out of 4 respondents use parks and open spaces at least once a week. This includes 35% of respondents who use parks and open spaces one to three times per week, 29% who are daily users, and 11% who use parks and open spaces four or more times per week. This finding is consistent with respondents who live in the VMC. It may be important to note that 36% of respondents who live in the VMC are daily users of parks and open spaces (Source: Q2).
4. The top three reasons to visit parks and open spaces are to enjoy physical activity and to be healthy (67%), to disconnect, unwind, and relax (56%), and to connect with nature and

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OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

wildlife (56%) (Source: Q4). This top three ranking is consistent with respondents who live in the VMC.

5. 3 out of 4 respondents usually walk to get to a park (Source: Q3). Respondents are also willing to walk for 10 minutes (37%), 15 minutes (34%), or 20 minutes (18%) to a park before deciding to cycle, ride public transit or drive a car (Source: Q10). These findings are consistent with respondents who live in the VMC.
6. To access larger sports fields or courts by car or public transit, respondents are willing to travel less than 15 minutes (30%) or between 15-29 minutes (46%). Only 10% of respondents are willing to travel 30 minutes or more (Source: Q16). This finding is consistent with respondents who live in the VMC.
7. 69% of respondents who live in the VMC cited long distances or time-consuming travel as the top barrier for using parks and open spaces, compared to only 47% for all respondents. This is followed by parks that are in poor condition (42% vs. 30% for all respondents), parks that feel unsafe (20% vs. 15%), and uninteresting facilities in the parks (20% for both groups). Further, when asked to choose barriers, only 7% of respondents who live in the VMC responded with "Nothing. [I am] happy with how often [I] go," compared to 23% for the overall respondent group (Source: Q6).
8. Respondents were asked if, when walking or cycling, they prefer a shorter route (10 minutes or less) that requires them to cross a busy street, or a longer route (15 minutes or more) that does not require them to cross a busy street. 62% of respondents who live in the VMC prefer the shorter route. In contrast, the wider respondent group is divided between the two opposing responses: 52% prefer the shorter route and 49% prefer the longer route (Source: Q13).
9. The majority of respondents expect access to trails for walking, hiking, cross-country skiing and cycling if they walk to a park nearby (10 minutes or less) (62%; Source: Q11) or at least 20 minutes away (71%; Source: Q12). Similarly, the majority of respondents are also most interested in nature or wildlife walk as a park activity (67%; Source: Q14), and chose running or walking as a recreational activity they or members of their household actively partake in at least once per month during peak season (either summer or winter) (76%; Source: Q15). A walk or hike is also the top activity (51%) that would bring respondents to a park in winter or colder weather, followed by skating (50%; Source: Q17). These findings are consistent with respondents who live in the VMC.
10. Respondents were asked to name their favourite park. The top responses are High Park (~7%), Boyd Conservation Park (~5%), North Maple Regional Park (~3%), G. Ross Lord Park (~2%), Trinity Bellwoods Park (~2%), and Kortright Centre for Conservation (~2%; Source: Q19). Other repeated mentions include Mackenzie Glen District Park, Marita Payne Park, Sonoma Heights Community Park, Richmond Green Sports Centre and Park, Sugarbush Heritage Park, Thornhill Woods Park, Bindertwine Park, Central Park in NYC, and Earl Bales Park.
11. 87% of respondents chose good lighting as a factor to consider when using parks and open spaces in the evening or after dark. This is followed by visibility and open space (62%), active programming and activities in the park (including special events) (44%), and lots of people using it (40%; Source: Q18). This ranking is consistent with respondents who live in the VMC.

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

- I. When in a park, the majority of respondents prefer to have physical signage nearby to learn more about the space around them (e.g. area history, types of plant species, etc.) (63%) and to help orient themselves (61%). Respondents who live in the VMC are more likely to

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OVERVIEW BY
ENGAGEMENT
TOUCHPOINT

use their mobile phone to access a map to help orient themselves (48% vs. 36% for all respondents), and to use their mobile phone to access information about the space around them (38% vs. 32%; Source: Q21).

2. Major parks and trails are the most valuable to respondents on a sign in an unfamiliar area (73%). This is followed by major streets and intersections (53%), attractions such as museums and galleries (36%), public transit hub (34%), and large retailers and restaurants (30%). This ranking is more or less consistent with respondents who live in the VMC, with a slightly higher percentage for large retailers and restaurants (36%; Source: Q22).

Landowner Meetings

An update regarding the VMC Secondary Plan Update, the VMC Transportation Master Plan Update, the VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Report, and the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan was provided to landowners in the VMC on February 4 and February 10, 2021.

Community Session

Over 60 residents of the Expo condominiums attended a virtual presentation and discussion on March 23, 2021. Residents stressed the need for park facilities, including basketball and tennis courts. They also stressed that dogs, and dog facilities are an issue that needs to be resolved and provided for.

Focus Groups

OVERVIEW

Two 90-minute Virtual Focus Groups were hosted on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 and Thursday, May 6, 2021, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, to provide the public an opportunity to learn more about the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan, and to obtain public input on key elements of the master plan. The events were organized and facilitated by staff from the City of Vaughan VMC Program, Janet Rosenberg & Studio, and Bespoke Collective.

The focus groups were hosted on Zoom Webinar. Members of the public in attendance were able to participate through the built-in chat and Q&A features, and through the interactive tool Mentimeter. Each session provided an introduction, a brief overview of the session, a land acknowledgment, an icebreaker activity with trivia questions on Vaughan, an interactive 45-minute presentation by Janet Rosenberg & Studio, and a 20-minute moderated Q&A session.

OUTREACH AND ATTENDANCE

The focus groups drew in a total of 23 participants: 11 participants joined on May 4, and 12 on May 6. Outreach was conducted with an email campaign via MailChimp. The campaign was intentionally focused on reaching “already engaged” community members. The team used a mailing list of 260 contacts collected from the VMC Parks Survey, which was conducted from October 16, 2020 to November 30, 2020. The campaign was able to generate 69.8% opens, and the conversion rate to attendance is 8.8%. As a benchmark for virtual public consultations in the future, 22 individuals registered for the May 4 focus group, and 23 for May 6. In relation to attendance numbers, the attrition rate of registrants is within the range of 50-57%.

KEY FINDINGS

- I. When asked what is the first thing that comes to mind when they think of the VMC, participants were generally excited about the creation of a high density, convenient and

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OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

walkable downtown. Many saw the VMC as a transit hub. However, some associated it as suburban, industrial, and empty; and with traffic and wide intersections. (Source: Q1; n=17)

2. When asked how the program of South Urban Park should differ from North Urban Park, 58% (11) of participants responded that they would like more spaces designed for markets, arts and cultural events, and 37% (7) would like more urban sports facilities (basketball, volleyball, skate park, adult exercise). (n=19)
3. 57% of participants would prioritize maximizing facilities in neighbourhood parks over maximizing green features. 43% would prioritize maximizing green features. (n=21)

4. In establishing parks near the VMC, 90% (19) of participants would prioritize convenient access by walking or cycling over the size of park and the number of facilities (n=21).

Walking and cycling paths or trails are also repeatedly mentioned by participants in open-ended questions. (Source: Q1, Q8-II)

5. When asked if the comfort and safety of a crossing over Highway 407 would affect whether they would walk or cycle to parks and open space south of the VMC, 77% (17) of participants responded "Yes, the more comfortable I feel, the more likely I am to walk or cycle across 407 to go to parks." 18% (4) responded "No, I am more likely to drive or take transit to any park south of the VMC." (n=22)
6. 55% (12) of participants would like the storm ponds in the West Environmental Space to be designed with bridges and decks that allow them to get next to the water. 45% (10) would like the storm ponds designed with trails and lookouts. (n=22)
7. When asked how the Millway Promenade should be designed south of Highway 7, 83% (19) of participants preferred it to be designed as an urban promenade, like the original concept. Only 17% (4) preferred it to be designed as a linear green park. (n=23)
8. The following are key themes for what participants found were most important for the VMC parks and open spaces to provide: (Source: Q8; n=22)
 - a. Safety
 - b. Comfort
 - c. Leisure
 - d. Outdoor recreation
 - e. Pedestrian and cycling trails
 - f. Flexible and open green spaces
 - g. Dog parks
 - h. Programmed spaces and amenities
 - i. Social spaces for gathering
 - j. Family-friendly spaces

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OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

9. When asked why these were important, participants' responses were centered on the themes of physical activity and mental health, access to the outdoors, connectivity and transit-oriented development, community and safety. (Source: Q9; n=17)
10. Participants were asked what they thought was missing in the master plan. The following is a list of key themes: (Source: Q10; n=17)
 - a. Connectivity and transit-oriented development
 - b. Bicycle rentals
 - c. Retail, food, entertainment and leisure
 - d. Trails and green spaces
 - e. Less or no parking
 - f. Parking
11. Participants were asked what they were more excited by when it comes to the transformation underway in the VMC. Participants were excited about the creation of a downtown corridor, green spaces, connectivity, accessibility, walkability, and spaces for retail, food and dining, outdoor activities and entertainment. (Source: Q11; n=17)

Have Your Say #1

From May 17 to July 1, 2021, an interactive webpage titled "Have Your Say" was available for the public to view a virtual presentation and to provide public input on key elements of the master plan. The webpage was developed as an extension of the focus group questionnaire. The page received a total of 186 visits and 131 contributions. The survey tool within the webpage was completed by 119 respondents. The largest survey respondent age group is 25-34 (37%), followed by 35-44 (26.1%) and 18-24 (15.1%). 50.4% of respondents are female, and 47.1% are male.

KEY FINDINGS

1. 80.7% of respondents believed that the design, features and facilities within the South Urban Park should differ from North Urban Park. 41.2% stated that the South Urban Park should have more spaces for markets, arts and cultural events, and 39.5% stated that it should have more sports facilities (e.g. for basketball, volleyball, skate park, adult exercise). 19.3% believed that it shouldn't differ, and liked the emphasis on leisure and flexible park spaces in North Urban Park (n=119).
2. When asked which approach they would take in designing neighbourhood parks in the VMC, 64.7% of respondents would prioritize green features over facilities (n=119).
3. When asked what matters the most in establishing parks close to the VMC, 68.9% of respondents would prioritize convenient access by walking or cycling over the size of the park and number of facilities available (n=119).
4. When asked how important are separated cycling and pedestrian facilities on the Jane Street Bridge to your choice to walk or cycle to parks and open space south of the VMC, 59.7% of respondents believed that is very important, and that they will only feel comfortable walking or cycling over the bridge if physically separated from traffic. 22.7% believed that is somewhat important—physical separation is ideal, but would feel comfortable using a standard sidewalk or bike lane (n=119).
5. When asked how the City should design the environmental open spaces and stormwater ponds on the western side of the VMC, 68.9% of respondents expressed the need for trails and lookouts over bridges and decks that allow them to get next to the water (n=119).

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OVERVIEW BY ENGAGEMENT TOUCHPOINT

6. 64.7% of respondents would prefer to see Millway, south of Highway 7, designed as an urban promenade with a paved walkway and adjacent cafes and retail, like the original concept, over a linear green park with more planting, trees and green features, and retail and cafes further away (n=119).
7. When asked what are the most important things that parks and open space in the VMC must provide, respondents offered the following (n=5):
 - a. Trails for walking, running and cycling
 - b. Outdoor gathering spaces (i.e. plaza/square, dog parks, seating, picnic areas, restaurants, patios, cafés, food trucks, shops, bars, markets, vendors)
 - c. Outdoor sport and recreation (i.e. swimming, tennis, soccer, baseball, cricket, pickleball)
 - d. Arts and culture (i.e. entertainment, live performances, music, festivals)
 - e. Washrooms and sanitation areas
 - f. Physical separation between walking/cycling paths and road traffic

Have Your Say #2

From November 16 to December 11, 2021, a second interactive webpage titled “Have Your Say” was available for the public to view an informational video and provide feedback. The video provided an overview of the master plan and an update on the progress of the study to date. The page received a total of 145 visits from 123 unique visitors, and four comments. As well, the YouTube presentation received a total of 141 views. The following is a summary of public feedback on the page:

1. One visitor expressed a need for an accessible ramp and stairs structure at the east end of the VMC along Exchange Avenue for safe access to Jane Street and the Highway 407 TTC station.
2. One visitor expressed a need for a bike lane on Millway Avenue, Jane Street south of Highway 7, or any other path connecting to the Black Creek Parkland.
3. One visitor expressed support for green and public spaces at the VMC, and requested a view or a 3D walk-through of pedestrian sidewalks, bike lanes and public transit at the VMC.

Stakeholder Meetings

Two City of Vaughan-led meetings with landowners and residents were hosted on March 3, 2022. The presentation during the meeting provided information on the progress of the study to date, an update and overview of the master plan, and an update on the development of signage options. The presentation has been posted to the study webpage at Project Updates (www.vaughan.ca).

A total of 64 stakeholders attended the stakeholder meetings (excluding City staff and councillors), with 40 stakeholders attending the landowner meeting, and 24 attending the resident meeting. Local Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco attended both meetings. Attendees were provided an opportunity to provide questions and comments.



Image credit:
DTAH

CONCLUSION

Across all touchpoints in the engagement plan, certain themes emerged from the public and stakeholder feedback that was received. Overall, the following five themes resonate strongly: (1) parks and green spaces, (2) walking and cycling, (3) connectivity, (4) flexible spaces, and (5) health and well-being. Reaching over 984 individuals and stakeholders, the collected data and findings, as summarized in this report, will be a substantive resource in the development of the master plan.




DOWNTOWN
vaughan
METROPOLITAN CENTRE