

October 29, 2024

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Communication  
Vaughan Metropolitan Centre  
Sub-Committee – October 30, 2024  
Item No. 3

**TO:** VMC Secondary Plan Team  
Cory Gray, Manager, Parks and Strategic Initiatives &  
Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, Planning and Urban Design  
City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, ON  
L6A 1T1

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

**RE:** SmartCentres Comments on Parks & Wayfinding Master Plan  
As presented at the VMC Sub-Committee October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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Dear Cory and Gaston,

SmartCentres (through our various ownership corporations) is pleased to provide this letter regarding the final VMC Parks & Wayfinding Master Plan, to be presented before the VMC Subcommittee on Wednesday, October 30, 2024.

As you are aware, SmartCentres has proposed (and continues to propose) a comprehensive redevelopment of its lands within the VMC in line with the vision established by the City. Over the last fifteen years, SmartCentres has been an active and positive contributor to the transformation of the VMC into a livable Downtown for the City of Vaughan. We have worked closely with City staff for many years on the advancement of various planning policies, significant development proposals, transit infrastructure, and parks and open spaces within the VMC. We have always strived to work collaboratively with the City of Vaughan including the significant developments we have advanced within the VMC.

We are pleased to provide the following comments on the final Parks & Wayfinding Master Plan, prepared by Janet Rosenberg & Studio, dated October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Accordingly, our comments are as follows:

Reference	Comment
Page 6	Please remove reference to Park Place Condos.
Page 35 –2.2  Policy Framework	While we appreciate the commentary on the potential challenges on the constructability of Strata Parks, we will note that Vaughan commissioned a detailed study of the feasibility of Strata Parks, the first of its kind in Ontario. This was ultimately approved by City Council, so we would appreciate <b>the removal of this speculative language</b> , by justifying the lack of justification for strata parks, as they remain a critical and necessary design function of mixed-use sites.
Page 56 - 3.4.4  Facilities Requiring Special Consideration	While we agree with the sentiment regarding the need for playground facilities, the City should <b>not</b> make this a mandatory requirement. There are other ways to achieve active play areas for children, for both indoor and outdoor amenity area. Imposing a new requirement associated with family-sized units only imposes an unnecessary requirement which stifles design creativity.
Page 67 – 4.2  Connectivity	We have two active Official Plan amendment applications in the VMC to delete roads, with the goal of providing additional parkland, so <b>we strongly disagree</b> with this stance, while we appreciate the sentiment.
Page 70 – 4.3.1  Squares	<p>We strongly appreciate the collaborative effort between ourselves and the City to better design and place the Public Square on the northern expansion lands (north of Portage Parkway). To this effect, our negotiations included the provision of the following specific clause in the future VM CSP, and we want to ensure this remains included going forward as this language is critical to the implementation of this square:</p> <p><i>As identified symbolically on Schedule XX, a maximum of a 0.2 ha Urban Square shall be provided on the lands in Expansion Area 1. This Urban Square location is conceptual only and the ultimate specific size, location, frontage, and configuration shall be further determined through the Planning Application process in accordance with the both the Planning Act and the City of Vaughan’s Parkland Dedication By-law 168-2022. For further clarity, in accordance with said By-law 168-2022 strata parkland will be accepted as full dedication. Further, to provide flexibility, the Urban Square can be in the form of a publicly accessible walkway, at the discretion of the City of Vaughan</i></p>
Page 80 - 4.3.2  Urban Parks	This section notes a new concept of a “western extension, (which) would connect the Urban Park into the broader <b>open space network</b> that is proposed to run adjacent to Highway 400...”. We strongly disagree with the introduction of the western extension as this directly opposes existing VM CSP policy no. 6.3.2, which allows flexibility for the final size and configuration of the environmental open space. This was also extensively negotiated between SmartCentres and the City.
Page 90 – 4.4.1  Environmental Open Spaces	Similar to the above, the Draft Master Plan shows an expansion of the Environmental Open Space to the east of Highway 400 and south of Portage Parkway. As per Policy 6.3.2 the final configuration and size of the Environmental Open Space is to occur in consultation with the City, TRCA and MTO. Further and park associated with this open space is to be a minimum 0.8 ha (Policy 6.3.3). To this effect, we are continuing to work with the TRCA and other relevant government agencies on the redesign of the

	<p>pond in this area to efficiently utilize the lands for development purposes in order to optimize the infrastructure investments that have occurred (as noted above), including the burying of stormwater management ponds (per Policy 5.4.2), which results in a reduction of the Environmental Open Space vs what is shown on the Draft Master Plan. We request that the <b>Draft Master Plan be updated to reflect the approved VMC Secondary Policy</b> no. 6.3.2 which permits flexibility, which is not shown currently. Lastly, we will also note that this figure shows a different area for this block versus Page 41.</p>
<p><b>Page 94 – 4.4.2</b></p> <p><b>Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Space</b></p>	<p>We noticed a POPS has been added west of our KPMG tower as shown on page 94. This has never been discussed with us previously nor was it secured in any approvals for this site.</p> <p>We acknowledge this will be a transition zone to the future park and we are willing to work with City on the appropriate arrangement but consideration for a POPS must be further discussed.</p>
<p><b>Page 96 – 4.4.3</b></p> <p><b>Mews and Flexible Streetscapes</b></p>	<p>There is a new E-W Mews within Block D1, directly north of Highway 7, and east of Millway Avenue, and accordingly <b>we request this to be deleted</b>.</p>
<p><b>Page 100 - 4.4.4</b></p> <p><b>School Sites</b></p>	<p>A substantial portion of our lands are designated as a <b>Potential School Site</b>. Given the policy directive to look at alternative designs which reflect an urban, high-density neighbourhood, this mapping is not appropriate. The large amount of lands identified makes an assumption that the school site in a suburban model, which is directly contract to Page 101 of the report, which notes that <i>Canoe Landing</i> is used as an inspiration. It is our request that potential school sites continue to be <b>identified by a symbol</b> similar to the current VMC Secondary Plan rather than mapping out a potential site plan for each school site as these locations are subject to a consultation process with the City of Vaughan, SmartCentres and School Board.</p>
<p><b>Page 132 – 4.9</b></p> <p><b>VMC Full Parks Master Plan</b></p>	<p>Block A6 (City File OP.22.004) is subject to active planning applications for the deletion of the E-W Local Road and we <b>request this be deleted</b> on the plan.</p> <p>Block C2 (City File OP.20.012) is subject to active planning applications for the deletion of the N-S Local Road and we <b>request this be deleted</b> on the plan.</p>

## 4.5 VMC Parks Master Plan, Full Build Out



Figure 1 – VMC Master Plan (Figure 52 on Page 104)

We look forward to reviewing the outstanding policies. Should you have any questions or require clarification on any of our comments, please feel free to contact me at 416-797-5269 or at [MKruger@smartcentres.com](mailto:MKruger@smartcentres.com).

Respectfully Submitted,

**SmartCentres**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MKruger".

Matthew Kruger  
Director,  
Development

cc: Paula Bustard, **SmartCentres**