

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (2) – APRIL 8, 2025

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Distributed April 4, 2025

SC1. Memorandum from the Interim Deputy City Manager, Planning, Growth Management and Housing Delivery, dated April 4, 2025

Subject

Re: Additional information regarding feedback received at the Jan. 22, 2025, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) for Report #4, Item #2, “Draft New Vaughan Official Plan 2025 (Working Session) File No.: PL-9550-16”

Disclaimer Respecting External Communications

Communications are posted on the City’s website pursuant to Procedure By-law Number 7-2011. The City of Vaughan is not responsible for the validity or accuracy of any facts and/or opinions contained in external Communications listed on printed agendas and/or agendas posted on the City’s website.

Please note there may be further Communications.



**STAFF COMMUNICATION
FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**SC1.
Staff Communication
CW(2) – April 8, 2025**

DATE: April 4, 2025

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

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

**RE: STAFF COMMUNICATION – Committee of the Whole (2),
April 8, 2025**

Additional information regarding feedback received at the Jan. 22, 2025, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) for Report #4, Item #2, “Draft New Vaughan Official Plan 2025 (Working Session) File No.: PL-9550-16”

1. Purpose

To provide the Mayor and Members of Council with additional information in response to feedback and questions received at the January 22, 2025, Committee of the Whole (Working Session), Agenda Item No. 2, Report No. 4, regarding the draft new Vaughan Official Plan 2025 (“VOP 2025”).

2. Analysis

Policy Planning staff brought forward a report to the January 22, 2025, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting which provided a Project update on the VOP 2025. A presentation on the key changes and updates made to the VOP 2025 was also provided. City staff and the Project consulting team, WSP Canada, were present to answer questions from the Mayor and Members of Council following the presentation.

This Staff Communication is intended to respond to the questions and feedback received by staff at the January 22, 2025, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) from the Mayor and Members of Council with respect to the VOP 2025:

Opportunity to refine the boundary of the Rutherford GO Station Protected Major Transit Station Area

Official Plan Amendment (“OPA”) No. 101 was adopted by Vaughan Council on September 26, 2023, and approved by York Region, without modifications, on November 23, 2023, to delineate and establish Protected Major Transit Station Area (“PMTSA”) boundaries and identify minimum density targets. OPA 101 came into force

on November 17, 2023. At the time OPA 101 was adopted, York Region was still an upper-tier municipality with planning responsibilities and provisions of the *Planning Act* required Vaughan to amend the Vaughan Official Plan 2010 (“VOP 2010”) to delineate PMTSA boundaries in Vaughan and identify their minimum density targets, as delineated and established by York Region, to conform with the York Region Official Plan 2022 (“YROP 2022”) within one (1) year of the policies and delineations for PMTSAs in the YROP 2022 coming into effect.

On July 1, 2024, York Region became an upper-tier municipality without planning responsibilities. Subsection 70.13(2) of the *Planning Act* provides that those portions of the YROP 2022 that apply to Vaughan are deemed to constitute an official plan of Vaughan and this official plan remains in effect until Vaughan revokes it or amends it to provide otherwise. As such, the PMTSA boundaries delineated, and respective minimum density targets established in VOP 2010 and YROP 2022 remain in effect currently.

On October 20, 2024, the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (“PPS 2024”) came into effect and replaced the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). The PPS 2024 provides policies specific to Major Transit Station Areas. Policy 2.4.2.1 of the PPS 2024 states:

Planning authorities shall delineate the boundaries of major transit station areas on higher order transit corridors through a new official plan or official plan amendment adopted under section 26 of the Planning Act. The delineation shall define an area within an approximately 500 to 800-metre radius of a transit station and that maximizes the number of potential transit users that are within walking distance of the station.

Policy 2.4.2.1 of the PPS 2024 permits Vaughan, as the planning authority, to delineate major transit station area boundaries through a new official plan. Therefore, the City has the authority to refine the Rutherford GO Station PMTSA (PMTSA 65) boundary through the VOP 2025, subject to approval by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Vaughan’s Urban Structure and hierarchy of Strategic Growth Areas

Subsection 2.2.1 of the VOP 2025 provides policies specific to Vaughan’s Urban Structure, as identified on Schedule 1 (including Schedules 1A, 1B and 1C). The Urban Structure identifies locations for residential, mixed-use or employment intensification and agricultural and natural areas where major change or development is not desirable.

“Intensification Areas” in the VOP 2010 were renamed to “Strategic Growth Areas” in the VOP 2025 to be consistent with the terminology in the PPS 2024. Draft policy 2.2.1.1.a provides the hierarchy of Strategic Growth Areas in descending order and intensity of use which is summarized in the table below:

Hierarchy of Strategic Growth Areas in Vaughan

Strategic Growth Area	Areas Included	Vision for Growth
Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (“VMC”)	VMC	The location for the highest rate of intensification in Vaughan, with a wide range of residential, office, retail, institutional, cultural and civic uses.
Primary Centre	Vaughan Mills Secondary Plan Area, Promenade Centre, Weston 7 Secondary Plan Area, Yonge Steeles Corridor Secondary Plan – South Area, Steeles Avenue West Secondary Plan Area, and Jane Street and Major Mackenzie Drive	Locations of intensification with predominantly mixed-use high- and mid-rise buildings, developed at an intensity supportive of transit.
PMTSAs	Twenty (20) PMTSAs delineated in Vaughan (typically overlap with other Strategic Growth Areas)	Areas of transit-supportive mixed-use communities that upon full build-out, are to achieve a gross minimum density target as established in the Plan.
Regional Intensification Corridor	Portions of Highway 7, Yonge Street and Bathurst Street	The focus of intensification on lands adjacent to major transit routes, at densities and in a form supportive of adjacent higher order transit.
Local Centre	Historic Villages of Woodbridge, Maple, Kleinburg/Nashville and Thornhill-Yonge Street, Vellore Village Centre, Carville Centre and Concord Centre	Provide a mixed-use focus for their respective communities in a manner that supports local needs at a walkable, neighbourhood scale with appropriate transition of intensification to surrounding communities.
Primary Intensification Corridor	Portions of Jane Street, Major Mackenzie Drive, Rutherford Road and Steeles Ave West	Link together the various centres on transit supportive corridors and will be places to accommodate intensification in the form of mixed-use mid-rise buildings, limited mixed-use high-rise buildings and low-rise buildings.

Definition of “Strategic Growth Area” and explanation of Strategic Growth Area policies

As defined by the PPS 2024, Strategic Growth Areas are “settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built

form. Strategic Growth Areas include major transit station areas, existing and emerging downtowns, lands in close proximity to publicly assisted post-secondary institutions and other areas where growth or development will be focused, that may include infill redevelopment (e.g., underutilized shopping malls and plazas), brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as Strategic Growth Areas”.

The definition of Strategic Growth Areas in the VOP 2025 is consistent with the PPS 2024 definition but is further refined to be specific to Vaughan’s Strategic Growth Area hierarchy. Policies specific to each Strategic Growth Area are contained in subsection 2.2.2 of the VOP 2025, as summarized below:

VMC: Draft policies 2.2.2.1 to 2.2.2.3 provide direction to ensure the VMC is planned to evolve as a transit-supportive and walkable community, while ensuring it provides the highest intensity and widest mix of uses in the City. Policies specific to the VMC will be established in the new VMC Secondary Plan 2025.

Primary Centres: Draft policy 2.2.2.4 provides that Primary Centres shall be planned to develop with a mix of housing types and tenures, at transit-supportive densities and include a mix of non-residential uses intended to serve the local population and City as a whole. Primary Centres shall be planned to have a fine grain multimodal transportation network, include an appropriate amount of well-designed public open spaces and parks, encourage pedestrian-friendly built form and be designed and developed to implement appropriate transition of intensity to surrounding Community Areas and be compatible with adjacent Employment Areas.

Protected Major Transit Station Areas: Draft policies 2.2.2.5 through 2.2.2.18 are specific to PMTSAs in Vaughan delineated by Schedule 1A, and their minimum gross density targets are established by policy 2.2.2.7, Table 2.2. The policies provide direction for PMTSAs that overlap with other Strategic Growth Areas and the provision of Affordable Housing in accordance with requirements of the *Planning Act*. Future Major Transit Station Areas policies are included as 2.2.2.19 to 2.2.2.22. While Future Major Transit Station Areas are identified conceptually on Schedule 1A, their location is preliminary and will require future work to establish their boundary and minimum density targets.

Intensification Corridors: Draft policies 2.2.2.23 through 2.2.2.25 are specific to Regional and Primary Intensification Corridors, both inside and outside of Employment Areas. The draft policies ensure that Intensification Corridors, where located outside of Employment Areas, shall be planned to develop with a mix of housing types and tenures, include a mix of non-residential uses, develop at transit-supportive densities, include well designed public open spaces, include development that creates an active street wall along the corridor and be designed and developed to ensure appropriate transition to Community Areas and be compatible with adjacent Employment Areas.

Local Centres: Local Centres are the mixed-use cores of their respective community and are residential in character but include an appropriate mix and intensity of uses to allow the residents of the Local Centre and surrounding community to meet their daily

needs. Draft policy 2.2.2.27 provides that Local Centres shall be developed with a mix of housing types and tenures, be predominantly residential in character but include a mix of appropriate uses intended to serve the local population, be the preferred location for locally delivered human and community services and be the focal points for expression of community heritage and character. Local Centres shall develop at transit-supportive densities, while accounting for the local urban fabric of each Local Centre and ensure all development is designed and developed to implement appropriate transition and use to surrounding neighbourhoods. They shall have a fine grain multimodal transportation network and include well designed public open spaces that are either landscaped parks, public plazas or both, in a manner appropriate to the local context.

The Project team is reviewing the Urban Structure and hierarchy of Strategic Growth Areas in preparation of the next draft of the VOP 2025 to provide clearer direction through the terminology and nomenclature proposed that will better align with the PPS 2024, and ensure areas identified within each Strategic Growth Area appropriately reflect the intended growth and development for that Strategic Growth Area in the hierarchy.

Vaughan Healthcare Campus located at Major Mackenzie Drive and Jane Street in Ward 1 identified as a “Strategic Growth Area” on Schedule 1 Urban Structure

The Vaughan Healthcare Campus is identified as a Primary Centre on Schedule 1A Strategic Growth Areas and designated “Major Institutional” by Schedule 13 Land Use Designations of the VOP 2025. The identification of the Vaughan Healthcare Campus in the VOP 2025 remains unchanged from what currently exists in VOP 2010, where it is identified as an Intensification Area – Primary Centre on Schedule 1 Urban Structure.

Per policy 4.2.4.1 of the VOP 2025, the “Major Institutional” designation applies to major health, educational, cultural and government uses that serve a City-wide or Regional function. Permitted uses include small scale retail and residential uses directly related to the Major Institutional use, such as student residences. The intent of the Jane Street and Major Mackenzie Drive Primary Centre is to continue to develop as a healthcare campus with the Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital and Campus uses and primarily non-residential intensification adjacent to the Major Mackenzie/400 York Region Transit Bus Terminal and Canada’s Wonderland/Jane Street corridor.

The lands are also subject to [Site-Specific policies](#) as identified on Schedule 14C of the VOP 2025, contained in subsection 13.6 of Volume 2 of the VOP 2010, which take precedence over the general policies contained in Volume 1 of the VOP 2025 for Primary Centres for those lands. The Site-Specific policies will remain in effect upon approval of the VOP 2025, in accordance with the policies for Transition provided in subsection 1.4.2 of the VOP 2025.

Kleinburg Core area identified as a “Strategic Growth Area” on Schedule 1 Urban Structure

The Kleinburg Core area is identified as a Local Centre on Schedule 1A Strategic Growth Areas. Although the VOP 2025 has changed the name of “Intensification Area”

to “Strategic Growth Area” to be consistent with the PPS 2024, the VOP 2025 maintains the existing Urban Structure for the Kleinburg Core area as it is already identified as an Intensification Area – Local Centre on Schedule 1 Urban Structure of the VOP 2010.

As stated in the VOP 2025, for the Historic Villages of Woodbridge, Maple, Kleinburg/Nashville and Thornhill-Yonge Street, the historic village cores will continue to be the main areas for local commercial activity and community facilities. Each village core will experience development and/or intensification to varying degrees subject to applicable Heritage Conservation District Plans. (VOP 2025, p. 46)

The Kleinburg Core area is subject to an [Area Specific Plan](#) per Schedule 14B of the VOP 2025. The Area Specific Plan, 12.4 of Volume 2 of the VOP 2010, provides detailed policies for the Kleinburg Core area for permitted uses, development standards such as heights and densities, land use designations, urban and community design, and transportation. Specifically, policy 12.4.10.22 provides that new buildings, additions to buildings or the redevelopment of existing sites in the Core Areas of Kleinburg or Nashville shall generally not exceed a maximum height of 9.5 metres above finished grade. Map 12.4.A Kleinburg Core Land Uses also provides a maximum height of 2.5 storeys for lands in the “Mainstreet Commercial” designation adjacent to the “Village Residential” designation and a maximum density of 1.0 Floor Space Index.

Additionally, Kleinburg-Nashville is designated as a Heritage Conservation District under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and a Heritage Conservation District Plan is in effect (Kleinburg-Nashville Conservation District Plan, By-law 268-2003), which was recently updated in 2021. Policy 12.2.1.1 in Volume 2 of VOP 2010 provides that land use planning decisions within the areas identified as Heritage Conservation Districts shall conform to the requirements of the applicable Heritage Conservation District Plan. The [Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Plan](#) provides an extensive and detailed policy framework to ensure appropriate development and the conservation and protection of the area’s heritage and character.

The process of developing the VOP 2025 does not include changes to the Area Specific Plan or Heritage Conservation District Plan and both plans will remain in effect upon approval of the VOP 2025, in accordance with Transition policies in 1.4.2.

Clarification regarding “Intensification” on Schedule 9A Street Classification

Schedule 9A Street Classification of the VOP 2025 is consistent with the [Vaughan Transportation Plan](#) which identifies a street classification system that aligns with Vaughan’s Urban Structure. “Intensification” on Schedule 9A refers to streets within areas that are currently identified as Intensification Areas in the VOP 2010. The purpose of Schedule 9A is to ensure that the functional classification of streets (i.e. local, minor/major collector, arterial) are considered in conjunction with the Urban Structure identified on Schedule 1 so that the street classification system is aligned with the City’s overall growth objectives.

Schedule 9A provides the following footnotes for lands subject to Secondary Plans, Area Specific Policies and Heritage Conservation Districts to ensure the more detailed plans and policies contained in Volume 2 are considered:

- If street classifications are not consistent between this Schedule and the Secondary Plan, the document that is most recent shall apply.
- Standard right-of-way requirements, including but not limited to street elements and widths, may be reviewed and modified in designated Heritage Conservation Districts at the discretion of the City.
- Additional information on streets with Special Classification can be found in the corresponding Secondary Plan and/or Area Specific Policies of the Vaughan Official Plan.

Policy framework for ensuring appropriate heights, densities and transition in the VOP 2025

Schedule 13 Land Use Designations of the VOP 2025 maintains the maximum heights and densities established by the existing VOP 2010 for lands outside of Secondary Plan areas or Area-Specific Plan areas.

Built Form and Development policies are contained in subsection 3.3.2 of the VOP 2025. Subsection 3.3.2 provides policies related to height, massing, scale, setbacks, effective built form transition, balancing density to achieve complete communities, appropriate transitions in scale to areas of lower density, etc. Policy 3.3.2.1 also provides that development applications shall have regard to City-Wide Urban Design Guidelines which provide performance-based directions for building and site design.

Most lands that are designated for mid-rise or high-rise building forms (residential and/or mixed-use) that are not within a Secondary Plan area have maximum heights and densities established on Schedule 13. Policy 4.1.1.5 of the VOP 2025 provides that where no height or density is indicated on Schedule 13, the maximum height and density shall be established through a Secondary Plan or Area-Specific policy and pursuant to the policies of Section 5.1.1. This policy is intended to ensure that the areas of the City that are expected to undergo significant change, are subject to a comprehensive study to establish a detailed planning framework that determines the appropriated mix, location and intensity of uses, that are phased appropriately and can be supported by available or planned municipal servicing and infrastructure.

The VOP 2025 also includes the following definitions for low-rise building, mid-rise building and high-rise building:

- Low-rise building: A building up to a maximum of five storeys in height.
- Mid-rise building: A building generally over five storeys in height, up to a maximum of twelve storeys in height.
- High-rise building: A building over twelve storeys in height with a range of heights and densities appropriate for the surrounding context pursuant to Schedule 13 of this Plan, applicable Secondary Plans and the Zoning By-law.

For lands outside of a Secondary Plan area or Area-Specific Plan area, the land use designations on Schedule 13 apply. The policies for land use designations are provided in subsection 4.2 of the VOP 2025 and establish permitted uses and building types and provide more specific policies for height and density where appropriate. Subsection 4.2 also provides direction with respect to permitted building types for lands within close

proximity to areas designated Low-Rise Residential to provide for an appropriate transition to the Low-Rise Residential area.

The next draft of the VOP 2025 is targeted for public release, review and comment in May 2025.

The Project team has fulsomely reviewed the feedback received at the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting and is currently preparing the next draft of the VOP 2025. The next draft will provide clearer policy direction regarding the matters identified above, including changes to terminology, nomenclature, and schedules with respect to the Urban Structure and Strategic Growth Areas and provide clarity regarding the intended vision for areas such as the Vaughan Healthcare Campus and Kleinburg Core.

A Committee of the Whole (Public Meeting) for the VOP 2025 will be held on June 4, 2025, and the project is expected to be completed in Fall 2025.

Any issues identified through further preparation of the VOP 2025, together with comments received from the public, Vaughan Council, internal staff and external agencies, and at the June 4, 2025 Public Meeting, will be addressed in a comprehensive report to a future Committee of the Whole meeting targeted for Fall 2025.

For more information, contact Fausto Filipetto, Senior Manager of Policy Planning and Sustainability, ext. 8699.

Approved by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Musacchio', written over a light blue horizontal line.

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