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planning + urban design

**COMMUNICATION C : 21  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (2)  
MAY 20, 2020  
ITEM # 10**

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

May 19, 2020  
File 9112

**Attn: Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of City Council**

Dear Sir,

**RE: Response to City Committee of the Whole (2) Report (Committee Item 10)  
Employment Lands Conversion Recommendation  
163 and 175 Bowes Road**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for the owner of the lands legally described as Part of Lot 21 Registered Plan 7925 City of Vaughan and Part of Lot 7 Concession 3 City of Vaughan (herein referred to as the 'subject lands'; see Appendix A). The intent of this correspondence is to express the owner's support in the recommended conversion of the subject lands for mixed-uses through the York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review Process.

**Description of Subject Lands**

The subject lands are located at 163 and 175 Bowes Road at the intersection of Oster Lane in the City of Vaughan. The lands are located within the Concord GO Secondary Plan, which designates the lands as *General Employment* and *Natural Areas*. Surrounding land uses are designated *General Employment* to the north, *High-Rise Mixed Use* to the east and *Employment Commercial Mixed-Use* to the south. The City of Vaughan Zoning By-law 1-88 zones the subject lands as *General Employment Area (EM2)*.

**Background**

York Region is currently undertaking their Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), part of which will define Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) boundaries. The Region's preliminary analysis has identified a portion of the Concord GO Secondary Plan area within MTSA 15; see Appendix C to this letter. In May of 2019 correspondence was forwarded to York Region requesting the inclusion of the entirety of 162 and 175 Bowes Road within the MTSA boundary. To facilitate mixed- uses on the subject lands, an Employment Lands Conversion Request was submitted in June 2018 to York Region Planning Staff.

In November of 2019, a letter was submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, requesting that the subject lands be excluded from the proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zone 10 (York). The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2017 on January 15, 2019. The proposed amendment designates the subject lands as within a Provincially Significant Employment Zone (Appendix B). The request argued that the exclusion of the lands would facilitate an efficient use of the lands, contributing to Provincial goals and objects through the Concord GO Secondary Plan and MTSA 15.

On March 12, 2020 York Region Planning Staff presented a report to the Regional Committee of the Whole entitled "Planning for Employment and Employment Conversions". The Report outlined the various supported conversions throughout the Region including the subject lands south of Oster Lane. While it is acknowledged that this recommendation is consistent with the proposed MTSA boundary, we note that final delineation of MTSA boundaries is targeted for Q3 of 2020 and there is an opportunity to revise the proposed boundary.

On May 13, 2020 City of Vaughan released a report to be presented at the Committee of the Whole on May 20, 2020 entitled "Request for Comments: York Region Evaluation of Employment Land Conversion Requests". The Report outlines City Staff's supported conversion of the lands south of Oster Lane and recommends that the future land uses be considered through the Concord GO Mobility Hub Study (MHS). The portion of the lands outside the Concord GO MHS are recommended to remain as employment lands. The Report is found to be consistent with the recommendations made by the Region.

### **Planning Rationale**

Weston Consulting, on behalf of the owner, would like to thank the Region and the City for reviewing our conversion request and providing partial support. This conversion, along with the MTSA delineation, will help the Region and City meet growth and intensification targets around higher-order transit corridors. However, we would like the Region, with the City's support, to recommend conversion of the entire 175 Bowes property for non-employment, mixed -uses.

The MTSA mapping prepared by the Region illustrates a boundary that has limited redevelopment potential in some areas. Lands south of Highway 7 are encumbered by natural heritage features or are part of a stable residential neighbourhood. It is our opinion that significant intensification in these areas is not likely. The Provincial Growth Plan defines an MTSA as being within 500 metres to 800 metres of a transit station. The northern limit of the MTSA boundary is approximately 500 metres from the Bowes Rd./ Highway 7 intersection (Concord BRT Station). Extending this boundary an additional 300 metres would capture the portion of 175 Bowes Rd., which is presently excluded from the conversion. The Growth Plan directs the Region to achieve a growth target of 160 people and jobs per hectare for MTSAs served by light rail or bus rapid transit. Given the limited redevelopment opportunities south of the BRT corridor, it is our opinion that the remaining 175 Bowes Rd. lands should be recommended for conversion to assist in achieving the growth targets.

We would also note that the conversion proposed by the Region and the City would bisect 175 Bowes Rd., thereby creating two separate land use designations on a single property. It would be more appropriate, in our opinion, to maintain a single designation for comprehensive redevelopment. While we understand that surrounding lands will maintain their employment uses, the hedgerow to the west and rail corridor to the east are natural transition features and would aid in limiting impacts and disruption to existing employment operations in the area.

### Next Steps

At this time, we respectfully request that the entirety of the subject lands be recommended by the City to be converted from Employment in order to provide greater use permissions that will help realize Provincial, Regional and local Municipal mandates. Weston Consulting, on behalf on the owner, will also continue to participate in the Regional MCR in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please contact the undersigned at extension 241 or extension 266 should you have any questions regarding this submission.

Yours truly,

**Weston Consulting**

Per:



Ryan Guetter, BES, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Vice President

and



Martin Quarcoopome, BES, MCIP, RPP  
Associate

- c. Tel Matrondola, Laurentel Developments  
Paul Freeman, York Region, Chief Planner  
Paul Bottomley, York Region, Manager Policy, Research and Forecasting  
Bill Kiru, City of Vaughan  
Fausto Filipetto, City of Vaughan  
York Region Clerk  
City of Vaughan Clerk

### Appendix:

- A. Context Air Photo
- B. Proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zones – Vaughan North, Area Number 10
- C. Proposed York Region Major Transit Station Area 15- Concord BRT Station
- D. Regional Recommended Modifications for Regional Official Plan Employment Zones Mapping
- E. City of Vaughan Recommended Modifications for Employment Lands Conversion Request

Appendix A



*Aerial Photograph of the Subject Lands*

**Appendix B**



*Excerpt of Subject Lands within PSEA Zone 10*

Appendix C

**Concord BRT Station**

**MTSA 15**

**On Highway 7 BRT / Barrie GO Line Corridor**  
 Along Highway 7 at Bowes Road/Baldwin Avenue, Vaughan



*Proposed York Region Major Transit Station Area 15- Concord BRT Station*

Appendix D

Request#: V16		City of Vaughan	
Address	163 & 175 Bowes Road	<p>Employment Area Conversion Request</p> <p>Existing Employment Area (as of 2017 York Region Employment Area Inventory)</p> <p>Proposed ROP Employment Area</p>	
Site Area	5.91 ha		
Employment Area	Keele		
Applicant	Weston Consulting		
Owner	Unknown		
Nature of Request	A request to re-designate lands from employment to a mixed-use.		
Summary of Assessment	<p>- Conversion to non-employment uses supports the local municipal planning objectives of the evolving urban structure proposed through the Concord GO Secondary Plan</p> <p>- The lands north of Oster Lane to be designated as employment in the Regional Official Plan. Lands south of Oster Lane to be designated at the discretion of the Local Municipality.</p>		
Local Municipal Council Position	No position at this time.		
<p><b>Recommendation:</b> A portion of the area recommended for conversion to non-employment uses. Designate remainder as employment in the Regional Official Plan.</p>			

*York Region Recommended Modifications for ROP Employment Zones Mapping*

**Appendix E**

ID	Applicant	Address
16	Weston Consulting	163 and 175 Bowes Road

**Location**

Located southeast of Oster Lane and Bowes Road.

**Request**

To convert the subject employment lands to permit residential and commercial uses.

**Staff Recommendation**

Support the conversion of lands identified within Deferral Area A in VOP 2010 to continue to pursue a GO station at this location through the Concord GO Mobility Hub Study .



**Staff Comment**

- The subject lands are partially within Deferral Area A in the Concord GO Centre Secondary Plan, Volume 2 of Vaughan Official Plan 2010, as identified by York Region.
- The City is currently undertaking the Concord GO Mobility Hub Study (MHS) to determine the future land uses within the study area.
- The portion of the lands outside the Concord GO MHS should remain employment lands.
- The underlying studies that support the MHS will determine the appropriate land uses. The “market-based approach” to the delivery of the station is currently being explored. The study will include the accommodation of the GO station and its infrastructure to inform the future Transit Project Assessment.
- The lands form part of a logical planning unit which is currently part of a developing Secondary Plan study.

*City of Vaughan Recommended Modifications for Employment Lands Conversion Request*