City of Vaughan
Appendix C. Natural Heritage in the City of Vaughan: Background for the Official Plan –
Draft Existing Conditions Report

AECOM

1. Introduction

The City of Vaughan is in a period of rapid growth and development and has begun the process of developing a plan for sustainable growth. As the population increases in the Greater Toronto Area and the population distribution is shifted to the outlying areas there is a greater need for residential development, as well as providing jobs for people living in the area.

The City of Vaughan is investing in a sustainable future. One of the pillars of sustainability is a clear understanding of the natural heritage within its stewardship, the connections to the quality of life for its residents and the economic benefits that the management of a healthy natural heritage system contributes.

This report provides an overview of the existing natural environment conditions of which the City of Vaughan is a part. The City is connected to the landscape via a linked system of watercourses, woodlands, wetlands and wildlife habitat. The goal of this report is to describe the natural heritage system in a way that provides dynamic support for the development of policies within the new City of Vaughan Official Plan that will lead the way into a sustainable future.

This report highlights areas of key natural heritage features and functions that will require consideration during future development within the City of Vaughan. Agricultural and urban development has created a mosaic of natural heritage within the City of Vaughan. Moving forward, the City's contributions to the system must be understood in order to be able to develop policies that reflect the vision of the residents. The objectives of this report are to:

1. identify key Natural Heritage features and functions;
2. characterize the sensitivities of those features and functions with respect to land use change; and,
3. provide a framework for the development of policy and a natural heritage strategy for the City of Vaughan.

1.1 Natural Environment Study Team

The Natural Environment study team consists of numerous Gartner Lee Limited staff including:

Dale Leadbeater .... Senior Ecologist – Terrestrial Lead
Michael Roy .... Senior Ecologist – Aquatic Lead
Joe Puopolo .... Senior Environmental Engineer
Mokhles Rahman .... Hydrogeologist
Edward Terry .... Environmental Planner
René Kleinecke and Bryan Valve   GIS Specialists
Kata Bavrlic .... Terrestrial Ecologist
Melanie Croft .... Aquatic Ecologist