

Community Improvement Plan for the Steeles Avenue Corridor, Jane Street to Keele Street, City of Vaughan

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1.0 Introduction

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) applies to the lands on the north side of Steeles Avenue, between Jane Street and Keele Street, up to the hydro corridor parallel to Steeles, in the City of Vaughan (henceforth, “the Steeles Corridor” or “the CIP area”; see Schedule A). It describes the policy context and planning objectives for the area and sets out the municipal tools and strategies intended to assist in achieving those objectives. It is a follow-up and companion document to the City of Vaughan’s Official Plan Amendment 620. The policies of OPA 620 are intended to manage and direct development of a transit-supportive, pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use precinct centered on a planned subway station in the Steeles Corridor.

What is a Community Improvement Plan?

Under Section 28 of Ontario’s *Planning Act*, a municipality may designate an area as a community improvement project area if, in the opinion of the council, the improvement of the area “is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.” The municipality may subsequently prepare and adopt a community improvement plan for the area. Community improvement is defined in the Act as “the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary.”

CIPs are shaped by local needs, priorities and circumstances. A community improvement approach is a flexible, comprehensive, coordinated and strategic framework for dealing with lands and buildings. Through community improvement plans municipalities can:

- Focus public attention on local priorities and municipal initiatives;
- Target areas in transition or in need of repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment and restructuring;
- Facilitate and encourage community change in a coordinated manner;
- Stimulate private sector investment through municipal incentive-based programs
- Direct public resources toward implementation of municipal planning policies.

As municipalities seek ways of becoming more sustainable, they are increasingly relying on CIPs to help achieve goals related to more compact land uses, intensification, mixed uses, proximity of residential uses to employment areas, restoration and reuse of vacant or underused land, reclamation of contaminated lands, and transit-supportive development. Under a CIP, as set out in Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, municipalities may:

- acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement activities;
- construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area in conformity with the CIP, and sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any such buildings and the land appurtenant thereto;
- sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area to any person or governmental authority for use in conformity with the CIP;
- make grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or

tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the CIP.

2.0 Description of the CIP Area

The CIP area is bounded by Steeles Avenue to the south, Jane Street to the west, Keele Street to the east, and the hydro corridor to the north. The subject lands have a total area of 43 hectares, less than half of which are developed. The existing uses and owners in the Steeles Corridor, from west to east, including their development status on the date of adoption of this CIP, are described below.

- The northeast corner of Jane Street and Steeles Avenue is currently vacant and approved for a “Commercial Cemetery”, which permits the use of the lands for a 4-storey and 2-storey crematorium and columbarium.
- The City of Vaughan owns the stormwater management pond located on the north side of Steeles Avenue directly east of the approved crematorium/columbarium site.
- United Parcel Service Canada Ltd. (UPS) owns a significant portion of the western part of the CIP area, where it operates a distribution facility with access on both Steeles Avenue and Jane Street. UPS has expressed its intention to continue its operations at this location for the foreseeable future and has submitted a site plan application to expand the existing operations over part of the vacant land it owns to the east of its existing building. The Spadina Subway Extension Environmental Assessment includes a portion of the Steeles West Station platform and subway tunnels under these lands, as well as portions of a bus terminal on the surface at the east end of the UPS lands.
- To the immediate east of the UPS property, the Region of York has acquired a vacant site for part of the transit terminal. The Spadina Subway Extension Environmental Assessment recommends use of these lands for the Steeles West Station bus terminals.
- A small vacant site owned by the Glen Corporation is located immediately east of the York Region transit terminal site; the Glen Corporation also owns a pair of two-storey employment-use buildings further east, containing office, warehousing, transportation and distribution uses.
- Two one-storey buildings containing office, transportation, warehousing and light industrial uses are located on the next two properties to the east of the Glen Corporation land.
- The most easterly and largest single property, occupying approximately two-fifths of the CIP area and owned by the Milestone Group, is almost entirely vacant, except for a recently constructed four-storey office building on the northwest corner of Keele Street and Steeles Avenue.

Surrounding the CIP area is a variety of institutional, employment, residential and open space uses. To the south is York University, one of Canada’s largest and fastest growing universities, with a student and faculty population in excess of 50,000. To the west, north of Steeles Avenue, is the Black Creek valley, and beyond that, single storey employment uses extending over to Highway 400. To the west of Jane Street, north and south of Steeles Avenue are Black Creek Pioneer Village and the Black Creek valley; further to the southwest are neighbourhoods of low and higher density housing. To the east and southeast are largely single storey industrial employment uses. Beyond the hydro transmission corridor to the north is a CN rail line that feeds into the CN MacMillan Yard, as well as a cemetery, single storey employment uses and Highway 407.

3.0 Policy Context

As briefly described below, there are a number of official policy documents that provide a policy basis for this CIP and set the stage for change and improvement in the area.

City of Vaughan Urban Structure Plan

Vaughan's overall land use structure was established through the approval of Official Plan Amendment (OPA) Number 400 (1995) as amended by OPA 600 (2001). OPA 600 envisions an urban structure in which the Vaughan Corporate Centre, located approximately two kilometres north of the Steeles Corridor, plays a central role as the City's new downtown. OPA 450 is the City's Employment Area Growth and Management Plan that establishes the structure of the employment area land uses. The Steeles Corridor lands were previously designated by OPA 450 as an employment area, with a "Prestige Area" designation on the Steeles Avenue frontage. Both OPA 600 and OPA 450 encourage development to be planned in a manner which will encourage public transit ridership, and complement and support the City's planned urban structure and land use pattern.

Vaughan Corporate Centre Plan and OPAs 528 and 529

The Vaughan Corporate Centre, located east and west of the Highway 400 and Highway 407 interchange and focused on Highway 7, is planned to evolve into the City of Vaughan's "downtown". The Vaughan Corporate Centre Plan (OPA 500) establishes policy to support the construction of higher order transit from the City of Toronto subway system to the Vaughan Corporate Centre. OPA 528 amended OPA 500, incorporating policies which identify the detailed work needed to more specifically delineate the subway corridor. OPA 529 further amended OPA 500, designating the right-of-way for the subway alignment north of Steeles Avenue in order to facilitate use of Section 41 of the *Planning Act*. This right-of-way now passes through the Steeles Corridor approximately midway between Keele Street and Jane Street.

Section 5.2.1.h) of OPA 529 makes provision for a higher order transit right-of-way and associated station facilities to provide enhanced transit service to the north side of Steeles Avenue. OPA 529 also recognizes that, "In combination with the opportunities inherent in its location opposite York University, it is apparent that the development potential of this area may exceed that which is currently permitted by OPA 450. Therefore, the long-term land use potential of this area should be re-examined." A Land Use Review was initiated for the Steeles Corridor in 2002, which led to OPA 620, discussed below.

City of Vaughan Highway 7 Policy Review

In 2006, the City of Vaughan completed its Highway 7 Policy Review and is amending its Official Plan to significantly enhance development densities and opportunities in the Highway 7 corridor, and thereby generate transit ridership in support of the Region's public transit initiatives. These amendments provide for increased development densities across the corridor, including the Vaughan Corporate Centre, the anticipated future terminus of the Spadina subway line.

York Region Official Plan

The pillars of the Regional Official Plan's growth management strategy include the incorporation of an urban structure based on centres and corridors, the promotion of infill and redevelopment, and the provision for efficient and mixed-use compact communities. The Plan supports the early implementation of rapid transit services connecting York University to Vaughan Corporate Centre to support development of the VCC as a Regional Centre, the Steeles West Station within the CIP area being critical to that connection.

Section 5.5 of the York Region Official Plan includes policies “to achieve attractive and vibrant Regional Corridors that support public transit and link Regional Centres.” The Steeles Avenue Corridor is identified as a Regional Corridor. Areas within Regional Corridors with the greatest opportunity for compact, mixed-use development, areas assigned early priority for rapid transit services and infrastructure, and areas abutting or adjacent to rapid transit stations are to be identified as Key Development Areas, where intensification and mixed-use development should be focused. The Plan states, “The implementation of rapid transit services should be initiated as early as possible in the Regional Corridors to encourage development and redevelopment.” Plans for segments of Regional Corridors should “promote public transit ridership through high quality urban design, human scale, land use mix, and compact development.” Buildings and sites should be “designed to provide convenient access for public transit users, pedestrians, cyclists and persons with disabilities.” Regional Corridors are to achieve a mix of commercial, housing, employment and institutional uses and should integrate with surrounding land uses through scale, land use and design.

In the Regional Official Plan’s Conceptual Transit Network a Regional Rapid Transit Corridor consistent with the proposed subway extension alignment is identified. The Plan’s first transit policy is “to develop, at an early date, a fully coordinated public transit network that links together the major...activity areas within York and make suitable connections with the transit systems in City of Toronto.” To achieve higher transit usage, the Plan supports improvements in service, convenient access and good urban design, including more direct road patterns, higher density development adjacent to transit-intensive roads, and “providing continuous collector road systems that permit the linking of several adjacent developments with direct transit routing.”

York Region Transportation Master Plan and York Region Rapid Transit Plan

The Region of York Transportation Master Plan identifies the need for a “Gateway” to the Region’s transit network within the Steeles Corridor. Also, the Region has purchased property for a bus terminal/subway station on the north side of Steeles Avenue. In conjunction with the proposed transit station, a commuter parking lot would be established in the hydro corridor. The York Region Rapid Transit Corporation has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) report providing for a dedicated bus rapid transit and subway connection from Steeles Avenue to the Vaughan Corporate Centre to the north.

York Region also prepared an EA for the entire Highway 7 corridor to connect the Vaughan Corporate Centre to the other two southerly Regional Centres in Richmond Hill and Markham. This involves the creation of dedicated bus rapid transit lanes that would be able to fully evolve to a light rail transit facility generally operating along the Highway 7 corridor. The VIVA bus rapid transit system is now in operation on Highway 7.

City of Toronto Official Plan for York University

York University and the City of Toronto began a collaborative process to update the York University Secondary Plan in mid-2005, in light of the planned transit improvements in the area. It is an expressed goal of the exercise to develop a planning framework of appropriate land uses and development densities to support the planned extension of the Spadina subway line. The updated Secondary Plan will also provide the necessary policy direction to ensure development along the University’s Steeles Avenue frontage will be consistent with, and complementary to, the development anticipated by OPA 620.

Toronto Transit Commission Environmental Assessments

The TTC has completed and is implementing an Environmental Assessment for bus rapid transit facilities between Downsview Station and York University. Having identified the extension of the Spadina subway to York University as a preferred next major subway extension, the TTC has also completed an Environmental Assessment for the subway and its associated facilities. As of the date of adoption of this CIP, final approval of the subway EA by the provincial Minister of the Environment was pending. On March 23, 2006, the Province announced plans to significantly increase its funding of public transit, including the extension of the Spadina subway line from its current terminus, through York University to the Vaughan Corporate Centre at Highway 7, with a subway station at Steeles Avenue within the CIP area. In early 2007, the federal government also committed to funding a significant portion of the capital costs of the extension.

Provincial Land Use Policies

Early in 2005, the new Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) was approved. The PPS includes sections providing for “Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient Development and Land Use Patterns” to create “Healthy, Livable and Safe Communities”. The PPS also provides that “a land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support the development of viable choices and plans for public transit”.

In January 2007, the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, under the Province’s Places to Grow Act, came into effect. The *Growth Plan* encourages intensification and promotes reduced dependence on the automobile through development of mixed use, transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly urban environments. Defined major transit station areas and intensification corridors, to be designated in official plans, shall be planned to achieve “(a) increased residential and employment densities that support and ensure the viability of existing and planned transit service levels [and] (b) a mix of residential, office, institutional, and commercial development wherever appropriate.” Also, “major transit station areas will be planned and designed to provide access from various transportation modes to the transit facility.”

The *Growth Plan* requires that all affected municipalities, including Vaughan, amend their Official Plan policies to conform to the *Growth Plan* within three years. In order to achieve intensification targets, Vaughan will need to realize much of its growth through infill development. Vacant and underdeveloped sites close to planned rapid transit facilities, such as those within the CIP area, are particularly scarce and valuable resources to be employed in achieving these targets. To fully satisfy the *Growth Plan*, intensification will need to be supported and accompanied by infrastructure that ensures access by pedestrians, cyclists, buses and automobiles to the subway station.

Official Plan Amendment 620

OPA 620 was adopted by Vaughan Council on June 26, 2006, and approved by the Region of York on October 24, 2006. Flowing from a Land Use Review of the Steeles Corridor (Jane to Keele) completed in 2004, OPA 620 envisions a mixed-use, high-density form of development, with street-related retail uses at grade and residential and office uses above. OPA 620 also provides for the subway station, associated transit facilities and transit-related development, with a 3500-car commuter parking lot to be located in the hydro corridor.

As set out in OPA 620, development will be structured and serviced by a grid network of local roads, including a new east-west road along the north side of the development lands, connecting Jane Street to Keele Street (see Schedule B). This road may be partially located within the hydro corridor and will be the subject of a Class Environmental Assessment. A series of north-south streets linking the east-west road to

Steeles and forming appropriately-sized development blocks will complete the primary grid. It is also the intent of the OPA to explore the potential to extend the eastern-most future north-south street through the hydro corridor and beyond to improve north-south connections in the area.

One of the main objectives is to provide a high level of support for public transit service by locating the highest densities in close proximity to the subway station on the planned Spadina subway extension. OPA 620 permits development densities of 4.0 FSI on and around the subway station site, 2.5 FSI within a 10-minute walking distance of the station, and 1.5 FSI at greater distances from the station. It also calls for a high level of open space and pedestrian amenities to complement development and encourage walking (see Schedule C).

The complete planning principles and objectives for the Steeles Corridor, as set out in OPA 620, are contained in Section 4.0 of this CIP.

Section 8.7 of OPA 620 states the intent to identify the Steeles Corridor as a Community Improvement Project Area, “for which a detailed Community Improvement Plan will be prepared.” The CIP Area may include any areas that display any or all of the following conditions:

- i. inadequate municipal infrastructure, including piped services, roads and streetscapes, public parking facilities and/or stormwater management facilities;
- ii. inadequate community services such as social services, public recreational/cultural facilities, and public open spaces;
- iii. building and/or property deterioration to the extent that it negatively affects the overall image of the area;
- iv. development at densities that are too low to support the planned transit facilities; and,
- v. site contamination levels that require environmental site remediation prior to development.

OPA 620 requires the City to solicit the input of affected residents, property owners and other interested stakeholders in preparing a CIP. Once adopted by Council, the CIP would allow the City to engage in the community improvement activities set out in Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. As stated, the OPA “establishes a framework for using financial and other incentives (e.g. development charges, tax increment financing, parking requirements, parkland dedication, municipal fees, etc.) to encourage transit-supportive densities.” It also stipulates that any financial or other incentives provided by the City shall be tied to achieving the targeted transit-supportive densities. Finally, the OPA states the CIP “should include criteria to determine when the intent of a Community Improvement Plan has been carried out, and when Council may, by by-law, dissolve the Community Improvement Project Area.”

On February 12, 2007, Vaughan Council adopted a by-law designating the Steeles Corridor as Community Improvement Project Area, under the provisions of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, and directed that a Community Improvement Plan be prepared.

4.0 Planning Objectives for the CIP Area

Consistent with the municipal and provincial policies discussed above, OPA 620 is intended to facilitate and direct development and redevelopment of the Steeles Corridor with a mix of uses that feature transit-supportive densities and a compact, pedestrian-friendly urban form. The land use vision also recognizes and supports the existing and planned uses on the York University lands on the south side of Steeles. The corridor is focused on the future Steeles West subway station, which will connect this area to the Vaughan Corporate Centre, York Region’s Rapid transit corridor on Highway 7, TTC’s

Spadina subway line and points beyond. Establishing these rapid transit connections is fundamental to achieving the land use vision.

OPA 620 sets out in detail the planning principles and objectives for the Steeles Corridor. They are as follows.

1. A transit-supportive Plan: Support and capitalize on existing and planned transit investments.
 - a) To establish high density, mixed-use residential/commercial development that provides support to the existing bus transit and planned subway service.
 - b) To establish a road and block structure that provides access for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit and passenger vehicles.
 - c) To develop a grid network of continuous and interconnected arterial, primary and local streets, and short development blocks, complemented by a public transit network, facilitating efficient movement by all modes.
 - d) To establish, at as early a stage as possible, an east-west primary road connection between Jane Street and Keele Street north of Steeles to support bus and car movements and to provide relief to the Keele/Steeles and Jane/Steeles intersections.
 - e) To protect for transit-related facilities (including bus terminals, passenger pick-up and drop-off and station entrances) required for the Steeles West Station.

2. A Plan to use infrastructure effectively: Manage development within the capacity of existing and committed transportation and servicing infrastructure.
 - a) To maximize land use densities within the capability of the infrastructure.
 - b) To plan for infrastructure improvements and community facilities and services that will support further increases to permitted land use densities.
 - c) To phase land uses so that they match with the implementation of the infrastructure improvements, meaning all public and/or private utilities (including but not exclusive of CATV, Hydro, Gas, Communications/Telecommunications, Canada Post, etc.), which are required to service a development.
 - d) To require all development to proceed on the basis of full services, logically extended in keeping with the availability of servicing capacity, and designed and built at a scale which ensure that the ultimate forecast population and employment growth resulting from this Plan can be accommodated.
 - e) To ensure that the costs of private development are fully borne by, shared equitably among, and recovered from benefiting landowners.
 - f) To plan well in advance, in cooperation with the Region of York, to ensure that infrastructure improvements at both the local and regional level are planned on a comprehensive basis, and built in time to address the needs of the Corridor, in concert with market demand.

3. Create a compact, mixed-use precinct, concentrating worker and resident population within a 10-minute walking distance of the future Steeles West Station.
 - a) To provide the opportunity for a full range of high density land uses.
 - b) To support a mixing, rather than separation, of land uses.
 - c) To provide an opportunity for the highest densities to be concentrated in the areas closest to the planned transit stops and station.
 - d) To establish a concentration of residential and major office development close to the subway station that supports development of a vibrant urban area.
 - e) To provide for the achievement of a substantial commercial centre with market synergies among the various uses and which fosters increased public transit ridership.
 - f) To provide retail development opportunities sufficient to accommodate the transit and pedestrian population in the Corridor, while avoiding creation of a retail centre serving broader City or Region wide needs.

- g) To establish the mixed-use residential and commercial corridor as an integral component of a pedestrian-friendly urban environment which is conveniently accessible by public transit, bicycle, and on foot from York University and the surrounding community.
 - h) To ensure that the Corridor develops in a manner consistent with its 'planned function' in the City's hierarchy of transit-supportive centres and corridors.
4. Complement and reinforce the academic function and campus environment of York University.
- a) To provide for a range of land uses that support the continued evolution of York University.
 - b) To recognize the core of the campus as the primary area for academic function, and provide support for other uses ancillary and complementary to that core academic function.
 - c) To become a complementary component to the York University campus, rather than a separate corridor in another context.
 - d) To make connections across Steeles Avenue and enhance pedestrian access between the north and south sides.
 - e) To visually connect land uses across Steeles Avenue from a built form and urban design perspective.
5. Ensure early phases of new development establish the vision for the Corridor at the outset and provide the opportunity for further land use evolution.
- a) To ensure that the first phase of development enables the City to acquire or secure the planned road rights-of-way which define the lot and block structure.
 - b) To encourage and support as high a density as supported by this Plan at the earliest possible stage of development.
 - c) To have all phases of development, including initial phases, reflect transit-supportive urban design.
 - d) To require preparation of development phasing plans that provide for the logical progression of development from its initial phase to a mature phase reflecting the urban form envisioned by the Plan.
 - e) To ensure as early as possible, the development of the key public sector elements needed to achieve the vision for the Steeles Corridor Secondary Plan Area, including the establishment of:
 - i. public transit services, and associated infrastructure and facilities;
 - ii. a grid network of public road rights-of-way;
 - iii. the continuous east-west primary road connection between Jane and Keele Streets;
 - iv. a pedestrian promenade along Steeles Avenue with a high-quality streetscape;
 - v. appropriately sized and located park/neighbourhood square and school sites.
 - f) To consider the compatibility of existing land uses in the early phases of new development.
 - g) To provide an appropriate transition in scale from residential areas to surrounding employment areas.
 - h) To protect against the displacement of employment from surrounding employment areas that are, in particular related to the CN Rail Yard and significant to the local, regional and national economy.
6. Develop a consistent, attractive image and pedestrian environment along Steeles Avenue through landscaping and the placement and massing of buildings.
- a) To promote the development of a mixed use residential and commercial district focused along the Steeles Avenue frontage.
 - b) To have development concentrated and massed along Steeles Avenue to create a physical presence and focus for the transit-riding pedestrian.

- c) To develop a walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment, with connections to the subway station, public facilities such as schools, parks, urban squares, and commercial areas.
 - d) To encourage built forms and streetscapes that support walking through a continuous, street-oriented urban area that is safe, attractive, and human in scale.
 - e) To encourage the grouping or clustering of utilities wherever possible in order to reduce or mitigate street clutter within the public or private realm. Wherever practical, the City encourages utilities to locate within buildings.
7. Provide a balanced transportation system convenient, safe and comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, and private vehicles.
- a) To develop a pedestrian and bicycle network through the Corridor, connecting private amenity areas, parks, neighbourhood squares, public buildings, stormwater management areas, utility easements and, where appropriate, local streets, within and adjacent to the Corridor, and particularly to the subway station and York University.
 - b) To support on-street parking on the local north-south roads, to support street-related retail uses that are accessible to both pedestrians and drivers.
 - c) To encourage the City of Toronto to consider, over the evolution of this Plan, the potential for on-street parking on Steeles Avenue.
 - d) To encourage travel on foot and bicycle, by providing safe and convenient pedestrian and bike networks on public streets and connections to the subway station, parks, public facilities and publicly accessible private amenity areas.
 - e) To use appropriate building setbacks, lane widths, turning radii, etc. as traffic calming measures as appropriate, to reduce traffic speeds, enhance public safety, and create a more urban condition.
 - f) To secure, acquire and/or protect for road rights-of-way and transit rights-of-way that make up the grid network of primary and local roads.
 - g) To facilitate bus access to the subway station and automobile access to the passenger pick-up and drop-off and the commuter parking lot in the hydro corridor.
 - h) To reduce the need for commuter travel by encouraging a closer relationship between the workplace and the home.
8. Integrate transit facilities, roads and development as seamlessly as possible with surrounding development.
- a) To encourage a significant increase in public transit ridership to reduce traffic congestion, energy costs and pollution, and foster greater efficiency in the operation of the transportation system.
 - b) To provide for a transition of land uses and density from the subway station to adjacent areas.
 - c) To provide a network of north-south road rights-of-way connecting across to the south side of Steeles Avenue to York University that also facilitate pedestrian and bicycle crossings.
 - d) To facilitate east-west movement through the corridor by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles through the provision of linked, mid-block connections.
 - e) To continue to work closely with York Region, City of Toronto, York University and the various transit providers to implement the transit and road system improvements complementing the development policies in this Secondary Plan.
 - f) To support additional longer-term road connections to areas beyond the Secondary Plan.
9. Ensure future residential neighbourhoods are adequately served by community amenities such as schools, urban squares and parks, libraries, emergency services and recreational facilities.

- a) To provide population and employment forecasts that support the planning and provision of community services.
 - b) To provide opportunities for multi-use institutional and community facilities.
 - c) To recognize the personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of recreation, urban parks and squares, and open spaces.
 - d) To establish policies for securing public uses, urban parks and squares, and publicly accessible private amenity areas.
 - e) To create a convenient and continuous pedestrian and bicycle network throughout the Corridor, connecting to transit, parks, public facilities, and linking it to the surrounding community.
 - f) To provide urban parks and squares that address the passive recreational needs of the anticipated households and employees within the Corridor.
 - g) To encourage and assist institutional users and public agencies in securing suitable sites and space to enable them to serve the community's social, cultural, education, government, health care and religious needs.
 - h) To ensure that the institutional uses are compatible with and complementary to neighbouring uses and the surrounding community, and are designed to facilitate the achievement of the urban design and streetscape objectives of the Plan.
 - i) To encourage major institutional users to locate on sites conveniently accessible to pedestrians and via the public transit network.
10. Maintain and support the primary function of the Hydro Corridor to transport electricity.
- a) To continue to work with York Region Rapid Transit Plan, Ontario Realty Corporation and Hydro One on expediting the design details and approvals of the continuous east-west primary road right-of-way between Keele Street and Jane Street.
 - b) To support a design of the east-west road right-of-way that protects the primary function of the Hydro Corridor.
 - c) To encourage as much of the east-west road right-of-way as is technically feasible to be located in the Hydro Corridor.
 - d) To protect the use of the Hydro Corridor for facilities that support the subway station and public uses but do not interfere with the primary function of the corridor.
11. Encourage the urban design of future development to be of the highest quality.
- a) To provide high quality development by:
 - i. encouraging and attracting private investment that will respond to the high order of public investment.
 - ii. adding value to private lands served by the public realm.
 - iii. encouraging a range and mix of high density residential, institutional and employment uses.
 - iv. establishing simple development "rules" in order to encourage, rather than discourage, development that meets the objectives of this Plan.
 - b) To use, in addition to the policies of this plan, the City of Vaughan's draft "Corridor and Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines – February 2004" as a guiding document to development in the Secondary Plan Area.
12. Promote and demonstrate environmental sustainability.
- a) To ensure a compact, mixed-use pattern of development and a network of streets and paths that encourage walking, cycling and transit use.
 - b) To remediate contaminated land.
 - c) To utilize best practices in watershed management.
 - d) To achieve high levels of energy efficiency in buildings and utilities.
 - e) To encourage the use of renewable energy sources.
 - f) To minimize the heat island effect from buildings and paved areas.

- g) To integrate stormwater management and water recycling facilities in the design of buildings, open spaces and parking areas.
- h) To protect the integrity of the Black Creek valley system.
- i) To support the development of district energy, heating and cooling systems.
- j) To encourage “green” buildings designed to achieve a high Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating.
- k) To ensure trees line streets and populate parking areas, and are well maintained.

In quantitative terms, the Steeles Corridor is planned to accommodate approximately 5,500 residential units, and a residential population of approximately 11,000, at full build out. A total of up to 83,000 square metres of office and other commercial uses is planned, which would generate an estimated 4,000 employees.

5.0 Rationale for the CIP

OPA 620 establishes the vision, planning principles and objectives for the Steeles Corridor. It is the intent of this CIP to assist in managing the gradual transformation of the area from low densities to higher, transit-supportive densities and from industrial uses to a mix of employment, residential and commercial uses.

There are many challenges to be addressed before the potential of the Steeles Corridor can be fully realized. None of the area’s existing development is consistent with the vision articulated by OPA 620. Nor are any of the elements of the required road network in place. The OPA 620 lands are largely unserved and are in need of comprehensive servicing solutions to facilitate their development.

OPA 620 recognizes that it will take a number of years for the corridor to reach its full potential. Coordinating public infrastructure and private development to ensure each phase of improvement serves the ultimate vision will be critical. From the outset, new land uses must be transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented. Also vital to the successful implementation of OPA 620 is the timely establishment of public infrastructure, particularly the roads and transit facilities identified in Schedule B.

The existing patterns of land ownership and land uses pose several potential impediments to achieving the land use and infrastructure objectives for the Steeles Corridor:

- Existing industrial land uses and the phasing of new land uses under OPA 620 may prevent timely implementation of the planned road network. Although much of the planned road network may be achieved as requirements of approved developments, critical parts of the network, such as the east-west road and certain north-south streets, may need to be secured and built in advance of development on affected properties.
- Detailed planning and design of the subway station, intermodal transit facility and transit-related development may result in the need for additional land beyond that which has been acquired by York Region, and may require a new arrangement of land ownership and uses.
- The most appropriate locations for other public facilities planned or to be planned, including parks, schools, stormwater management facilities and other public works or community amenities, may be on land not subject to a development application. In some cases, the City may secure the best site through a developers’ agreement, as provided for in OPA 620. In other cases, the City may need to acquire land or facilitate a land exchange among private landowners.

- The continuing presence and potential expansions of industrial land uses, due to their visual and environmental impact, may hinder the development of transit-supportive uses and densities on adjacent or nearby land, as provided for in OPA 620. In such cases, the City may need to acquire land or facilitate land exchanges among landowners to overcome a faulty arrangement of ownerships and uses.
- Restrictions that may be imposed on public uses within the hydro corridor, due to its transmission function, which may necessitate the acquisition of land not anticipated by OPA 620 for public infrastructure.

Because one or more of the above impediments is anticipated to apply to any given part of the Steeles Corridor, its entirety has been designated a Community Improvement Project Area and is subject to this CIP.

6.0 Municipal Leadership Actions

To both advance the planned and desired improvements in the Steeles Corridor and address the potential impediments described in Section 5.0, the City of Vaughan will play a leading role in the implementation of OPA 620 and this CIP.

Partnerships

The City of Vaughan intends to work cooperatively and in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, York Region, the City of Toronto, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Hydro One, CN Rail, the various transit agencies and York University to implement OPA 620 and this CIP. It may also act alone or in partnership with a private sector interest to implement this CIP.

The City will support a York Region initiative to prepare a Regional Community Improvement Plan to address matters in the Steeles Corridor of regional interest, if both the City and the Region deem such a CIP appropriate. (As of January 2007, the *Planning Act* allows upper tier municipalities to adopt Community Improvement Plans for certain matters, as prescribed in Ontario Regulation 550/06, including infrastructure such as transportation corridors and facilities, waste management, and water, wastewater and stormwater works. Regional CIPs may also deal with land and buildings within and adjacent to existing or planned transit corridors that have the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed use development and redevelopment and affordable housing.)

Land Acquisition and Disposal

As permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, the City of Vaughan may, as a community improvement project, acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvements to implement OPA 620 and this CIP. It may also sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land and any buildings acquired or held by it to advance, on both an interim and long-term basis, the objectives of OPA 620 and other transit-oriented and city-building policy objectives.

In the case of land acquisitions, such community improvement projects may:

- involve land intended or required for transit facilities and transit-related development, roads or other works in order to implement OPA 620, other relevant policies, or other subsequent plans for the area approved by Council; and/or
- be for the purpose of achieving an improved pattern of land ownership to facilitate either public or private redevelopment and use that implement, in the interim or long-term, OPA 620 and this CIP.

In the case of land disposals or leases, a condition of the sale or lease must be that the land will be used to further the implementation of OPA 620.

To achieve transit-related development, the City may enter into agreements respecting the funding of land acquisition with other levels of government. Land exchange agreements with private landowners may also be undertaken to ameliorate issues of faulty arrangement, both interim and long-term.

Building Construction and Improvement

As permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, the City of Vaughan may construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land it holds or acquires in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan. In such cases, the project must implement OPA 620 or other subsequent plans for the area approved by Council.

7.0 CIP Monitoring

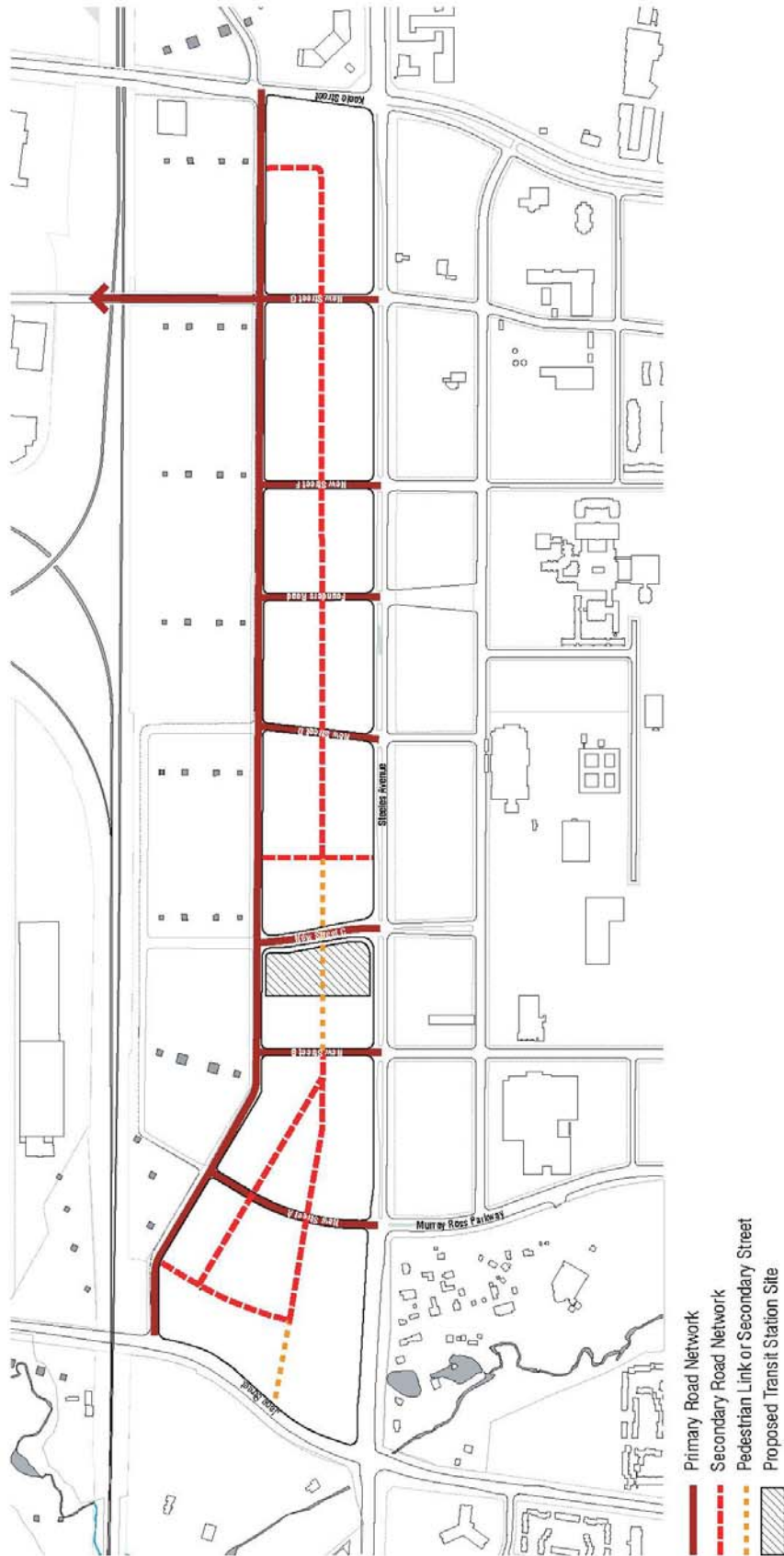
The City will monitor the effectiveness of this CIP at each stage of substantial improvement within the Steeles Corridor. It is expected that this CIP will be required to ensure all planned major components of the public realm, including roads, transit facilities, parkland, schools and other community infrastructure and amenities, are implemented in a timely manner and in appropriate locations. Council may, by by-law, dissolve the Community Improvement Project Area, when:

- the essential public infrastructure planned to service the future development envisioned in OPA 620 has been provided; and
- redevelopment and development has occurred in the CIP Area to realize the goals of OPA 620.

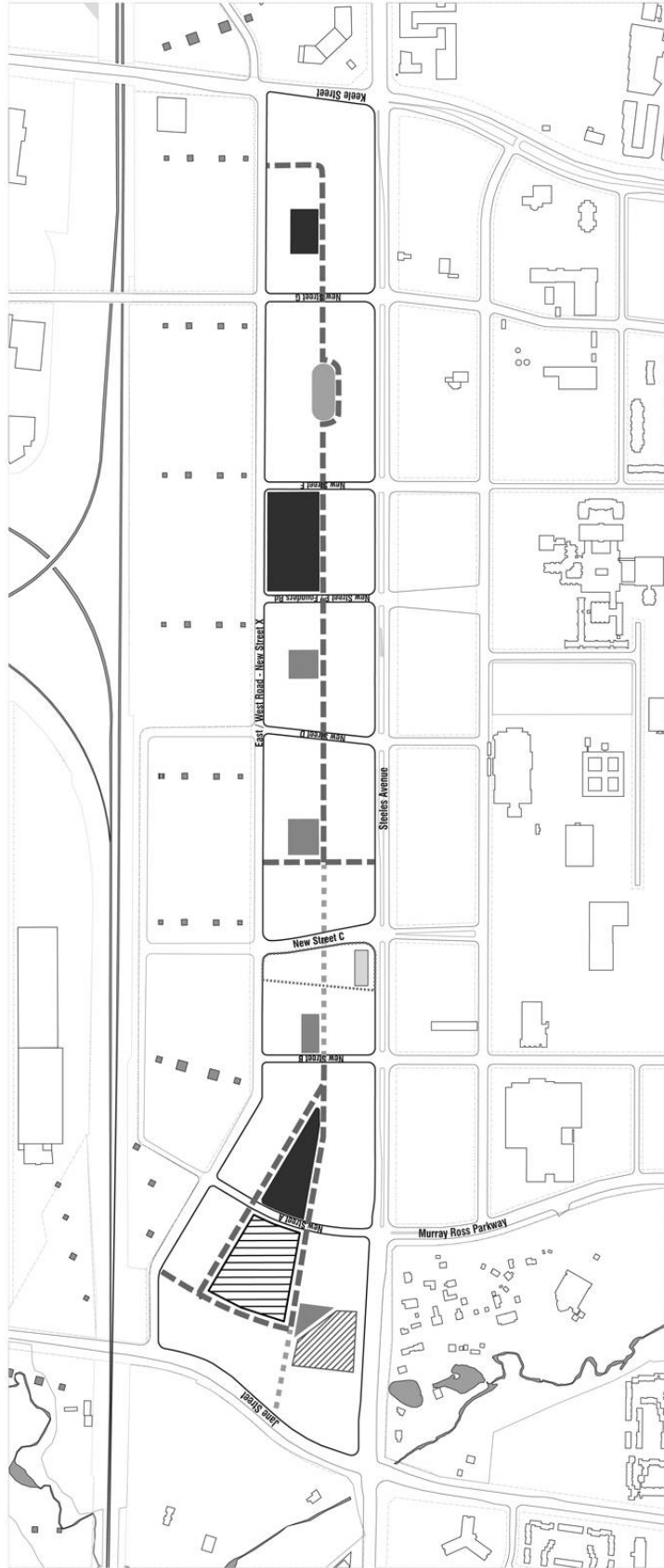
If, in the opinion of City Council, development in the Steeles Corridor is not proceeding as planned in OPA 620, then it may amend this CIP with additional strategies and programs as provided for in the *Planning Act*. These may include grants or loans to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the CIP to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the CIP. The City will monitor the progress of public transit improvements in the area, principally the subway extension, as well as real estate transactions and land development in the vicinity of the planned extension, to determine if and when development incentives that may be provided through a CIP are appropriate and necessary to implement the vision of OPA 620.



Schedule A - Community Improvement Project Area



Schedule B - Conceptual Street Network



- Neighbourhood Park
- Neighbourhood Square / Green
- Urban Plaza
- Potential School Site or Open Space
- Secondary Road Network
- Pedestrian / Cycle Link or Secondary Street
- Existing Storm Water Management Pond
- Lands Acquired for Transit Terminal

Schedule C - Conceptual Open Space Network and Public Amenities