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COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

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7.1 Community Infrastructure

7.1.1 Community Infrastructure

Sustainable communities are those that provide for the social wellbeing of their residents, in addition to using land resources wisely. This means providing for important community, human and social services and facilities, such as emergency services, libraries, community centres, *schools*, *day care* and health care; providing places and opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of civic life; ensuring a range of housing choices, including a variety of types, tenures and prices; and ensuring residents have access to healthy and affordable food – some of which may be grown in the City. These various facilities and services are at the core of a high quality of life in Vaughan and, like other basic facilities and services such as hydro, roads, water and sewer, are considered part of the infrastructure necessary to maintain a healthy, liveable and sustainable City.

The Region of York, the Province and the Federal governments and various agencies are responsible for the funding and delivery of most human and social services in Vaughan. However, Vaughan plays an important role in where and how the services and facilities associated with community infrastructure are provided. Vaughan is also directly responsible for the provision of certain elements such as parks and recreation facilities and can directly support access to local food and a strong local food system. In addition, various non-profit organizations and agencies based in Vaughan are directly involved in the delivery of community and social services.

Two studies were undertaken to better understand Vaughan's community infrastructure needs, the Social Services Study (2009) and the Active Together Master Plan (2008). These studies provide an important understanding of Vaughan's community infrastructure and targets for the future. The policies in this chapter build on the findings of these studies.



It is the policy of Council:

- 7.1.1.1. To support consistent levels of investment in order to successfully implement the City of Vaughan Parks, Recreation, Culture and Libraries Master Plan, referred to as the Active Together Master Plan, in order to provide library and cultural facilities and parks and open spaces.
- 7.1.1.2. To update the Active Together Master Plan every five years, coinciding with the review of this Plan, including adjustments to facility needs and targets based on updated long-term population targets and growth patterns.
- 7.1.1.3. To support and encourage the provision of a full range of housing options across the City to meet the current and future needs of all residents. Vaughan shall plan for a balanced supply of housing that includes diversity in housing type, tenure, and affordability.
- 7.1.1.4. To support and encourage local food systems and local food production throughout the City to promote healthy lifestyles, provide affordable food options, contribute to sustainability, support economic growth and increase local food security.
- 7.1.1.5. To work with York Region and other levels of government and social service providers to plan for the provision of human and social services that will continue to meet the needs of Vaughan residents.

7.2 Community Services and Facilities

7.2.1 Supporting the Provision of Community Services and Facilities

Community services and facilities are the wide variety of public programs, buildings and spaces that provide for community health and wellbeing. They include arts and recreation facilities, museums, libraries, community health and resource centres, schools, places of worship, *day care* and long-term care facilities. Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan provides direction for the municipal provision of many of these services and facilities. Community services and facilities also include emergency services such as fire, police and emergency medical services and dispatch centres.

A variety of private and non-governmental organizations provide community services and facilities that improve the quality of life for Vaughan residents and employees, augmenting community infrastructure provided by Vaughan and York Region. Public school facilities, provided by school boards, play an important community building role and are a convenient location for many functions beyond education. Places of worship cater to the spiritual needs of a community but also often function as a hub for other activities including celebrations, social services, and child care. Child care providers play an important role for many and contribute to *complete communities*. The City of Vaughan will continue to be creative in achieving community services and facilities through traditional and non-traditional means to provide optimal resources for all residents and employees.

Conveniently located and accessible community services and facilities are critical to the success of municipal programs and services, and contribute directly to the health and social wellbeing of communities. Community services and facilities should be integrated into existing and **New Community Areas**, and located within **Intensification Areas** and other central locations in order to facilitate access and use. In addition to programming and service requirements, facilities should have convenient transit and pedestrian access, site design that prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle movement and should be built to the street for prominence and ease of access.

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.2.1.1. To support new and renovated community service and recreation facilities that are appropriately designed, and:

- a. conveniently accessible by transit, bicycle and on foot;
 - b. centrally located in the area in which they provide service;
 - c. designed to incorporate green building standards, as set out in Section 9.1.3 of this Plan; and,
 - d. designed to support *universal accessibility*.
- 7.2.1.2. To support the reuse of surplus *school* properties and facilities for social services and community, cultural or *affordable* housing facilities.
- 7.2.1.3. To encourage the reuse of existing municipally-owned facilities for new community-serving uses, and to encourage the co-location of multiple activities and services, such as recreational buildings, libraries, and arts and cultural facilities.
- 7.2.1.4. To encourage and support the development of joint and/or shared *community facilities*, such as *schools*, community centres, libraries, *day care* or other appropriate facilities, on shared sites and, where appropriate, adjacent to public parks.

7.2.2 Community Centres and Services

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.2.2.1. That community centres shall be planned to develop as, or evolve into, full service centres that provide for a wide variety of community needs in addition to recreation. To achieve this, community centres may include a variety of municipal services and limited commercial or *retail* uses that would contribute to the overall function of the centre as a community hub.
- 7.2.2.2. To explore the potential for the *intensification* of existing community centres through the development of residential and local-serving *retail* and community service uses.
- 7.2.2.3. That community centres and services be responsive to Vaughan's diversity with a range of cultural and age appropriate facilities and services, including facilities for youth and seniors. Target populations for specific facilities and services shall be included in the design process to address their needs.

- 7.2.2.4. To support the provision of senior- and immigrant-focused services in multiple languages and to support targeted social services outreach to specific communities with high levels of seniors, new immigrants, people living below the poverty line, children and youth.
- 7.2.2.5. To implement the community service objectives of the Active Together Master Plan, as amended from time to time, by ensuring the per-capita targets for indoor community centres and indoor recreation facilities are met and that planned facilities are sufficient to meet the needs of projected residential populations.

7.2.3 Schools and Day Care

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.2.3.1. That *schools* are permitted in all residential, mixed-use and major institutional land use designations, in accordance with the policies contained in Chapter 9 of this Plan. The precise location, size and number of *schools* shall be established in consultation with the appropriate school board through the Secondary Plan and/or Block Planning process.
- 7.2.3.2. To explore, with the school boards, smaller school sizes that better fit into the desired planned context of ***Intensification Areas***.
- 7.2.3.3. That *day care* uses are permitted and encouraged in all *urban areas*, subject to locational criteria, except for **General Employment** designations, in accordance with the policies contained in Chapter 9 of this Plan and will provide both indoor and outdoor play areas in accordance with Provincial regulations. The zoning by-law shall provide specific standards to regulate the appropriate size, configuration, siting, sunlight exposure, landscaping, setbacks and buffering provisions for the associated outdoor play area.
- 7.2.3.4. To consider the provision and location of *day care* facilities in the preparation of Secondary Plans, Plans of Subdivision, for large-scale residential and industrial developments; and development plans or Site Plans for *major office*, *major retail* and

residential developments, giving consideration to the needs of the local community, the availability of existing services and the expected composition of the resident and employment populations.

- 7.2.3.5. That the zoning by-law supports the provision of adequate *day care* facilities by addressing design standards for associated outdoor play space, including but not limited to standards related to safety, size, location, orientation and comfort.

7.2.4 Libraries

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.2.4.1. That libraries are permitted in all residential, mixed-use, employment and institutional land use designations in accordance with the policies contained in Chapter 9 of this Plan. Suitable library sites shall be identified through the Secondary Plan and/or Block Planning process and shall be identified in consultation between landowner groups, the Vaughan Public Library Board and the City of Vaughan.
- 7.2.4.2. To implement the library facility objectives of the Active Together Master Plan, as amended from time to time, including targets for neighbourhood, community and resource libraries, through per-capita targets for library facilities and that existing and planned library facilities are sufficient to meet the needs of projected residential populations.
- 7.2.4.3. To ensure that new and renovated libraries are appropriately designed, and that these facilities shall be:
- a. conveniently accessible by transit, bicycle and on foot;
 - b. centrally located in the community which they service;
 - c. designed to incorporate green building standards as set out in Section 9.1.3 of this Plan; and,
 - d. designed to support *universal accessibility*.
- 7.2.4.4. To encourage and support the development of joint or co-located library facilities such as community centres, *schools*, or other appropriate facilities.

7.2.5 Public Safety Services

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.2.5.1. That *public safety services* such as fire halls, emergency health service stations and police stations may be located within all land use designations, in accordance with the policies of Chapter 9 of this Plan, to facilitate optimal response times.

7.3 Parks and Open Spaces

Vaughan's parks and open spaces assume many forms and are located throughout the City. Parks support active and passive recreation and include playing fields, playgrounds, large and small event spaces, community spaces, aquatic facilities, field houses, skateboard parks and a variety of other uses.

At one end of the spectrum of open spaces there are the more naturalized areas that support passive recreational uses and ecological functions, such as trails, sensitive wetlands, valley lands and forests, cemeteries, the Don and Humber river systems, and the casually tended landscapes around stormwater management ponds. At the other end of the spectrum are the smaller publicly accessible open spaces that consist of both public and private spaces and comprise greenways, pedestrian pathways, and amenity spaces. Creating and enhancing the full spectrum of open spaces and parkland is essential in developing a system that connects both significant and minor destinations, encouraging citizens to enjoy a range of recreational activities.

The Active Together Master Plan provides an overview of the needs and priorities for parks and recreation facilities and spaces in Vaughan. As Vaughan grows and intensifies, more and diverse opportunities for new parks and open spaces will be identified. These opportunities will need to consider the provision of active uses, those parks that accommodate major recreational and athletic uses, and passive uses, those parks and open spaces that are more closely tied to enjoyment of the natural and urban environments and include non-intensive recreational uses. Parkland and open space provision will respond to a number of priorities, including athletic fields and courts, children's play areas and waterplay facilities, skateboard parks, additional nature trails, off-leash dog areas and a variety of other needs.

Active Uses: permitted sports activities and other activities requiring specialized facilities, such as playgrounds, outdoor fitness equipment, baseball, soccer, cricket, tennis, aquatics and other similar uses.

Passive Uses: unstructured recreation activities such as seating areas, off-leash areas, picnic areas and other similar uses.

7.3.1 Parks and Open Space Types

A hierarchy of parks and open spaces will be provided and integrated throughout the City to support a relatively balanced distribution of facilities and activities throughout Vaughan. Regional Parks serve the entire City and can accommodate large City-wide events. **New Community Areas** will require a variety of new District and Neighbourhood Parks to meet the needs of future residents. **Intensification Areas** will require new and creative parkland opportunities provided on a more urban scale, mostly in the form of Neighbourhood Parks and Public Squares. A variety of open spaces are provided throughout the City, ranging in size and type from small woodlots to long greenways. The following policies set out types of parks and open spaces and general design approaches.

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.3.1.1. To implement the parkland objectives and targets of the Active Together Master Plan, as amended from time to time, by satisfying the per-capita targets for parkland are met and that existing and planned parkland facilities are sufficient to meet the needs of projected residential populations.
- 7.3.1.2. To support a variety of parks that are evenly distributed throughout the City, in accordance with the Active Together Master Plan, as follows:
 - a. Regional Parks are large parks, greater than 15 hectares, that play a City-wide role and can accommodate large cultural, recreational and entertainment events, such as festivals, sport tournaments, weddings and other events. Regional Parks should also accommodate uses found in District Parks.
 - b. District Parks should be large, greater than 5 hectares, and flexible to accommodate a variety of recreational and athletic interests, including major sports fields, large skateboard parks, outdoor skating facilities, field houses, picnic shelters, off-leash areas, aquatic/waterplay facilities and other uses. Where possible, the location of District Parks should be coordinated with community centre sites to maximize efficiencies and shared use.
 - c. Neighbourhood Parks provide a balance of active and passive uses and must balance the needs of the City as a whole and those of the local community.

Neighbourhood Parks should generally be located within a 10-minute walk of the majority of the community served. The size of Neighbourhood Parks can vary from a minimum of 1 hectare up to 5 hectares to meet the needs of individual communities, but should generally be smaller in size than District Parks. Where possible, Neighbourhood Parks should be coordinated with school sites to maximize efficiencies and shared use.

- d. Public Squares are intensively-used spaces that can accommodate a range of neighbourhood-oriented social opportunities and larger city-wide entertainment and cultural events depending on their size and location. Public Squares can include public art, small outdoor game areas such as chess tables, formal gardens and lawns, fountains/waterplay, small areas for dog walking, concert facilities and stages, seating areas and places to eat. They can also accommodate street-related activities such as vendors, *retail* kiosks, temporary markets, performance and exhibit space, and a range of other facilities. Public Squares should generally be up to 1 hectare in size. Smaller sites may also be considered in densely populated areas. Public Squares shall be designed to:
 - i. include a mix of landscaping and hardscaping;
 - ii. be defined and animated by buildings that provide a sense of intimacy and enclosure;
 - iii. be located in **Intensification Areas** and be connected to buildings and other open spaces through landscaped pathways;
 - iv. be highly visible with prominent public street frontage (50% of park perimeter);
 - v. be considered on existing under-developed sites such as parking lots and *brownfield* sites;
 - vi. be considered as part of the design and planning of the **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre** and **Primary** and **Local Centres**; and,
 - vii. reflect high quality design and support year round use.

7.3.1.3. To accommodate a variety of open spaces types, which provide important benefits to the City, are evenly distributed throughout the City, in accordance with the Active Together Master Plan, as follows:

- a. greenways, which are typically a minimum of 25 metres in width, provide important linkages for pedestrians and cyclists, can improve connections between significant destinations such

- as other parks and open spaces and *community facilities*, and provide opportunities for small-scale recreational activities within the greenway corridor;
- b. nature reserves, which provide opportunities for passive recreation and trails, where such activities will not have an adverse impact on significant natural features and ecological functions;
- c. woodlots, which provide opportunities for trails and should be encouraged on public and, through partnerships, on private lands;
- d. stormwater management facilities, which provide opportunities for trails and resting areas and can improve linkages to other parks and open spaces; and,
- e. cemeteries, which can, where appropriate, provide opportunities for passive recreational uses such as pedestrian and bicycle routes.

7.3.1.4. That all existing parks shall be maintained in public ownership, and that the establishment of new parks and open spaces shall be prioritized through the parkland dedication policies in Section 7.3.3 of this Plan. Only parklands classified by the City as Regional Parks, District Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Public Squares are eligible for parkland dedication credits through the development process. Open spaces shall be established through other means.

7.3.2 Parks and Open Space Design

New parks and open spaces in Vaughan must respond to an increasingly maturing and diverse urban environment and population. In ***Intensification Areas***, more intensively used parks will be more common as space for larger parks is no longer available. Vaughan will continue to provide high quality and diverse parks that provide for the year-round recreational needs of a variety of residents.

It is the policy of Council:

7.3.2.1. That parks and open spaces may include a range of community amenities, including sports facilities, playgrounds, pavilions and shelters, outdoor amphitheatres and picnic areas. The types of amenities provided should reflect the catchment area, target population, local needs and the park's functional characteristics, as appropriate to each park type.

- 7.3.2.2. That, at the discretion of the City, Neighbourhood Parks and Public Squares within ***Intensification Areas*** may be designed to be smaller and accommodate less land-intensive activities in order to better fit into the desired planned context of these areas and to take advantage of available land resources. These parks and open spaces should be designed to support more intensive uses.
- 7.3.2.3. To encourage the naturalization of parks, where appropriate, in part or in whole, to enhance Vaughan's Natural Heritage Network, provide additional opportunities for passive recreation.
- 7.3.2.4. That all parks shall be located and oriented to be:
- a. in a central location or in the community to be served in order to act as a focal point for the community;
 - b. uninterrupted by major physical barriers, such as rail lines, arterial, and collector streets, and other physical barriers that restrict access;
 - c. accessible by transit, bicycle, on foot and by car;
 - d. highly visible with prominent public street frontage (50% of park perimeter) to enhance passive surveillance; and,
 - e. connected to other parks, open spaces and natural features to create an interconnected network of parks and open spaces.
- 7.3.2.5. To design parks and open spaces to:
- a. accommodate a diverse range of both passive and active recreational activities, and have flexibility to accommodate new uses or interests;
 - b. cater to a broad range of users by providing space and facilities that support a range of activities;
 - c. encourage healthy living through the provision of a variety of recreational facilities, ranging from sports fields to outdoor fitness areas and playgrounds;
 - d. to reflect the diverse cultures in Vaughan by providing for unique activities and facilities that reflect the needs of various cultural and ethnic groups;
 - e. accommodate *universal accessibility* and provide for a range of activities for people with disabilities; and,
 - f. incorporate best practice principles of sustainable design, including natural heritage enhancement, naturalized stormwater management features, use of native plant species, incorporation of environmental education features and use of low-maintenance and energy efficient facilities and landscapes.

- 7.3.2.6. Where buildings or structures that support the planned function of parks and open spaces are proposed within parks and open spaces, they should be sited and designed to:
- a. be a positive, attractive, sensitive and integrated element;
 - b. enhance, protect and restore existing vegetation and natural heritage features;
 - c. incorporate public amenities, including public art, and enhance the user experience of these areas; and,
 - d. enhance open space linkages, public access, visibility and effective use of the park or open space.
- 7.3.2.7. Where development is proposed adjacent to parks and open spaces it shall:
- a. be sited and designed to minimize rearlotting and the impact of shadows on the park or open space;
 - b. be oriented to maximize public access and views to such spaces, where appropriate;
 - c. present a primary and interactive façade to the park or open space; and,
 - d. provide for casual overlook thereby increasing the passive surveillance and safety of the park or open space.

7.3.3 Parkland Dedication

While Vaughan currently provides significant parkland resources for all communities, growth and *intensification* may place increased pressure on existing parks and open space and increase the demand for new ones. Additional parkland will be required to meet future needs, and new types of parks may be required to maintain current levels of parkland provision. Most parkland is established under the provisions of the Planning Act through the use of parkland dedication or cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication. While these tools will continue to be utilized, additional measures for acquiring parkland will be explored to maximize Vaughan's parkland resources.

In addition to parkland dedication, open space resources will continue to be required through the development process, but outside of the parkland dedication process. These resources complement Vaughan's parkland, providing additional opportunities for passive recreation, establishing linkages between community resources, and contributing to a healthy natural environment.

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.3.3.1. To consider the parkland objectives and targets established in the Active Together Master Plan, as amended from time to time, in the application of parkland dedication requirements in the development process. Communities that fall short of the active and passive parkland targets are considered priorities for additional parkland resources.
- 7.3.3.2. To require the provision of new parkland for all new residential development at the rate of 5% of the total gross land area or one hectare of parkland per 300 dwelling units, whichever is the greatest. Cash-in-lieu of parkland dedications, or a combination of cash-in-lieu and parkland, may be considered by the City where such contributions may be more effective in achieving local parkland targets and the objectives of the Active Together Master Plan, such as in **Intensification Areas** where parcels may be too small to result in an effective parkland dedication.
- 7.3.3.3. To require the dedication of parkland for all new non-residential development at the rate of 2% of the total gross land area. Cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication may be considered by the City where such contributions may be more effective in achieving local parkland targets and objectives identified in the Active Together Master Plan.
- 7.3.3.4. That only parklands classified by the City as Regional Parks, District Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Public Squares are eligible for parkland dedication credits through the development process. Open spaces shall be established through other means.
- 7.3.3.5. That, to be considered for parkland dedication, Parks/Public Squares must be highly visible with prominent public street frontage (minimum 50% of park perimeter on a public street).
- 7.3.3.6. That **Core Features** identified in policy 3.2.3.4 shall not be included in the total gross land area for the purposes of calculating parkland dedication requirements imposed under the Planning Act and policies 7.3.3.2 and 7.3.3.3, unless such areas have been utilized for associated servicing infrastructure.

- 7.3.3.7. That lands containing **Core Features** of the Natural Heritage Network, major utilities such as TransCanada Pipeline, Hydro One etc, or buffer lands adjacent to rail corridors will not be accepted for the purposes of satisfying parkland dedication requirements.
- 7.3.3.8. That any parkland conveyed to the City must be free of all encumbrances including, but not limited to utilities/utility boxes, servicing easements, vegetation/tree stands in poor condition, and underground parking facilities.
- 7.3.3.9. To maximize the establishment of open space through the development process, by means other than parkland dedication, to complement parkland resources, provide important linkages and contribute to a healthy natural environment.
- 7.3.3.10. To consider alternative means for establishing new parkland and parkland improvements, including, but not limited to:
- a. land purchases;
 - b. the provisions of Section 37 of the Planning Act as set out in Section 10.1.2.9;
 - c. land exchanges or swaps, especially where it may prevent private development on or adjacent to an open space that provides significant environmental benefits or is highly valued by the community;
 - d. partnerships and/or joint provision of land; and,
 - e. establishment of a non-profit Parks Foundation to promote parkland donation and conservation easements.

7.4 Food and Food Production

Most of the vast array of foods we enjoy come from well beyond the City limits and even from beyond Canada's borders. In the face of rising transportation costs that increase the cost of imported foods and the concern that climate change is both being exacerbated by food production and putting pressure on the places we rely on for food, many cities are interested in increasing access to local food. The seeds of a local food supply have already been sown – more local food is being promoted in grocery stores, and farmers' markets are becoming a more common sight. Consumer demand for fresh, local food is rising, which in turn is creating a market for food produced in and around Vaughan.

Large-scale farm production, farm-related *retail* stores and pavilions, farm-gate sales, community gardens, farmers' markets and backyard gardens are all part of a city-wide food system. Local food production has a wide variety of benefits, including strengthening food security, developing community connections through community gardening initiatives, increasing local economic growth, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from food transport and providing vulnerable groups with access to nutritious and affordable food.

Vaughan will continue to support and grow local food systems. Access to land and space is critical to supporting food production, especially within *urban areas*. Opportunities for *urban agriculture* will continue to be supported, including opportunities in open spaces, utility corridors, parks, undeveloped parcels and other areas. In addition to ensuring available lands for *urban agriculture*, land use policies will facilitate the active use of these lands by allowing activities that support agriculture, including nearby composting, equipment storage and sales facilities, where appropriate. Vaughan will also support opportunities to bring food to market.

7.4.1 Food and Food Production

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.4.1.1. To support and encourage local food production and promotion through programs, funding and support, including, but not limited to, developing a municipal food charter with objectives and targets for the support of local and diverse food production, developing a 'buy local' food program for municipal facilities and events, and developing a marketing program for local food.
- 7.4.1.2. To support the creation of local distribution centres, or food hubs, within the *urban area* for direct sales between producers and consumers. These hubs could include seasonal markets in **Intensification Areas** and a larger permanent farmers' market in the **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**.
- 7.4.1.3. That farmers' markets are encouraged to locate in accessible locations throughout the City of Vaughan and especially in areas where access to locally grown food and healthy food products may be limited.
- 7.4.1.4. To encourage community agriculture through increased flexibility in land use permissions by:
 - a. allowing community gardens and related uses in all land use designations except **Natural Areas**;
 - b. investigating the use of parks and public open spaces for gardening and community agriculture, and prioritizing the identification of opportunities for community gardens in park spaces;
 - c. allowing the use of City-owned land, underutilized sites, and long-term development parcels for community agriculture, where feasible;
 - d. encouraging the identification of space for community agricultural activities through the Secondary Plan and Block Plan process;
 - e. encouraging the identification of space for community agricultural activities in new residential development; and,
 - f. allowing and encouraging community gardens as part of the private outdoor amenity space requirements for new development, including roof-top gardens.

- 7.4.1.5. To support community agriculture, including community gardens, and other community-related opportunities for local food production by:
- a. providing resources and support for community agriculture activities, including rain barrels, composting bins, compost, wood mulch or other forms of in-kind support;
 - b. supporting and engaging in partnerships with community-based non-profit organizations that assist low-income residents with garden and food-related programs;
 - c. encouraging the temporary use of large vacant sites for agriculture, without limiting the potential for future development;
 - d. developing guidelines that would assist in the establishment of local composting operations that would process organic materials collected from *urban agriculture* sites; and,
 - e. developing food program partnerships with *schools* and institutions.

7.5 Housing Options

7.5.1 Ensuring a Range of Housing Options

The transformation of Vaughan to a healthy, sustainable and vibrant urban place includes ensuring there is a diversity of housing options to accommodate all those who choose to make Vaughan their home. A wider variety of housing choices will mean that children who grow up in Vaughan will be able to stay close to their family as young adults, and seniors who have lived in the community can remain here in housing that best meets their needs. More housing choices will also mean less congestion on roads as more people who work in the City can also find housing opportunities here too.

Increasing housing choices means more options in three areas:

- **Housing Type:** adding a greater range of housing types and sizes, including more townhouses, stacked townhouses and multi-unit buildings, to the existing housing stock which still primarily consists of single-detached and semi-detached houses.
- **Housing Tenure:** adding more rental units, as currently only 7% of Vaughan's current housing stock is rental.
- **Housing Affordability:** adding more *affordable* housing options, as currently over a quarter of Vaughan residents spend more than 30% of their gross income on housing (a common threshold for affordability) and there are fewer than 500 units of *social housing* in the City.

Improving housing choice and access is a priority at both the Provincial and Regional level. Both the Provincial Growth Plan and the York Region Official Plan require municipalities to plan for a range and mix of housing options, including *affordable* housing. Among other tools such as setting *affordable* housing targets, municipalities are required to encourage *secondary suites* in the built-up area.

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.5.1.1. To encourage and support the provision of a full range of housing options including ownership and *rental housing*, *social housing*, housing for seniors, *supportive housing*, emergency shelters for women and families, accessible housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities and other types of housing that meets the needs of Vaughan's diverse population.

- 7.5.1.2. To work with York Region to develop an *affordable* housing implementation framework to achieve the *affordable* housing polices of this Plan by:
- a. contributing to achieving the York Region target that 25% of all new housing units, Region-wide, be *affordable*;
 - b. requiring that a minimum of 35% of new residential units in the **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre** and along Regional Corridors, as identified in the York Region Official Plan, be *affordable* housing units;
 - c. requiring a housing strategy within all Secondary Plans, which will demonstrate how *affordable* housing targets will be met; and,
 - d. assisting with the provision of *affordable* housing, where appropriate.
- 7.5.1.3. To require that all *significant developments* that include a residential component demonstrate their contribution to meeting the City's housing objectives through the preparation of a housing options statement. Housing options statements, prepared to the satisfaction of the City, will be required for all Block Plan, Plan of Subdivision, Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications, and describe the following:
- a. the total distribution of housing types;
 - b. tenure types and distribution;
 - c. the range of unit sizes, both in terms of floor area and number of bedrooms; and,
 - d. special residential components, such as social or senior housing.
- 7.5.1.4. To support and prioritize the following housing initiatives:
- a. the development of housing appropriate for seniors, such as *affordable* ownership, and *affordable* rental, within existing and new communities;
 - b. the provision of family-sized housing units, which are appropriate for families with children, in **Intensification Areas**;
 - c. considering *universal accessibility* and accommodations for people with disabilities in the development of design guidelines and standards for new residential development; and,
 - d. allowing *secondary suites* where deemed appropriate by a City-initiated study.

- 7.5.1.5. That housing for vulnerable populations is protected by permitting emergency shelters for women and families and group homes for people with developmental disabilities in all land use designations where residential uses are permitted, subject to the policies in Chapter 9 of this Plan.

- 7.5.1.6. To protect existing *rental housing* consisting of greater than 6 rental units from both demolition and conversion to condominium ownership or non-residential use by prohibiting such demolitions or conversions that would result in a rental vacancy rate of less than 3%.

7.6 Human and Social Services

7.6.1 Human and Social Services

A variety of private, government and non-governmental organizations provide human and social services and facilities that improve the quality of life for Vaughan residents and employees. These services address the needs of the population in areas such as health care, food banks, services for people with special needs, parenting programs, services for youth and settlement support for new immigrants. While these services can generally locate wherever *retail* or office uses are permitted, there is greater benefit to locating them where they can be easily accessed by their target clients. Similarly, as the City grows social and human service needs of the community must be recognized, in the same way the City currently provides the hard infrastructure needs to accommodate growth.

It is the policy of Council:

- 7.6.1.1. To work with the Region of York to develop guidelines, criteria and policies for consideration of human and social services needs in development review processes.
- 7.6.1.2. That opportunities for the provision of human and social services be incorporated into the design and evaluation of **New Community Areas** and **Intensification Areas**.
- 7.6.1.3. That human and social services be located such that they are easily accessible by transit and by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 7.6.1.4. That human and social services buildings and facilities should be designed with the principles of *universal accessibility*.
- 7.6.1.5. To encourage human and social services to locate in mixed-use buildings that are convenient, easily accessible and integrated into new and existing communities.



