



SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION REPORT
CF Markville Nominee Inc. (c/o Malone Given Parsons Ltd.), Application for Official Plan Amendment to permit a four-phase mixed use development, including retention of the existing shopping mall, consisting of 4,500 residential units, 11,250 m² of non-residential and community amenity space, three new public parks, and a future school location, with buildings ranging in heights from 6 to 39 storeys at 5000 Highway 7 (Ward 3)
File PLAN 23 126054

PREPARED BY: Elizabeth Martelluzzi, RPP MCIP, Senior Planner, Central District, Ext. 2193

REVIEWED BY: Sabrina Bordone, RPP MCIP, Manager, Central District, Ext. 8230
Stephen Lue, RPP, MCIP, Senior Development Manager, Ext. 2520

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the report, dated April 22, 2025, titled, “RECOMMENDATION REPORT, CF Markville Nominee Inc. (c/o Malone Given Parsons Ltd.), Application for Official Plan Amendment to permit a four-phase mixed use development, including retention of the existing shopping mall, consisting of 4,500 residential units, 11,250 m² of non-residential and community amenity space, three new public parks, and a potential future school location, with buildings ranging in heights from 6 to 39 storeys at 5000 Highway 7 (Ward 3) File PLAN 23 126054”, be received;
2. THAT the Official Plan Amendment application submitted by CF Markville Nominee Inc. be approved and the draft Official Plan Amendment, attached hereto as Appendix ‘A’, be finalized and brought to a future Council meeting to be adopted without further notice;
3. AND THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report recommends approval of the Official Plan Amendment application submitted by CF Markville Nominee Inc. to permit a four-phase mixed use development, including retention of the existing shopping mall, consisting of 4,500 residential units, 11,250 m² of non-residential and community amenity space, three new public parks, and a potential future school location, with buildings ranging in heights from 6 to 39 storeys at 5000 Highway 7, as shown in Figures 4 and 5 (the “Proposed Development”).

Staff are of the opinion that the Proposed Development makes efficient use of an underutilized parcel of land currently occupied by surface parking and is consistent with Section 2.2.1. b) of the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement, which permits “all types of residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas)”. The proposal provides a transit-supportive intensification opportunity within a Major Transit Station Area (“MTSA”) and identified key development area, utilizes existing infrastructure, diversifies the housing stock by offering high-density residential

uses with both rental and market tenures, and proposes a mix of land uses to service new and existing residents.

The Proposed Development has been designed to be sensitive to the existing community by locating the shortest buildings adjacent to the low-rise neighbourhood on the north side of Bullock Drive and the tallest buildings at the intersection of Highway 7 and McCowan Road, providing appropriate built form transitions between areas of different intensities and uses across the subject lands. For these reasons, Staff opine that the proposed Official Plan Amendment is appropriate and represents good planning.

PURPOSE:

This report recommends approval of the Official Plan Amendment (“OPA”) application (the “Application”), submitted by CF Markville Nominee Inc (the “Owner”), to permit the Proposed Development at 5000 Highway 7 (the “Subject Lands”).

Process to Date:

- June 22, 2023: Staff deemed the Application complete
- December 5, 2023: [Statutory Public Meeting](#) was held
- December 23, 2024: Owner submitted revised plans in response to Staff comments
- April 2025: Revised plans submitted by the Owner

The 120-day period set out in the [Planning Act](#) before the Owner can appeal the Application to the Ontario Land Tribunal (the “OLT”) for a non-decision ended on October 13, 2023. Accordingly, the Owner can appeal the Application to the OLT.

If the DSC supports the Application, the planning process will include the following steps:

- Council adoption of the site-specific OPA
- Continued review and processing of the site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment (“ZBA”) application for the Phase 1 lands (PLAN 24 172945), as shown on Figure 5, including scheduling of a statutory Public Meeting
- Submission of future Site Plan Control, Draft Plan of Condominium, and Consent applications for each phase of development

BACKGROUND:

Location and Area Context

The 28.2 ha (69.68 ac) Subject Lands are located on the northwest corner of Highway 7 and McCowan Road, south of the Centennial GO Station, and are currently occupied by Markville Mall, a Porsche car dealership, two restaurant buildings, surface parking areas, and an internal private road (see Figures 1 and 3). The Subject Lands are part of the ongoing Markville Secondary Plan study, which includes these and other surrounding properties.

Revisions made by the Owner to the original submission

The Owner revised the Proposed Development in response to the Application review and feedback from the statutory Public Meeting, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) Reduced building heights at the Highway 7 and McCowan Road intersection (Phase 1) from a maximum of 45 to 39 storeys (the overall Phase 1 heights have decreased by fourteen storeys over the five proposed towers from the initial submission).
- b) Increased building height at the northeast portion of the Subject Lands adjacent to the Centennial GO Station from a maximum of 30 storeys to 34 storeys.

- c) Above-grade parking garage was removed from the Highway 7 frontage and replaced with a 15-storey residential building.
- d) Revised building heights in response to the desired distribution of built-form of the Markville Secondary Plan Study Emerging Concept (December 2023), based on the principle with the tallest heights focused at key intersections and areas in between the height peaks as height transitions from 6 and 15-storeys (mid-rise built form).
- e) Introduced building step backs above the eighth storey for the two 15-storey buildings Highway 7.
- f) The proposed entrance on Highway 7 mid-block between McCowan Road and Bullock Drive) is to include improved pedestrian infrastructure, including wide sidewalks, street lighting, plantings to serve as the shopping mall main entrance.
- g) The pedestrian entrance at the corner of Highway 7 and McCowan Road now includes an urban plaza to provide significance to this key intersection.
- h) Public realm enhancements have been proposed to lands adjacent to Highway 7 to improve visual connections to the Rouge Valley System.
- i) Expanded the park on the south side of Bullock Drive, and three unencumbered public parks, which represent approximately 15% of the developable area. Proposed privately owned public spaces ("POPS") results in private open spaces accounting to approximately 3% of the Proposed Development for a total of 18%.

Table 1 summarizes the Proposed Development that includes three unencumbered public parks and the opportunity for a future public school (see Figure 4)

Table 1: The Proposed Development (See Figures 4 to 7)	
Residential Area:	387,775 m ² Gross Floor Area ("GFA")
Non-residential Space:	11,250 m ² GFA
Density (Floor Space Index - "FSI"):	2.0 FSI, including the existing shopping mall (to remain) with the following densities each development phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1: 5 FSI; Phase 2: 5 FSI; Phase 3: 2 FSI; Phase 4: 5 FSI
Dwelling Units:	4,500 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1: 1,857; Phase 2: 970; Phase 3: 453; Phase 4: 1,220
Building Height:	Phase 1: 30 to 39 storeys (5 buildings) Phase 2: 15 to 34-storeys (4 buildings) Phase 3: 6-storeys (1 parking structure and 3 buildings) Phase 4: 15 to 30 storeys (5 buildings)
Public Parks and Open Spaces:	Over 18% is proposed to be open space and parks, consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One unencumbered public park fronting Highway 7 Two unencumbered public parks fronting Bullock Drive Two smaller POPS

Table 1: The Proposed Development (See Figures 4 to 7)

Vehicular Access and
Parking Structures:

- Maintain existing accesses
- Propose 1 additional access to Highway 7 (between Bullock Drive and McCowan Road)
- 1 new parking structure (north side of the Subject Lands)
- Underground parking for new buildings

The Proposed Development is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (the “2024 PPS”)

The 2024 PPS provides direction on matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning and development and includes, in part, building strong, healthy communities with an emphasis on efficient development and land use patterns, the wise use and management of resources, and protecting public health and safety. The Subject Lands are located within a defined Settlement Area and the McCowan BRT Station Protected Major Transit Station Area (“PMTSA 15”). The Proposed Development promotes the efficient use of land, resources, and infrastructure, pursuant to Section 2.2.1.b), which permits “all types of residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas).” The Proposed Development supports commercially designated retail lands and active transportation and transit.

The Proposed Development conforms to the 2022 York Region Official Plan (“ROP”) as it is compact and transit supportive

The ROP designates the Subject Lands “Urban Area” (Map 1), “Community Area” (Map 1A), and are located along a Regional Corridor (Highway 7), which permits a wide range of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. Community Areas consist of most of the required housing and population-related jobs that would accommodate the forecasted population. The Subject Lands are adjacent to a Rapid Transit Corridor along Highway 7, and within PMTSA 15, which prescribes a minimum density of 200 people and jobs per hectare.

The 2014 Official Plan (the “2014 OP”) does not apply to the Subject Lands

The policies of the 2014 OP state that until the approval of a Secondary Plan for the Markville Key Development Area lands is approved, the 1987 Town of Markham Official Plan, as amended, will continue to apply, and the land use designations and the related policies of the 2014 OP will be used to inform the new Secondary Plan for this area. The Subject Lands are located within the Markville Key Development Area, which is intended for employment and residential development in single use and mixed-use setting, providing for office, retail, service and recreational uses, and a variety of higher density housing types.

The 1987 Official Plan (the “1987 OP”)

The 1987 OP designates the Subject Lands “Commercial - Major Commercial Areas”, which permits a wide range of commercial uses, and a range of entertainment and institutional uses. This designation may also permit medium and high-density residential uses, subject to ensuring that the planned function of the land is maintained, that the location is appropriate, and that the applicable provisions of Section 2.13 (Housing) of the 1987 OP are met. Staff opine that the Proposed Development introduces housing supply in an existing service area that will meet the anticipated housing needs of the City. The Owner proposes an OPA to permit a mixed used development with site-specific density and height provisions, and includes the provision of future parks, school site, and urban design improvements to support the intensification.

The Draft OPA (see Appendix 'A') has been provided by the Owner's Planning Consultant and will be finalized prior to being brought forward for Council enactment. The provisions in **bolded** text within the Draft OPA have been added by Staff.

The Proposed Development generally aligns with the principles of the Markville Secondary Plan Study (the "Study")

The City initiated the Study in 2022 to inform the preparation of a new Secondary Plan for the Markville key development area. The Study area comprises the lands south of the Stouffville GO right-of-way, north of the Rouge River, east of Austin Drive Park and Bullock Drive and west of Laidlaw Boulevard and includes the Subject Lands and the larger surrounding area (see Figure 6). Staff opine that the Proposed Development, including the land use and built form, generally aligns with the vision, guiding principles, and emerging concept plan (land use and built form) documented in the Interim Report for the Study area. The Markville Secondary Plan Final Study Report and recommendations will be reported in the Final Study Report, which is targeted for the Development Services Committee ("DSC") in Q2-2025.

DISCUSSION:

This section identifies how the matters raised through the review process for the Application, including those raised at the statutory Public Meeting, have been resolved and considered.

The City received 23 written submissions and 24 oral deputations at the statutory Public Meeting, with key comments and concerns with Staff's responses summarized below

a) Appropriateness of the proposed height and density and alignment with the guiding principles for the Markville Secondary Plan

The Owner proposes a height range of 6 to 39 storeys across seven development blocks (excluding the mall) with densities from 2 to 7.4 FSI (see Appendix 'A', Draft OPA). The December 11, 2023, Emerging Concept as part of the Study Interim Report includes heights from 5 to 40 storeys on the Subject Lands, structured around three higher-density and high-frequency transit stations at the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the Subject Lands. Following comments from the statutory Public Meeting and Staff's feedback, the Owner reduced the proposed maximum height from 45 to 39 storeys at the Highway 7 and McCowan Road node to align with the City's Emerging Concept. Staff opine that the proposed heights are consistent with the Emerging Concept and guiding principles of the Markville Secondary Plan. Moreover, Staff note that the Proposed Development does not require an amendment to the maximum permitted density within the in-force 1987 Official Plan, nor the 2014 Official Plan, which permits 2 FSI across the entire Subject Lands.

Concerns were raised with respect to shadow impacts on adjacent properties and the public realm within the Subject Lands because of the proposed heights. The Owner's revised Proposed Development maximizes sun exposure on the proposed parkland components. Staff agree with the conclusions of the Sun Shadow Analysis, which demonstrates that the Proposed Development avoids unnecessary overshadowing on the existing low-rise neighbourhood to the north and the public realm to ensure comfortable sunlight access, in accordance with the applicable policies and guidelines. Moreover, the Proposed Development achieves appropriate built form through adequate tower separation to minimize shadow and privacy impacts. The Owner continues to work with Staff to achieve desirable building designs through the current and future ZBA applications and subsequent site plan applications. Staff find that the proposed height and density are appropriate.

b) Concerns with transportation and traffic

The Owner submitted a Transportation Impact Study ("TIS") and an addendum that documented the review of the site-related traffic impacts based on the revised proposal and responds to Staff and agency comments. The TIS findings indicate the critical need to shift towards non-auto modes of transportation (public transit, cycling and walking) to support the Proposed Development. Improvements required to accommodate these needs include the anticipated widening of regional roads (e.g., McCowan Road) and transit network improvements (e.g., Highway 7 Rapidway extension to Cornell, all-day frequent GO Rail services). The Proposed Development also includes improvements to the internal road network to create a complete street network, including a re-alignment of the internal ring road and an additional access to Highway 7. The timing of these improvements would impact the schedule of development phases. Staff will require detailed phasing assessments as a condition of future Zoning By-law Amendment applications, to fully inform the timing and sequencing of transportation infrastructure programs.

Transportation Demand Management ("TDM")

The Subject Lands are in an area with excellent transit connections including the Stouffville GO rail line, the VIVA system along Highway 7, and local bus connections. The Owner agrees to provide future residents a robust system of supportive TDM strategies to manage travel demands, including but not limited to leveraging existing transit access, network and on-site enhancements to the pedestrian and active transportation system, and a parking strategy to be reviewed in greater detail and implemented as each development phase progresses (notwithstanding the prohibition of minimum parking requirements within an MTSA under the Planning Act).

The Proposed Development would transform the public realm from an auto-oriented environment to a pedestrian and cyclist-friendly environment through improvements to the active transportation network, including sidewalks and cycling facilities, which would provide safe connections between existing transit stops and access to the mall. The strategic placement of parks and open spaces would allow for direct sightlines and pathways to the key entrances of CF Markville.

c) Sufficient proposed public parkland

The Owner revised the proposed park sizes and configuration within the Proposed Development to provide a total of 1.45 ha of unencumbered parkland, which equates to approximately 15% of the developable area which meets the Planning Act requirements. In addition to public parkland, the Owner proposes two POPS, which represent approximately 3% of the developable area. The Owner has revised the Application to eliminate stratified parks (i.e., parkland or public open space on top of private infrastructure including, but not limited to, parking garages). All proposed parks would now be unencumbered.

d) Concerns raised regarding additional school space and library and community recreation space facilities

Concerns were raised regarding the need for additional school spaces. The York Region District School Board ("YRDSB") identified the potential need for a new elementary school within the Subject Lands to serve the forecasted growth for the Markville area, including students generated from the Proposed Development. The revised Draft OPA includes a policy that offers the YRDSB and York Catholic District School Board the opportunity to

obtain an interest in a school site within 30 days of the City circulating a ZBA application for a mixed-use development in the school priority area on the Subject Lands (see Appendix 'A', Draft OPA). In accordance with the proposed Draft OPA policy, the Owner agrees to consult with the school boards to determine the school size, should the Boards seek to acquire such an interest. Due to the high-density nature of the development, the Board indicated their willingness to accept a smaller school site and explore opportunities for potential shared use and alternative arrangements consistent with Board policies.

Some members of the public expressed concern with the capacity of libraries and community recreation facilities with the increased population generated from the Proposed Development. As part of the submission, the Owner submitted a Community Services and Facilities Report that analyzed the availability and demand for these services and facilities in connection with the Proposed Development. The report concluded that the service level for libraries and community recreation facilities will continue to be sufficient when accounting for the Proposed Development. In the case of libraries and arenas specifically, the service levels are proposed to operate well above City averages.

e) CF Markville to be retained and additional retail opportunities at key locations

The Owner confirmed that the existing mall will remain on-site with the Proposed Development (see Figure 5). Additional potential commercial uses are proposed at various key locations within the building podiums to animate ground level frontages, including within buildings along Highway 7 and within the internal ring road. Staff have no objections to the Proposed Development's impact on the mall as the regional shopping node is maintained, while additional housing is provided within an Intensification Area planned for significant growth in accordance with the provincial, regional, and local policy framework.

Should the Owner propose to redevelop the mall (in its entirety or in portions) or new phases of CF Markville that are not part of this Proposed Development in the future, the draft OPA requires that a future Official Plan Amendment shall be accompanied by a Comprehensive Block Plan to address matters such as, but not limited to, future parkland, public road and pedestrian connections, and community facilities.

f) Floodplain impacts will be mitigated as required by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority ("TRCA")

A small portion of the Subject Lands identified in Phase 4 of the Proposed Development is located within the Regional Storm flood plain. As per TRCA's Living City Policies, a minimum 10 m setback from the flood plain is typically required for any above and underground development (e.g., buildings, surface and underground parking, grading). The Owner will be required to address the delineation of the flood plain and buffer and implement stormwater management measures, as approved by the City and TRCA, prior to approval of future ZBA applications required to facilitate the Proposed Development.

g) Coordinated timing of infrastructure

Concerns were raised regarding the coordination between phasing of development and timing for infrastructure and transit improvements. Four development phases are included in Figure 5 of the proposed Draft OPA, as determined in accordance with "no build zones" established by various retail tenant leases associated with CF Markville. Each phase contains public parkland to ensure that outdoor recreational space is provided to accommodate the additional population associated with each phase.

h) Purpose-built rental housing proposed in Phase 1 and Staff will continue to work with the Owner to secure affordable housing in future phases

The Proposed Development will offer a diverse mix of unit types and sizes, which includes purpose-built rental units in Phase 1 and will contribute to the mix of tenures in the community. Staff will continue to advocate for the Owner to include affordable and/or purpose-built rental units through future phases.

CONCLUSION:

The Subject Lands are in a MTSA and planned to accommodate intense forms of transit supportive redevelopment. The Proposed Development makes efficient use of a shopping centre parking lot, encourages the use of public transportation, and contributes to a complete community. Therefore, Staff opine that the Proposed Development is appropriate and represents good planning and recommend that the Application be approved and the Draft OPA be brought forward to a future Council meeting, once finalized, for enactment.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The Application aligns with the City's strategic priorities in the context of growth management and municipal services to ensure safe and sustainable communities.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Application was circulated to various departments and external agencies and their requirements will be reflected in the implementing OPA.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Giulio Cescato, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning and Urban Design

Arvin Prasad, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES:

Figure 1: Location Map
Figure 2: Area Context and Zoning
Figure 3: Aerial Photo
Figure 4: Conceptual Site Plan
Figure 5: Proposed Phasing Plan
Figure 6: Markville Secondary Plan Study Area
Appendix 'A': Draft Official Plan Amendment

APPLICANT:

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