



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: November 12, 2019

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**SUBJECT:**

**PRELIMINARY REPORT**

Application for Official Plan Amendment to facilitate the creation of the Victoria Glen Secondary Plan north of Elgin Mills Road and east of Victoria Square Boulevard in the North Markham Future Urban Area

File No: PLAN 19 129512  
Ward 2

**PREPARED BY:**

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**REVIEWED BY:**

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Interim Manager, North District

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the report dated November 12, 2019 titled “PRELIMINARY REPORT, Application for Official Plan Amendment to facilitate the creation of the Victoria Glen Secondary Plan north of Elgin Mills Road and east of Victoria Square Boulevard in the North Markham Future Urban Area” be received.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Not applicable.

**PURPOSE:**

This report provides preliminary information on the Official Plan Amendment application submitted by Victoria Glen Landowners to facilitate the creation of the Victoria Glen Secondary Plan. This report contains general information regarding applicable Official Plan policies, as well as other issues identified during a preliminary review of the application. This report should not be taken as Staff’s opinion or recommendation on the application.

**BACKGROUND:**

**Subject Lands and Area Context**

The 62 hectare (153 acre) subject lands, referred to as the “Victoria Glen block”, are located within the Future Urban Area (“FUA”) in north Markham (see Figure 1 – Future Urban Area Context Plan). The Victoria Glen block is bounded by Elgin Mills Road to the south, Woodbine Avenue and the Hydro Corridor to the west, and Berczy Creek and Berczy Creek Tributary to the north and east (see Figure 2 – Location Map). Existing land uses consist primarily of agricultural and rural residential uses.

Surrounding land uses include (see Figure 3 – Aerial Photo):

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- The lands north and east of Berczy Creek and Berczy Creek Tributary are the FUA employment lands, which are collectively owned by the City of Markham, York Region and private landowners.
  - The Berczy Glen Secondary Plan area is located to the south, across Elgin Mills Road. These lands are planned to accommodate urban residential uses.
  - An existing estate residential subdivision and recently constructed low density residential subdivision are located to the immediate west of the Hydro Corridor. Further west is Victoria Square Boulevard and the Victoria Square subdivision.

**Application deemed complete**

The application was deemed complete by staff on August 19, 2019.

**The next steps in the planning process include:**

- Holding the Statutory Public Meeting; and,
- Development Services Committee's consideration of a recommendation report.

The dates for the Statutory Public Meeting and the above noted Development Services Committee Meeting have not yet been set.

**PROPOSAL:**

The participating Victoria Glen Landowners submitted an Official Plan Amendment application to the City of Markham to re-designate the lands from 'Future Neighbourhood Area' in the 2014 Official Plan to the appropriate urban residential designations (see Figure 4 – Proposed Victoria Glen Secondary Plan Land Use Map), including:

- 'Residential Low Rise'
- 'Residential Mid Rise'
- 'Mixed Use Low Rise'
- 'Mixed Use Mid Rise'
- 'Greenway'

Refer to Table 1: Victoria Glen Secondary Plan Statistics for a complete statistical summary of the proposal.

A draft of the proposed Official Plan Amendment is available at the Development Services Front Counter.

**POLICY OVERVIEW:****Provincial Policy Conformity**

In considering a development application, staff assess consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) and conformity with relevant Provincial Plans, which in this case are the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017 & 2019) and the Greenbelt Plan (2017). A more detailed review and assessment of conformity with provincial policy will be set out in a future staff report, including but not limited to, an evaluation of the following:

- Achieving minimum density targets

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- Supporting the achievement of complete communities that feature a diverse mix of land uses and provide a range and mix of housing types
  - Providing convenient access to transportation, public facilities and open spaces
  - Establishing an integrated and connected active transportation network
  - Protecting natural heritage and agricultural lands, where appropriate, from urban development
  - Planning for sewage, water services and stormwater management.

**Official Plan**

The 2014 Official Plan (as partially approved on November 24, 2017 and further updated on April 9, 2018) designates the Victoria Glen block ‘Future Neighbourhood Area’ and ‘Greenway’ as per Map 3 – Land Use (see Figure 5 – Official Plan Map 3 Excerpt).

The FUA lands consist of approximately 975 developable hectares (2,409 acres) and approximately 1,300 gross hectares (3,212 acres). It is bounded by Major Mackenzie Drive to the south, the Hydro Corridor and Woodbine Avenue to the west, the northerly City limits and Elgin Mills Road to the north and Robinson Creek to the east. The FUA is identified in Markham’s 2014 Official Plan as one component of Markham’s strategy to accommodate forecasted growth to 2031.

Section 8.12 of the Official Plan provides direction for the preparation of a Conceptual Master Plan for the entire Future Urban Area lands as the basis for the development of secondary plans.

**Conceptual Master Plan**

In 2014 the City of Markham initiated a Conceptual Master Plan (“CMP”) as the first phase of a detailed planning process for the FUA. The CMP was informed by the findings of a number of City-led background studies, including a Transportation Study, Subwatershed Study, Water and Wastewater Servicing Studies, and planning and urban design studies. The CMP establishes a high-level Community Structure Plan (see Figure 6 – Community Structure Plan) and accompanying policy direction for the FUA lands, which anticipates approximately 45,000 residents in roughly 14,000 dwelling units and approximately 16,000-18,000 jobs. The CMP was endorsed by Council in October 2017, and provides the framework for the more detailed statutory secondary plans within the FUA.

**Zoning By-law**

The Victoria Glen lands are zoned ‘Agriculture One (A1)’ and ‘Open Space One (O1)’ by By-law 304-87, as amended (see Figure 7 – Area Context/Zoning). The ‘A1’ zone permits a limited number of uses, including: agriculture uses, storage of agriculture produce, seasonal vegetable or fruit stand, single family detached dwelling, private home day care, and public conservation project. The ‘O1’ zone permits a golf course, public or private park, athletic field, and public conservation project.

**DISCUSSION:**

The following is a brief summary of the key matters raised to date. These matters, and others identified at the Public Meeting and through the circulation and detailed review of

the Official Plan Amendment application, will be addressed in a final report to Committee.

**Technical studies/reports currently under review**

City staff, external agencies and senior levels of government are in the process of reviewing a number of studies/reports submitted in support of the application including: Master Environmental Servicing Plan (“MESP”), Transportation Study, Planning Justification Report, Community Design Plan, Housing Impact Statement, Community Energy Plan, and Stage 1 & 2 Archaeological Assessment.

**Integration and treatment of cultural heritage resources**

There is one identified cultural heritage resource located on the subject lands. The Henry Lever House, located at 11139 Victoria Square Boulevard, is a detached residential building that has a “listed” heritage status in Markham’s Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. Additionally, the subject lands are located near the community of Victoria Square, which is home to a number of designated and listed properties of cultural heritage value. Heritage Staff are in the process of reviewing and commenting on the application.

**Conformity with the Conceptual Master Plan**

Staff, in consultation with external agencies and senior levels of government, are reviewing and assessing conformity of the draft Secondary Plan with the key elements of the Conceptual Master Plan (2017), including:

- Neighbourhood structure and land uses
- Size, location and configuration of the school block
- Size, location and configuration of the neighbourhood park
- Street network and active transportation network
- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

**Alignment with the North Markham Urban Design Guidelines**

Staff are reviewing and assessing consistency of the draft Secondary Plan with the principles and direction of the North Markham Urban Design Guidelines, including:

- Discouragement of backlotting onto the Greenway System
- Street and block configuration
- Size, location and configuration of parks and open spaces
- The design of stormwater management facilities

**Protection and enhancement of the natural environment**

The MESP submitted in support of the application, challenges the designation of three Provincially Significant Wetlands (“PSW”) on the subject lands (see Figure 8 – Provincially Significant Wetlands Subject to MESP & Provincial Review). The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (“MNR”) is responsible for identifying and evaluating wetlands. The application was circulated to the MNR for their review and comment. They advised that an updated Ontario Wetlands Evaluation System evaluation is required for the subject lands to initiate a formal review of the PSWs. At this time, the lands in question remain designated as PSWs and will be protected as such.

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**Future Urban Area Collector Road Network Class Environmental Assessment (EA)**

The City of Markham undertook the FUA Conceptual Master Plan (2017) in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessments process, satisfying Class EA Phase 1 (Identify the Problem/Opportunity) and Class EA Phase 2 (Identify Alternative Solutions and Establish Preferred Solution) (see DSC report from November 19, 2018 titled 'FUA Conceptual Master Plan – Transportation, Water and Wastewater Master Plan Class Environmental Assessment Study, Phases 1 and 2'). The participating FUA landowners are now undertaking the remaining Class EA Phase 3 (Examine Alternative Methods of Implementing the Preferred Solution) and Class EA Phase 4 (Prepare an Environmental Study Report) on an individual block by block basis.

One collector road is proposed in the Victoria Glen block. The alignment of this collector road will be confirmed through Phases 3 and 4 of the ongoing FUA Collector Roads Class EA (Victoria Glen block).

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The proposal will be reviewed in the context of the City's strategic priorities, including creating safe, sustainable and complete communities.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The application has been circulated to various City departments and external agencies for their review and comment.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

Biju Karumanchery, R.P.P., M.C.I.P.  
Director of Planning and Urban Design

Arvin Prasad, R.P.P., M.C.I.P.  
Commissioner of Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Figure 1 – Future Urban Area Context Plan
- Figure 2 – Location Map
- Figure 3 – Aerial Photo
- Figure 4 – Proposed Victoria Glen Secondary Plan
- Figure 5 – Official Plan Map 3 Excerpt
- Figure 6 – Community Structure Plan
- Figure 7 – Area Context/Zoning

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Figure 8 – Provincially Significant Wetlands Subject to MESP & Provincial Review  
Table 1: Victoria Glen Secondary Plan Statistics