

SUBJECT: Conceptual Master Plan for the Future Urban Area –
Community Structure Plan and Key Policy Direction

PREPARED BY: Catherine Jay, OALA, RPP Ext. 2520
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RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report dated September 11, 2017 entitled “Conceptual Master Plan for the Future Urban Area – Community Structure Plan and Key Policy Direction” and staff presentation be received;
- 2) That the Conceptual Master Plan for the Future Urban Area, attached as Appendix ‘A’ to the report dated September 11, 2017 entitled “Conceptual Master Plan for the Future Urban Area – Community Structure Plan and Key Policy Direction”, be endorsed as the basis for the review and approval of statutory secondary plans for the Future Urban Area lands;
- 3) And that staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) is the first phase of detailed planning for the Future Urban Area (FUA) lands in north Markham. The FUA lands are identified as one component of Markham’s strategy for accommodating growth to 2031 in the Markham Official Plan 2014. The lands are expected to accommodate approximately 45,000 residents and 16,000-18,000 jobs within sustainable, healthy, compact, complete communities.

The CMP provides a high level Community Structure Plan and accompanying policy direction for the FUA lands, as the basis for the review of more detailed statutory secondary plans. The Plan identifies a protected Greenway System, a transportation network, an integrated open space network, and broad land use categories which together deliver the structural elements of the new communities and employment areas to be developed, consistent with Markham and York Region Official Plan requirements.

The completion of the Conceptual Master Plan (attached as Appendix ‘A’ to this report) is a major milestone in the comprehensive planning process leading to the development of new communities in the FUA, representing the culmination of four years of intensive consultation with key agencies, landowners and the public. Further refinements to the Community Structure Plan are anticipated through the preparation and review of

secondary plans and their supporting technical studies including master environmental servicing plans, and completion of EA processes for infrastructure projects.

Secondary plans for each of the concession blocks within the FUA are expected to be submitted shortly after consideration of the CMP by Council. Recognizing the substantial amount of analysis already undertaken through the CMP process, the required statutory public meetings for the secondary plan applications will be scheduled, either individually or collectively, in a timely manner following the applications being deemed complete.

A number of studies are ongoing, including the development of Urban Design Guidelines and a Community Energy Plan for the FUA lands. The Urban Design Guidelines will provide further direction for community design plans, including new ways of providing municipal infrastructure/services (such as low impact development measures for stormwater management and cycling facilities) based on the consideration of a number of factors, including financial analysis. The Community Energy Plan will identify means of reducing community energy demands. The Urban Design Guidelines and Community Energy Plan will be brought to Council at a later date, prior to secondary plan approval.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council endorsement of the Conceptual Master Plan for the north Markham Future Urban Area (FUA) as the basis for the review and approval of statutory secondary plans for the Future Urban Area lands. The report also outlines the next steps in the planning process for the FUA, specifically submission and review of secondary plan applications.

BACKGROUND:

Completion of the Conceptual Master Plan is a major milestone in the comprehensive planning process for the north Markham Future Urban Area

In late 2013/early 2014 Council initiated a multi-year, multi-discipline Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) exercise by authorizing a number of supporting studies required to inform the detailed planning for the north Markham Future Urban Area (FUA). The FUA lands are outlined in Figure 1. The comprehensive planning process for development of the FUA lands is provided in Figure 2.

In October, 2016, Development Services Committee received an Interim Report on the status of the Conceptual Master Plan work. The Interim Report was circulated to the public and other stakeholders for comment. The Conceptual Master Plan attached as Appendix 'A' to this report, represents substantial completion of the supporting studies and provides direction for the review and approval of required statutory secondary plans, and subsequent draft plans of subdivision.

The Future Urban Area is one component of Markham's strategy for accommodating growth to 2031 as identified in the 2014 Official Plan

The north Markham FUA lands consist of approximately 975 developable hectares 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 Official Plan 2014 (partially approved), as one component of Markham's strategy to accommodate forecasted growth to 2031. The majority of growth in Markham to 2031 is being accommodated through intensification of the existing urban area, with the Future Urban Area accommodating approximately 20 percent of residential growth.

Approximately 700 hectares of developable lands within the FUA are designated 'Future Neighbourhood Area' (see Figure 3). These lands, located primarily between Major Mackenzie Drive and Elgin Mills Road, are anticipated to accommodate approximately 45,000 residents in approximately 14,000 dwelling units. Approximately 275 hectares located north of Elgin Mills Road are designated as 'Future Employment Area'. The entire north Markham FUA will support approximately 16,000-18,000 jobs, most of which will be accommodated in 'Future Employment Area' lands. The remainder of the lands in the FUA are comprised of a protected natural heritage system designated as 'Greenway'.

Planning for the north Markham FUA is proceeding in accordance with the policies of the York Region Official Plan 2010 (YROP 2010). As supported by Markham Council, the recently enacted Provincial Growth Plan 2017 allows for the continued planning for the FUA under a 2031 planning horizon and under the policy direction of the 2006 Growth Plan as reflected in the YROP 2010 and Markham's 2014 Official Plan.

Goal is to develop healthy and resilient new communities

As outlined in the October 2016 Interim Report, the new communities in the north Markham FUA are being planned in accordance with the vision of sustainable growth outlined in Markham's Official Plan 2014. This vision is based on four key themes: protection of the natural environment, building compact and complete communities, increasing travel options, and maintaining a vibrant and competitive economy. Consistent with the Official Plan and Provincial policy, the overarching goals are to ensure the development of healthy and resilient complete communities.

Conceptual Master Plan Process

The Conceptual Master Plan is the first stage of detailed planning for the FUA. The CMP provides a high level Community Structure Plan and accompanying policy direction for the FUA lands, as the basis for more detailed statutory secondary plans for each of the four concession blocks (described in more detail below).

The Conceptual Master Plan was informed by the findings of a number of City-led concurrent background studies, including a subwatershed study, master transportation, water and wastewater studies, and planning and urban design studies. The component studies of the CMP were undertaken in a coordinated, integrated manner, each following

a similar three-phase process, consisting generally of background and development of options, impact assessment of the options, and development of an implementation strategy for the preferred option. Phases 1 and 2 of the studies are complete and Phase 3 is nearing completion. The analysis to date has provided sufficient direction to conclude the CMP stage of the planning process. Remaining Phase 3 work, primarily related to the subwatershed study, will inform the preparation and review of the master environmental servicing plans that will accompany secondary plans.

Conceptual Master Plan process satisfies Phase 1 and 2 of Municipal Class Environmental Assessment requirements for road and servicing infrastructure

The Environmental Assessment (EA) Act identifies an EA planning and approval process to be undertaken prior to construction of certain municipal infrastructure projects such as roads, water and wastewater projects. To avoid duplication of effort in subsequent stages of the planning process in the FUA, the CMP followed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process with respect to the transportation, water and wastewater studies. The CMP will satisfy Phases 1 and 2 of the Municipal Class EA process for the transportation, water and wastewater projects within the FUA that are subject to Class EA undertakings, through the detailed evaluation and documentation of the various alternatives considered in arriving at the Community Structure Plan. Phases 3 and 4 of the EA process will now be carried out by landowners for specific road and servicing projects identified through Phases 1 and 2 of the EA process, building on the Phase 1 and 2 work completed through the CMP.

The Conceptual Master Plan was developed through a highly collaborative process working closely with agency and landowner partners, and with public engagement

The Conceptual Master Plan represents the culmination of four years of intensive consultation with key agencies, including York Region planning and transportation staff, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), school boards and participating landowners. A high level of commitment to the CMP process by agency staff was integral to the completion of the CMP and Markham staff are appreciative of the past and ongoing commitment of the agency staff teams. Consultation has also been taking place with non-governmental organizations, adjacent municipalities, other agencies such as utilities, non-participating landowners, and First Nations and Métis communities.

Each of the study phases provided opportunity for Council and public input through reports to Development Services Committee and Public Open Houses. The first Public Open House was held in January 2015 to introduce the Conceptual Master Plan work program to the public and to obtain initial input for consideration in developing land use concepts. A second Public Open House was held in November 2016 to introduce, and solicit input on, a preliminary Community Structure Plan and associated policies for the FUA. The input received was considered in the Phase 2 impact assessment and will continue to be considered in the Phase 3 implementation recommendations. More recently, notice of the conclusion of the CMP exercise has been provided to those who requested notification, and information boards have been made available at the Angus

Glen Community Centre and on the City website to inform the public of Committee's consideration of this report.

Further opportunities for public input will be available through the review and approval of individual secondary plans for each concession block, and subsequent development applications.

DISCUSSION:

The documentation of the Conceptual Master Plan and supporting studies is being organized within three volumes as follows:

- Volume 1: Community Structure Plan and Key Policy Direction - provides an overview of the CMP process, and a summary of the work undertaken to date, including identification of a Community Structure Plan and key policy direction for secondary plans;
- Volume 2: Transportation, Water and Wastewater Master Plans – will document the transportation, water and wastewater servicing studies (satisfying requirements for Phases 1 and 2 of the Class EA process); and
- Volume 3: Subwatershed Study – will document all phases of the Subwatershed Study.

Volume 1: Community Structure Plan and Key Directions is attached as Appendix 'A' to this report. Volumes 2 and 3, once completed, will be available to support the preparation of master environmental servicing plans for individual secondary plans and the completion of environmental assessment processes for the identified infrastructure projects. All three volumes will be posted on the Markham website once finalized.

The Community Structure Plan and key policy direction provides an overall planning framework for the new communities and employment lands in the Future Urban Area

The Community Structure Plan developed through the CMP process, and as identified in Figure 4, provides a high level community structure across all of the FUA lands. The Plan identifies a protected Greenway System, a transportation network, an open space network, and broad land use categories which together deliver the structural elements of the new communities and employment area to be developed in the Future Urban Area, consistent with Markham and York Region Official Plan requirements.

The broad land use components (Residential Neighbourhood Area, Mixed Use Neighbourhood Corridor, and Mixed Use Regional Corridor) provide for a range of housing types (from ground oriented units to apartments), schools, parks and open space, as well as appropriate locations for retail and service uses, all at transit-supportive densities. These lands are being planned to support an overall density of 70 residents and jobs per hectare and 20 units per hectare consistent with the York Region Official Plan 2010. The Employment Area component is intended to accommodate primarily general employment uses (manufacturing, warehousing, etc), with opportunities for business park uses and ancillary retail and service at appropriate locations. The transportation network

consists of a series of arterial and collector roads that also form the basis of the active transportation and transit systems.

Details regarding the components of the Community Structure Plan and the associated key policy direction are provided in Appendix 'A' to this report.

Further refinements to the Community Structure Plan components are expected through more detailed work in the preparation of secondary plans and completion of EA processes

The Community Structure Plan shown in Figure 4 is the result of the extensive analysis undertaken during the CMP process at a master planning level, taking into account the competing objectives of environmental protection, accommodation of a certain level of growth, and ensuring adequate infrastructure (e.g., transportation, community facilities, servicing) is provided to support the new communities. It is expected that components of the Community Structure Plan will be even further refined through more detailed technical study in the next phases of the planning process for the lands (i.e., secondary plans, and associated master environmental servicing plans and community design plans), through subsequent phases of the EA process, and potentially through the resolution of outstanding appeals to the Official Plan 2014. Refinements to collector road alignments, certain 'Greenway Under Study' areas, corridor depths and school, and park and open space locations are anticipated and are acceptable where the underlying principles of the Community Structure Plan are not compromised.

Urban Design Guidelines will provide additional guidance for the preparation of community design plans for each secondary plan area

Community design plans will be prepared as companion documents to secondary plans for each of the secondary plan areas within the FUA. Whereas secondary plans provide statutory policy direction in the form of Official Plan policy, community design plans provide an even more detailed description of the community such as a community vision, street layout, organization of schools and parks, built form, integration of cultural heritage buildings, sustainability features, and streetscape and other public realm considerations.

Urban Design Guidelines for the Future Urban Area are being prepared to provide additional guidance for the anticipated community design plans. The Guidelines will build on the direction provided in the CMP and the more detailed urban design policies of Markham's Official Plan and the City's best practices in community design.

Achieving sustainable communities requires changes in underlying community infrastructure

The development of sustainable healthy communities in the FUA requires the introduction of new ways of providing municipal services/infrastructure that go beyond business as usual in Markham, particularly with respect to stormwater management and the facilities needed to encourage active transportation (walking and cycling). Sustainable stormwater management includes the consideration of low impact development best management practices, and alternatives to traditional stormwater

management ponds. Success in encouraging walking and cycling as alternatives to reliance on the automobile will depend on the facilities provided, e.g., sidewalks on both sides of all streets and a network of cycling facilities that best meet the needs of cyclists. Further analysis is underway to determine which types of facilities should be recommended for use in the FUA, including consideration of financial impact. Once concluded, the analysis will be brought forward to Council for consideration, and reflected in the Urban Design Guidelines.

A Community Energy Plan is also being developed for the Future Urban Area

The York Region and Markham Official Plans require that a Community Energy Plan be developed for the new communities within the Future Urban Area. The Community Energy Plan is intended to reduce community energy demands, optimize passive solar gains, maximize active transportation and transit, and make use of renewable, on-site generation and district energy options.

Preparation of a city-wide Municipal Energy Plan is currently underway, led by Sustainability and Asset Management. Staff will continue to work with the FUA landowners to prepare a Community Energy Plan(s) that will help to meet city-wide greenhouse gas reduction targets, once established through the city-wide Municipal Energy Plan. The active transportation and transit component of the Community Energy Plan is being addressed through the Conceptual Master Plan.

NEXT STEPS:

Submission of secondary plan applications by landowners expected in early fall

Secondary plan applications for the neighbourhood areas, including supporting MESP and community design plans, are anticipated to be submitted shortly after consideration of the Conceptual Master Plan by Development Services Committee.

The MESP will be expected to address phasing of development in each of the secondary plan areas. At minimum, the phasing plans are expected to have regard for development occurring in an orderly fashion, with regard for delivery of key infrastructure and providing for elements of a complete community in each phase.

Recognizing the substantial amount of analysis already undertaken through the CMP process, staff will schedule statutory public meetings for the secondary plan applications, either individually or collectively, in a timely manner following the applications being deemed complete.

Completion of studies, fiscal impact analysis and Urban Design Guidelines

The studies and additional analysis outlined above, specifically the supporting studies, financial analysis, Urban Design Guidelines and Community Energy Plan are being completed. The Urban Design Guidelines and Community Energy Plan will be brought to Council at a later date, prior to secondary plan approval.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The Conceptual Master Plan work was undertaken by a team of City staff and consultants funded through approved capital budget projects and a Funding Agreement with participating landowners in the north Markham Future Urban Area.

As mentioned, the financial impact of anticipated new infrastructure and/or associated levels of service are being assessed as part of an analysis of which types of infrastructure should be recommended for use in the FUA. This analysis will be brought forward with the Urban Design Guidelines being developed for the FUA.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

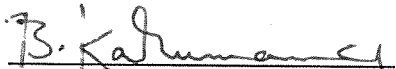
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:


The Future Urban Area will accommodate a portion of Markham's growth to 2031 as identified in the Markham Official Plan 2014 and York Region Official Plan 2010.

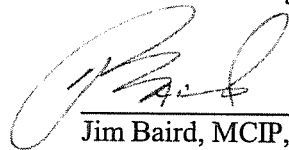
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

All relevant City departments were consulted and their comments have been addressed in the development of the Conceptual Master Plan. Business units will continue to be consulted during the review and approval of statutory secondary plans.

RECOMMENDED BY:


Biju Karumanchery, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning & Urban Design

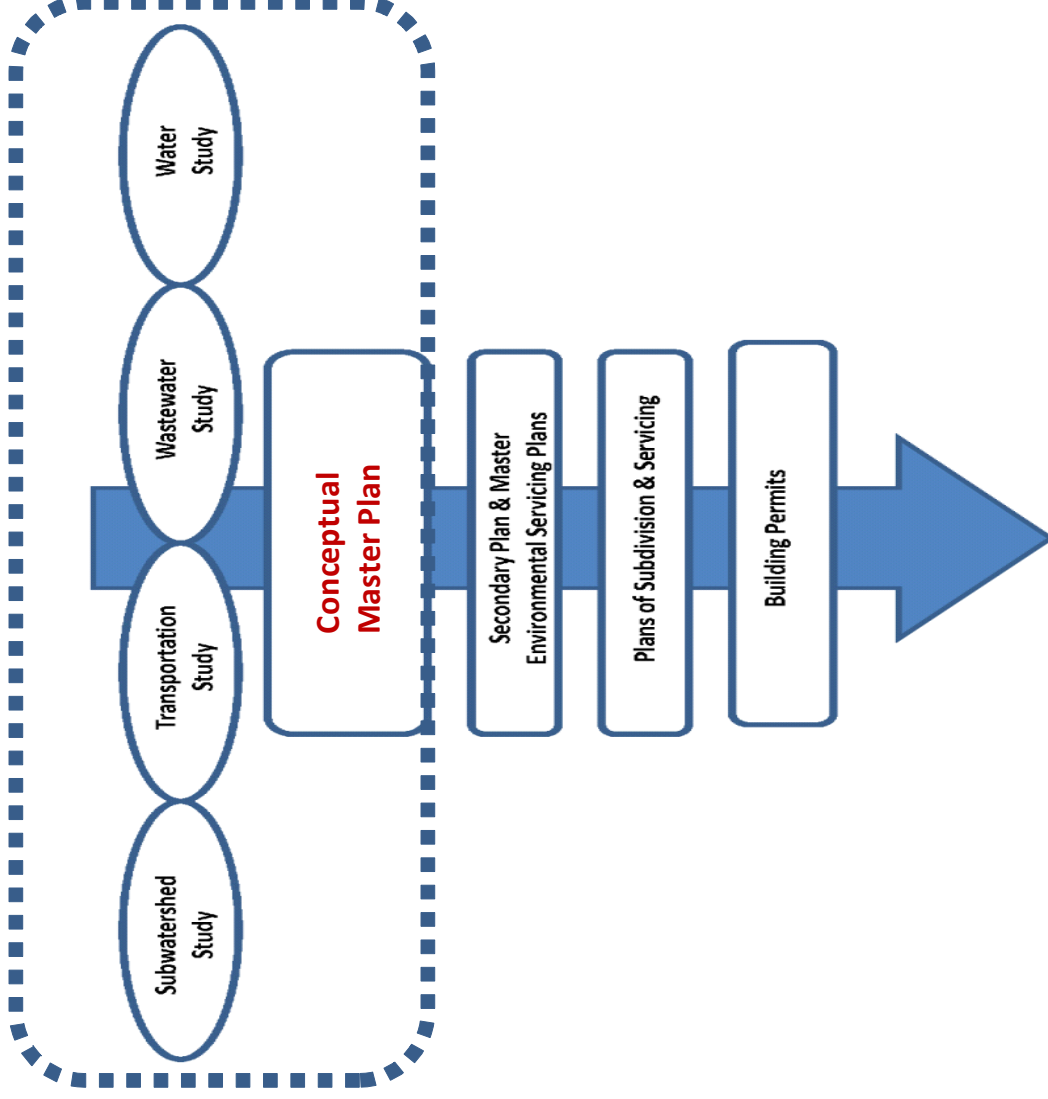

Brian Lee, P. Eng
Director, Engineering


Jim Baird, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

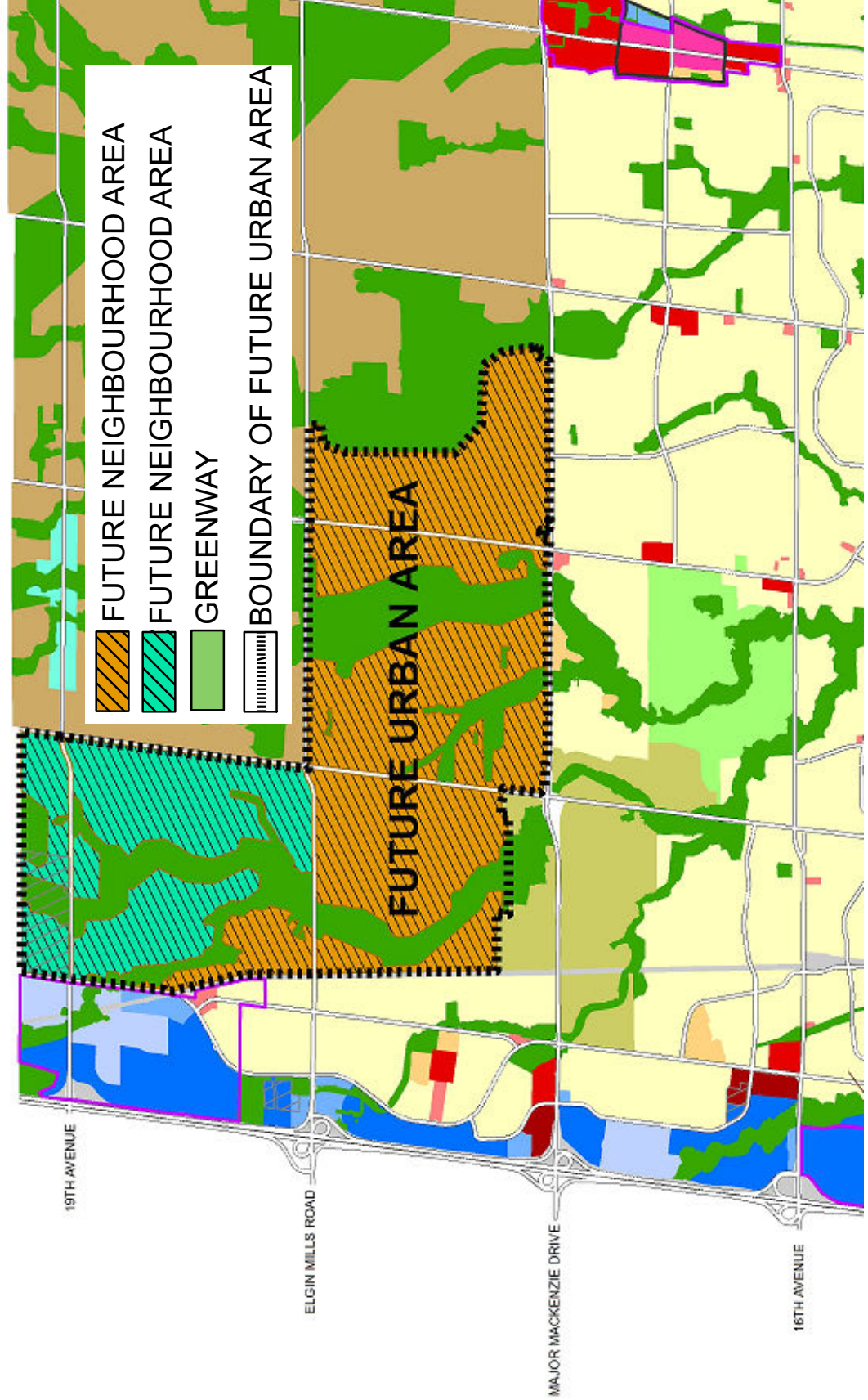
- Figure 1: Future Urban Area – Location Map
- Figure 2: Planning Process for the Future Urban Area
- Figure 3: Official Plan Land Use Designations
- Figure 4: Community Structure Plan

Appendix 'A' Conceptual Master Plan for the Future Urban Area –
Volume 1: Community Structure Plan and Key Policy Direction,
September 2017



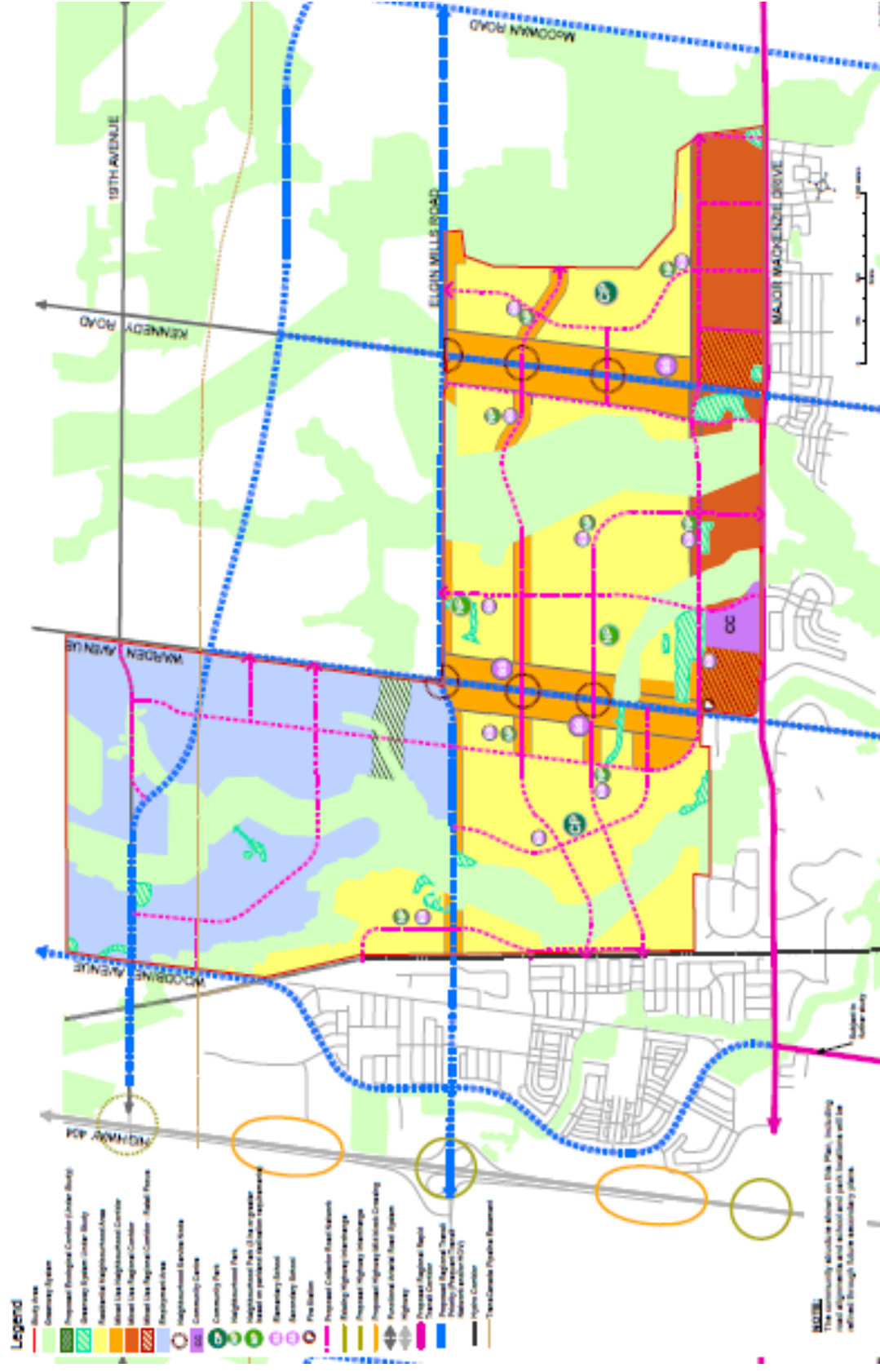
PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE FUTURE URBAN AREA





OFFICIAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS





COMMUNITY STRUCTURE PLAN