



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: December 9, 2014

SUBJECT: Future Urban Area - Conceptual Master Plan Process Update

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RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report and presentation dated December 9, 2014, entitled “Future Urban Area - Conceptual Master Plan Process Update” be received;
- 2) That staff be authorized to hold an Open House in early 2015, to present information to the public on the initial phase of the north Markham Conceptual Master Plan studies;
- 3) That the Regional Municipality of York be requested to review the role and function of the proposed Donald Cousens Parkway extension as part of the York Region Transportation Master Plan Update 2014;
- 4) And, that staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not applicable.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Conceptual Master Plan process for the Future Urban Area, and to obtain authority to hold an Open House to present information regarding the first phase of the Conceptual Master Plan studies.

BACKGROUND:

The detailed planning for the north Markham Future Urban Area is being undertaken through a comprehensive Conceptual Master Plan process

The north Markham Future Urban Area (FUA), as identified in Markham’s 2014 Official Plan (not yet in force), covers about 975 developable hectares bordered 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 (Figure 1).

Approximately 675 hectares of developable lands within the FUA are designated 'Future Neighbourhood Area'. These lands, located primarily between Major Mackenzie Drive and Elgin Mills Road, are anticipated to support approximately 38,000 people and approximately 12,000 dwelling units. Approximately 300 hectares located north of Elgin Mills Road are designated as 'Future Employment Area'. The entire north Markham FUA will support approximately 19,000 jobs, most of which will be accommodated in 'Future Employment Area' lands. The remainder of the lands are designated 'Greenway', for environmental protection and enhancement.

In October 2013, Development Services Committee received a staff presentation on the proposed Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) Work Program for the detailed planning of the FUA. The Conceptual Master Plan will provide a high level community structure for the entire FUA lands, as the basis for more detailed statutory Secondary Plans for each of the concession blocks. An accompanying Key Directions document will also provide policy direction for these Secondary Plans and subsequent development applications.

As outlined in the October 2013 presentation, consistent with direction outlined in the Official Plan, the Conceptual Master Plan is being informed by a number of background studies including Subwatershed Studies, Water and Wastewater Studies, and a Transportation Study, along with Planning and Urban Design studies. These coordinated studies are following a Master Planning Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

Subwatershed studies were initiated in the fall of 2013. Water, wastewater, transportation and planning/urban design studies were initiated in early 2014.

The component studies of the CMP are being undertaken in a coordinated manner, each following a similar phased process. The subwatershed study phases consist of background and characterization; impact assessment; and identification of management/implementation strategies. These phases align with the three phases identified in the water, wastewater and transportation studies which generally consist of background analysis and preparation of network concept options; evaluation of options to identify a preferred alternative, and finalizing the preferred alternative and management recommendations. The coordinated work programs facilitate the preparation of community structure concepts for testing at the appropriate time through the component studies.

Consultation and Engagement is a key component of the CMP

The component studies of the CMP are being undertaken in close consultation with Regional Planning and Engineering staff, staff from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), and participating landowners. Certain non-government organizations (e.g., Friends of the Rouge) have also been consulted at the outset of the studies. The intention

is to involve as many stakeholders as possible from the beginning of the process in order to identify and resolve matters that could otherwise cause delays in later stages of the planning process.

Each of the study phases also anticipates the opportunity for Council and public input through reports to Development Services Committee and Open Houses. Further engagement and consultation will continue to take place with non-governmental organizations, adjacent municipalities, other agencies such as school boards and utilities, non-participating landowners, as well as First Nations and Métis communities.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Public input to be obtained regarding initial phase of studies

The first phase of each of the studies is nearing completion. Staff propose that the information compiled to date be presented to the public for information and comment. A Public Open House is proposed to be held on Thursday, January 15, 2015 at the Markham Civic Centre. City staff and consultant teams will be in attendance. Notice for the Public Open House is proposed to be provided to property owners within the FUA, as well as persons and agencies identified on notification lists. Notice will also be published in The Economist and Sun newspaper.

The purpose of the Open House is to:

- Provide opportunities for stakeholders, landowners and agencies to learn about the CMP process and the progress of the individual studies;
- Satisfy Class EA requirements for public consultation; and
- Obtain input to assist with developing preliminary community structure concepts to be tested during the next phase of the component studies.

Information will be provided on the individual studies as indicated below:

Subwatershed Studies

The Subwatershed Study team has been developing an understanding or characterization of the environmental features within each of the four subwatershed areas (Berczy, Bruce, Eckhardt and Robinson Creeks). Panels will outline background information on topics such as the subwatershed study process, natural features mapping, species at risk, etc.

Conceptual Master Plan Planning Study

As mentioned, the Conceptual Master Plan will consist of a Community Structure Plan and Key Directions implementation document. Open House panels will provide an understanding of the Official Plan requirements for the development of the FUA, such as the need to develop a sustainable community plan to accommodate 38,000 people and 19,000 jobs, minimum density requirements, etc, as well as the existing community context (e.g., cultural heritage, adjacent land uses, etc). Input received from the public will be used to develop preliminary community structure concepts for testing in the next phase of the CMP process.

Transportation Study

The transportation study will identify a transportation system within the FUA that provides for a full range of travel options (walking, cycling, transit and automobile). Panels will outline transportation planning objectives, the existing system, a method to forecast future travel demand and identification of constraints and opportunities.

Water and Wastewater (Servicing) Studies

The water and wastewater studies will identify servicing concepts for the FUA. Similar to the Transportation Study, panels will provide information on water and wastewater system planning objectives, links to the existing system, a method to forecast future water demand and wastewater generation and identification of constraints and opportunities.

The Conceptual Master Plan Process will satisfy requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process

In order to streamline processes and timelines for the various approvals required to facilitate development in the FUA, the component studies are being undertaken through a master planning process under the Environmental Assessment Act. The CMP process is intended to satisfy Phases 1 and 2 of the Class EA process for infrastructure projects (such as water, wastewater and transportation projects) to be undertaken by the City, Region and landowners, depending on the nature of the project.

Next Steps:

Following the Public Open House, preliminary community structure concepts will be developed. As part of Phase 2 of the Studies, an impact assessment of the preliminary community structure concepts will be undertaken through an iterative process to determine the preliminary preferred community concept. This preliminary preferred community concept will be made available for public comment at a second Public Open House anticipated in June 2015.

It should be noted that these timelines are conditional upon the Ontario Municipal Board approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 3 and the relevant portions of the City of Markham's 2014 Official Plan relating to the FUA Lands.

Staff propose that the role and function of the proposed Donald Cousens Parkway extension to 19th Avenue be reviewed as part of the York Region Transportation Master Plan Update 2014

The York Region Official Plan 2010 and Markham Official Plan 2014 identify the proposed extension of the Donald Cousens Parkway (DCP) from Highway 48 to 19th Avenue near Woodbine Avenue (see Figure 1). The proposed DCP is designated as a Regional arterial road which will function as part of the Regional Transit Priority Network. The alignment shown is conceptual, to be confirmed through a Class EA process at a later date.

The DCP extension could potentially bisect a portion of the 'Future Employment Area' lands within the northwest portion of the Future Urban Area. The DCP extension is not included in the Region's ten year capital budget and the Region has no immediate plans to initiate the EA Study required to confirm the alignment of this road. To facilitate the planning of the north Markham Future Urban area it would be prudent to review the role and function of the DCP extension. Markham Staff recommend that Markham Council request Regional Council to review the role and function of the proposed DCP extension as part of the Regional Transportation Master Plan Update, currently underway.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)

The studies are funded based on the Council approved budget and a Funding Agreement negotiated with participating Landowners in the north Markham Future Urban Area.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

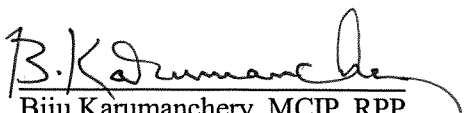
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:


The Conceptual Master Plan process for the FUA is consistent with the Markham Official Plan 2014 and the Region's Official Plan Amendment 3 (ROPA3) which identifies urban expansion lands in north Markham. The CMP process will address the four main themes outlined in the City OP related to environmental protection, building complete communities, increasing travel choices, and maintaining a competitive economy.

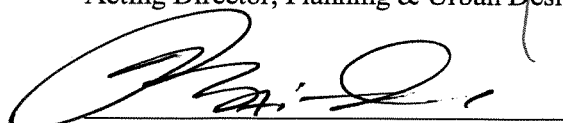
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

All relevant departments, particularly Recreation, Operations, Finance and Legal, have been and will continue to be consulted during the Conceptual Master Plan process.

RECOMMENDED BY:

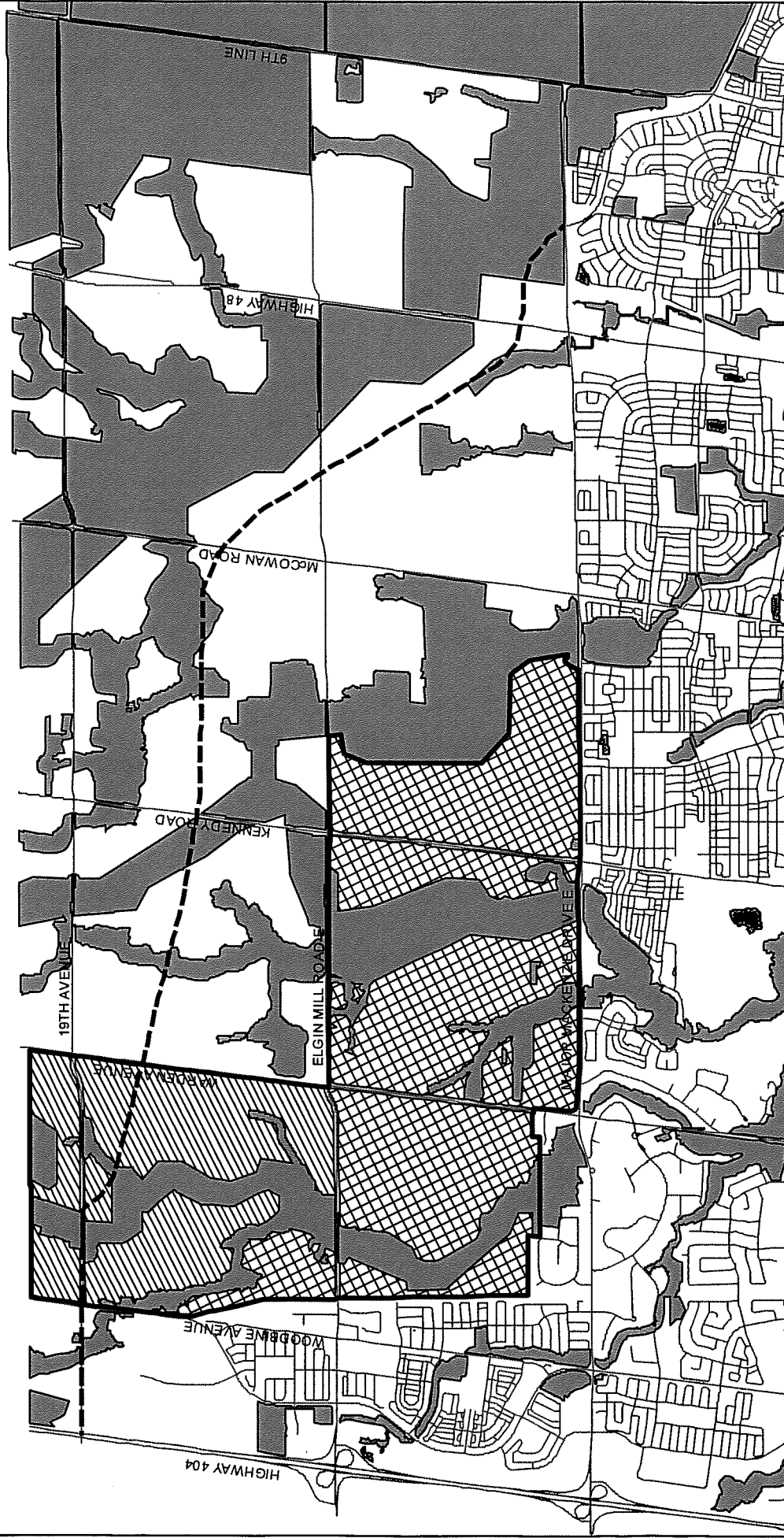

Biju Karumanchery, MCIP, RPP
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ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1 – Location and Land Use Map



LOCATION AND LAND USE MAP

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|---|---------------------------|---|--|
|  | FUTURE EMPLOYMENT AREA |  | FUTURE DONALD COUSENS PARKWAY (CONCEPTUAL ALIGNMENT) |
|  | FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA |  | SUBJECT LANDS |
|  | GREENWAY | | |