



Report to: Development Services Committee

Date Report: September 16, 2014

SUBJECT: Central Pickering Development Plan – Class Environmental Assessment for Regional Services

PREPARED BY: Joseph Palmisano, Sr. Transportation Engineer, Ext. 6200
Brian Lee, Senior Manager, Special Projects, Ext. 4838

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) **THAT** the staff report entitled “Central Pickering Development Plan – Class Environmental Assessment for Regional Services” be received;
- 2) **AND THAT** Durham Region be requested to review with Markham the transportation staging and implementation plan for phases subsequent to Phase 1 of the Central Pickering Development Plan;
- 3) **AND THAT** Durham Region be requested to work with the City of Toronto and Regional Municipality of York for the widening of Steeles Avenue East, from Markham Road to York-Durham Line;
- 4) **AND THAT** Metrolinx be requested to provide transit services to the Seaton Community and East Markham, including commuter rail service on the CP Havelock Subdivision, CP Belleville Subdivision, Highway 7 transit, and Highway 407 transit;
- 5) **AND THAT** this report and recommendations be forwarded to Durham Region, Regional Municipality of York, City of Pickering, Metrolinx, and the Ministry of the Environment for their necessary action;
- 6) **AND THAT** staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to inform Council that the Regional Municipality of Durham has recently completed a study for the provision of Regional services, including water, wastewater, transportation, transit and service facility infrastructure, to service the lands indentified as the Central Pickering Development Plan (CPDP) Area, and to provide Council with staff recommendations related to transportation matters.

BACKGROUND:

The CPDP was approved by the Province in May 2006 under the provisions of the Ontario Planning and Development Act. The CPDP area is generally bounded by the CP Belleville Line to the south, Sideline 16/Pickering-Ajax Boundary to the east, Highway 7 to the north and York-

Durham Line to the west, within the City of Pickering, Ontario (see Attachment 'A'). To allow for its implementation, the CPDP specifies that several technical studies will be required including the Master Environmental Servicing Plan and a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for Regional Services.

In January 2012, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing issued a Declaration of Provincial Interest regarding Seaton planning matters, and the Province subsequently amended the CPDP in June 2012 to include, among other matters, 2031 population and employment forecasts for the Seaton community which were previously absent. The Seaton Community is expected to accommodate a population of 61,000 and employment of 30,500 for the 2031 horizon year. The CPDP also includes agricultural lands between the West Duffins Creek and York-Durham Line. These actions by the Province ultimately resulted in the Durham Region's Growth Plan conformity amendment (Durham ROPA 128), which was substantially approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on January 9, 2013.

Two separate Municipal Class EAs were undertaken by Durham Region, based on the type of infrastructure:

1. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project, which includes the planning for provision of Regional water and wastewater infrastructure, such as watermains, sewers, pumping stations and reservoirs.
2. Transportation and Transit Infrastructure Project, which includes all roads, bridges, cycling paths/lanes, and sidewalks in Regional road rights-of-way. The Regional roads servicing the CPDP include Brock Road, Whites Road Extension, Rossland Road Extension, Taunton Road, and Whitevale Bypass. The Province's May 2006 CPDP provides an overall layout/network for transportation infrastructure (see Attachment 'B') within the CPDP Study Area, which established the basis for the CPDP Regional Services Class EA.

At the conclusion of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for Regional Services, an Environmental Study Report (ESR) was prepared and placed on public record for a 90-day review period from June 27, 2014 to September 24, 2014. During this time, all interested persons or agencies may submit comments on the ESR.

OPTIONS / DISCUSSIONS:

CPDP Regional Services Class EA assessed in detail five Durham Region transportation corridors which include Brock Road, Whites Road Extension, Rossland Road Extension, Taunton Road, and Whitevale Bypass. Of these Regional roads, Whitevale Bypass and Taunton Road/Steeles Avenue provide east-west connectivity between the City of Markham and the Seaton Community. In addition, Highway 7 and Highway 407 provide connectivity between the City of Markham and the Seaton Community; however these facilities are not under the jurisdiction of Durham Region and therefore any required studies (i.e. Class EA) would be undertaken by the appropriate agency.

The EA recommendations for the two Region of Durham transportation corridors that are of interest to Markham are summarized below. The recommended road alignment for each of the Durham Region transportation corridor is shown in Attachment 'C'.

Recommendations for Whitevale Bypass and Taunton Road

Corridor	Durham Region Recommendations
Whitevale Bypass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can accommodate an ultimate 36 m right-of-way and four-lane cross-section • Minor Transit Corridor • Provision for dedicated cycling and pedestrian facilities <p><u>Section 1 (2021 Horizon*)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 travel lanes per direction for general purpose traffic including transit vehicles, from west limit of Phase 1 to Brock Road (see Attachment 'D') • The timing for this section of the Whitevale Bypass, as per the Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy is linked to the Phase 1 development area which is expected to be substantially completed by 2021 <p><u>Section 2 (2030 Horizon*)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 travel lanes per direction for general purpose traffic including transit vehicles, from west limit of Phase 1 to West Duffins Creek (see Attachment 'E') • The timing for this section of the Whitevale Bypass, as per the Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy is linked to the Subsequent Phases of development which is expected to be substantially completed by 2030 <p><u>Section 3 (To be Finalized*)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 travel lane per direction for general purpose traffic from across West Duffins Creek to York-Durham Line • The timing for this section of the Whitevale Bypass, as per the Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy has not been identified and the need will be determined based on road capacity and the role of the extension
Taunton Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can accommodate an ultimate 45 m right-of-way and six-lane cross-section • Higher Order Transit Corridor • 2 travel lanes per direction for general purpose traffic. Taunton Road is currently constructed with 2 travel lanes per direction east of York-Durham Line • 1 travel lane per direction for High Occupancy Vehicles and transit. The timing for this improvement has not been specified • Provision for dedicated cycling and pedestrian facilities separated from the travel portion of the roadway

* Approximate timing information according to Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy, revised May 2013

Whitevale Bypass Impact on 14th Avenue in Markham

14th Avenue is a two lane rural Regional road from east of Donald Cousens Parkway to the York-Durham Line. 14th Avenue crosses over the Rouge River, and continues through the Bob Hunter Memorial Park and Rouge National Urban Park, from east of the CP Rail line to the York-Durham Line. A concern has been raised in the past regarding a proposed alignment of a new

Whitevale Bypass road connecting to 14th Avenue, and anticipated increase in traffic through east Markham, particularly in Box Grove. There are existing capacity constraints along 14th Avenue between Markham Road and Box Grove Bypass and as such, increases in traffic volumes will result in additional congestion and delays. The forecasted 2031 peak direction total traffic volumes (westbound during the AM peak hour) indicate that the section of 14th Avenue between the Box Grove Bypass and York-Durham Line will also operate at or near capacity based on a lane capacity of 700 vehicles per hour. Relative to existing weekday AM peak hour volumes, this represents a volume increase of approximately 120 to 550 vehicles in the westbound direction, with the highest increases in volumes experienced closest to York-Durham Line. Considering the environmental sensitivity of the Rouge River, the Rouge National Urban Park, and potential impact to the Box Grove Community, staff is of the opinion that it is essential to provide transportation capacity improvements and transit service on Highway 7 and Steeles Avenue to provide alternative options for trips destined to the central part of Markham and the City of Toronto. Commuters from Durham Region also have the option of using Highway 407 which has ample capacity to handle increase in east-west traffic.

At the outset of the CPDP Regional Services Class EA, the Whitevale Bypass connection to 14th Avenue was assumed to include a four lane cross-section. Through the preparation of the CPDP Regional Services Class EA, York Region and Markham staff advised Durham Region that capacity improvements to 14th Avenue east of Donald Cousens Parkway to York-Durham Line will not be supported due to environmental impact to the natural environment and impact to the Box Grove Community. York Region staff had further requested that road network alternatives be considered that do not include widening of 14th Avenue. In response to this matter, the York Region 10-Year Capital Program, does not identify a widening of 14th Avenue from Box Grove Bypass to York-Durham Line and the CPDP Regional Services Class EA recommends that Whitevale Bypass be constructed at two lanes west of West Duffins Creek connecting to 14th Avenue.

The CPDP Regional Services Class EA assessed the ultimate Durham Region infrastructure requirements based on a 2031 horizon. Information on the development phasing of CPDP is not contained in the ESR, however information on the phasing can be found in the Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy, Revised May 2013, and the Seaton Phase 1 Regional Infrastructure Front End Agreement, dated June 2014. The ESR assumes that the Whitevale Bypass connecting with 14th Avenue will be in place by 2031 however according to the Staged Servicing the Implementation Strategy the need for the Whitevale Bypass across West Duffins Creek to York-Durham Line may occur over a longer time horizon. As documented in the Staged Servicing and Implement Strategy, during Seaton Phase 1 (which will contain approximately 12,000 housing units and Phase 1 employment area), the Whitevale Bypass will be constructed as a 4-lane arterial to the western limit of the Phase 1 development area (see Attachment 'D'). The Phase 1 residential area is expected to be substantially completed by 2021. The westward extension of the Whitevale Bypass between the limits of Phase 1 and West Duffins Creek will be constructed during the subsequent phases (see Attachment 'E'). The phases subsequent to Phase 1 are expected to be substantially completed by 2030. The timing of the Whitevale Bypass across West Duffins Creek to York-Durham Line is not finalized and the need according to the Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy will be determined based on road capacity and the role of the extension in the protection of the existing Hamlet of Whitevale. Markham staff is of the

opinion that it is essential that the potential impact to the Box Grove Community also be considered.

Steeles Avenue Improvements

Steeles Avenue, which is currently under the jurisdiction of the City of Toronto, is the boundary road between York Region and the City of Toronto, west of York-Durham Line. East of the York-Durham Line it continues as Taunton Road forming a major east-west arterial road throughout Durham Region. The need to improve Steeles Avenue as an inter-regional connector has existed for some time. York Region and the City of Toronto have agreed to principles of cost sharing and implementation for the section of Steeles Avenue from Markham Road to Donald Cousens Parkway and continue to have ongoing discussions in order to reach a resolution on matters related to ownership, operations, and funding. Until such agreement is made, the timing of widening Steeles Avenue cannot be finalized. There is no agreement between the City of Toronto, York Region, and Durham Region for the section of Steeles Avenue from Donald Cousens Parkway to York-Durham Line. Staff requests that Durham Region work with the City of Toronto and York Region for the widening of Steeles Avenue, from Markham Road to York-Durham Line.

Transit

Transit improvements are essential to the development of the CPDP. The Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan has identified a number of key transit improvements for this area including the Provision of a peak period regional rail service between Seaton and Union Station / Summerhill and between between Locust Hill / Markham and Union Station / Summerhill. Given the importance of providing alternative modes of transportation in this area, we request that Metrolinx provide regional transit services to the Seaton Community and East Markham, including commuter rail service on the CP Havelock Subdivision, CP Belleville Subdivision, Highway 7 transit, and Highway 407 transit.

CPDP Development Phasing

Information on the development phasing of CPDP is not contained in the ESR, however information on the phasing can be found in the Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy, revised May 2013, and the Seaton Phase 1 Regional Infrastructure Front End Agreement, dated June 2014. The Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy notes that for all residential and employment areas phases subsequent to Phase 1, it is recommended that a holding provision be imposed, as provided for in Pickering OPA 22. One of the conditions for the removal of the holding designation is the completion of a future transportation study to determine the need and, if warranted, the extent and timing of additional transportation improvement that may be required to support development beyond the first phase of development. The study is to be undertaken by the landowners in consultation with the City of Pickering, Durham Region, York Region, and the City of Toronto. We request that the staging and implementation plan for development phases subsequent to Phase 1 be reviewed with Markham.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:

There is no financial impact in Council adopting staff recommendations.

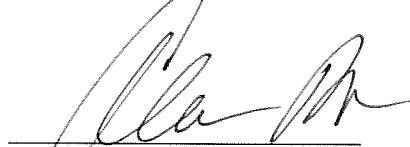
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Staff recommendations are consistent with Markham growth management policies which require development phasing to match the rate of infrastructure delivery, and Markham transportation policies which encourage alternative modes of transportation by providing choices of different modes.


BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Planning Department has reviewed this Report.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Alan Brown, C.E.T
Director of Engineering



Jim Baird, M.C.I.P, R.P.P
Commissioner, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 'A': Central Pickering Development Plan Area

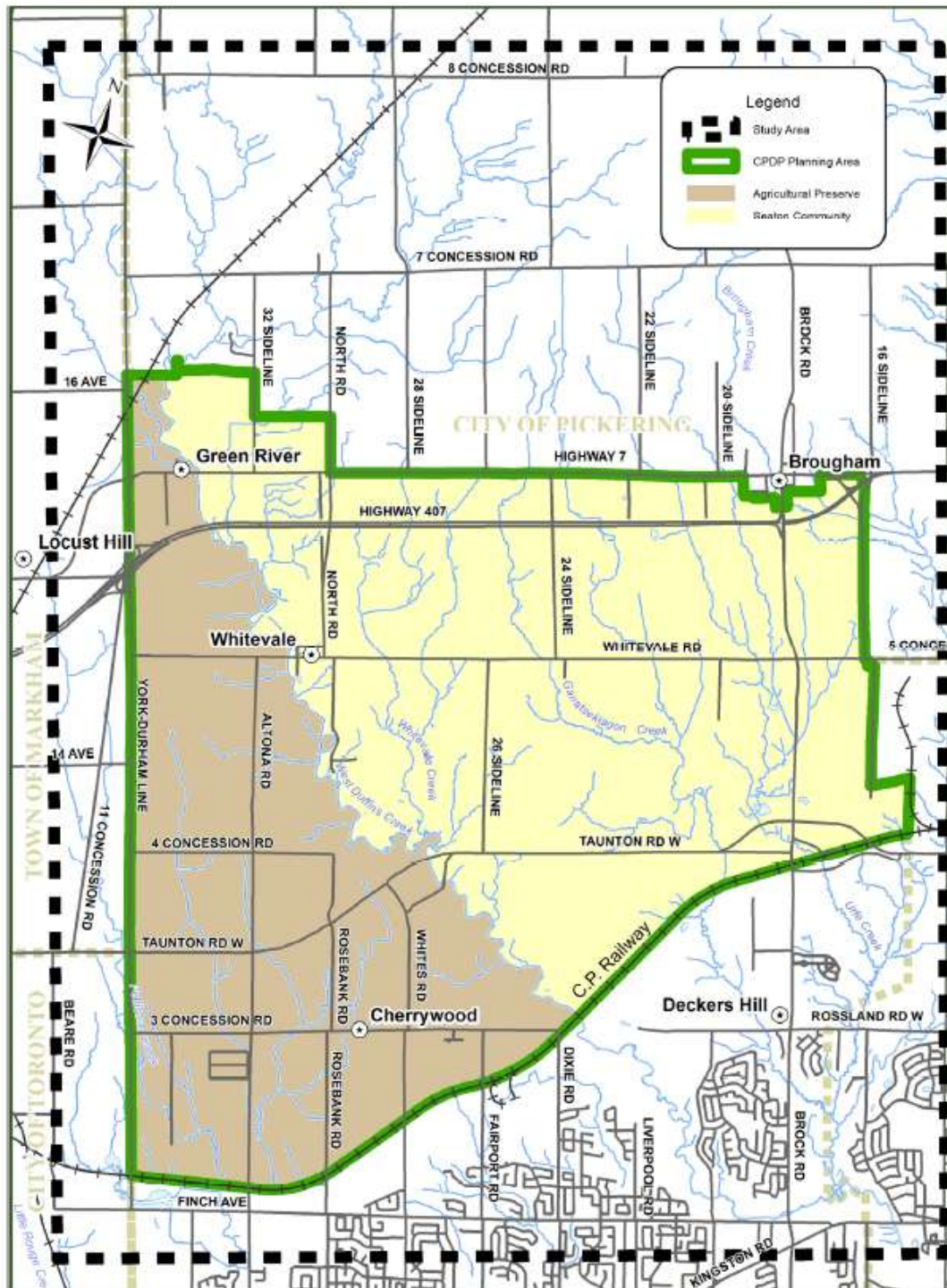
Attachment 'B': Central Pickering Development Plan, May 2006 – Transportation Network

Attachment 'C': Central Pickering Development Plan Regional Services Class Environmental Assessment, June 2014 – Recommended Road Alignment

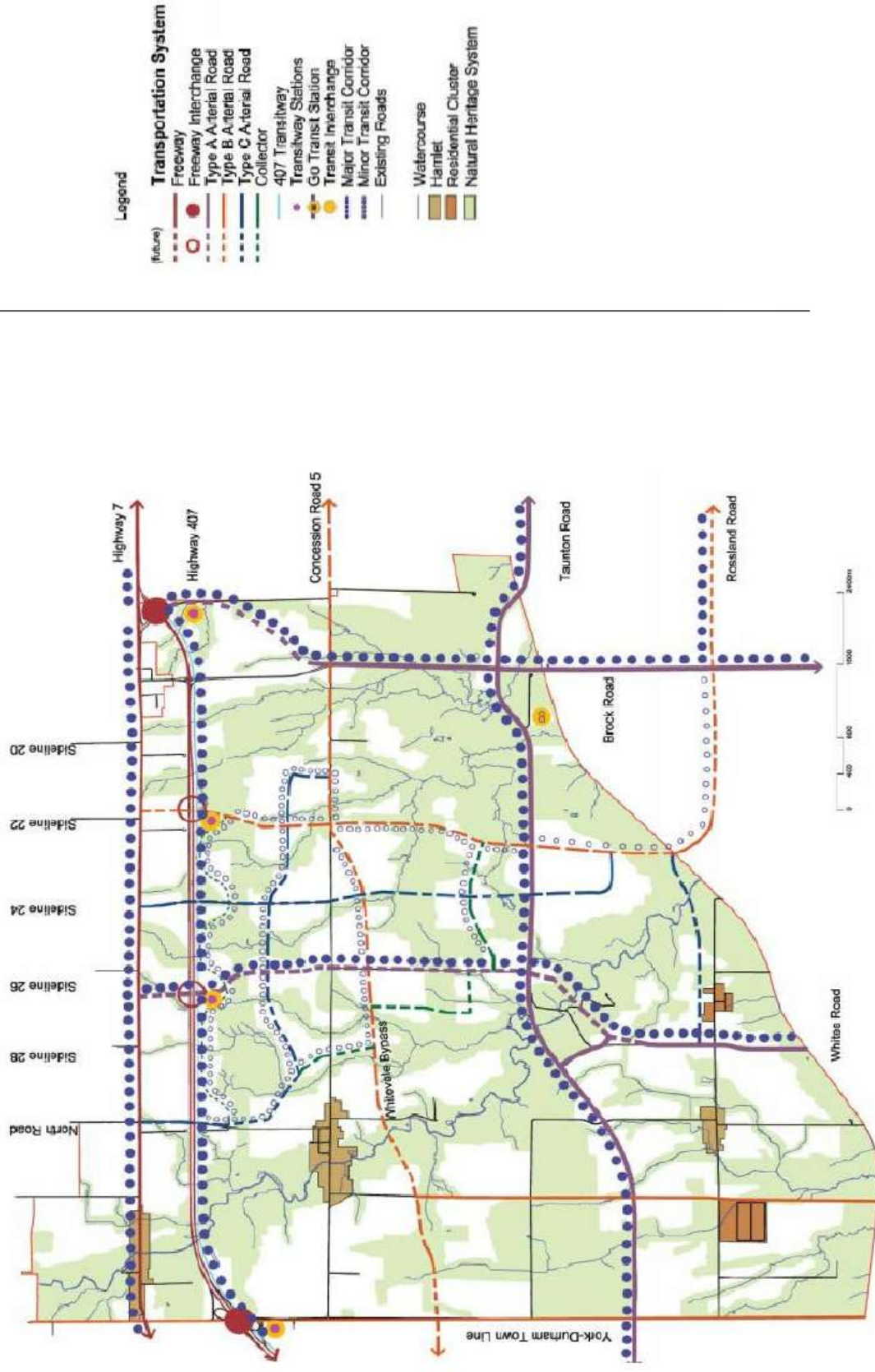
Attachment 'D': Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy – Phase 1, Roads

Attachment 'E': Staged Servicing and Implementation Strategy – Subsequent Phases, Roads

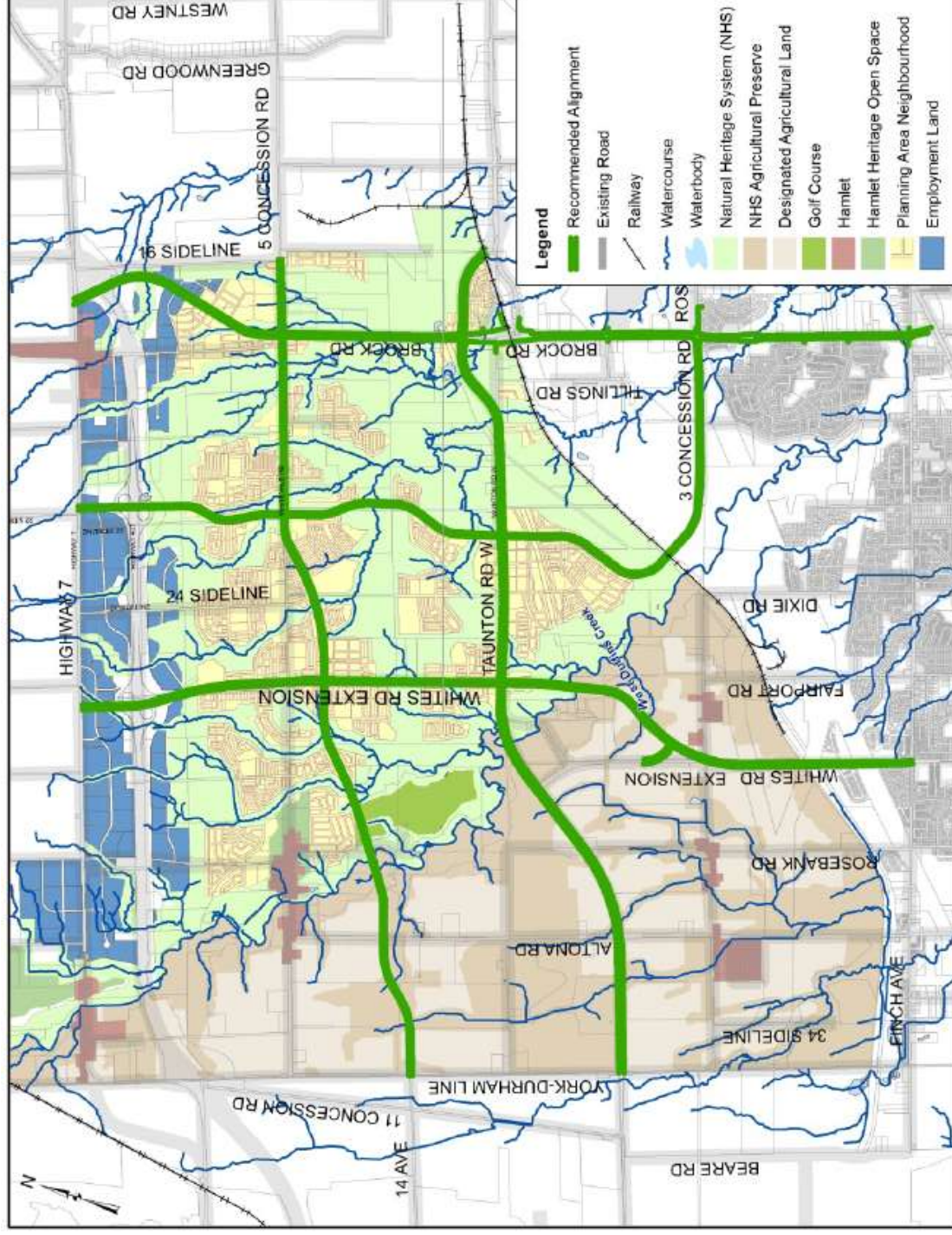
Attachment 'A': Central Pickering Development Plan Area

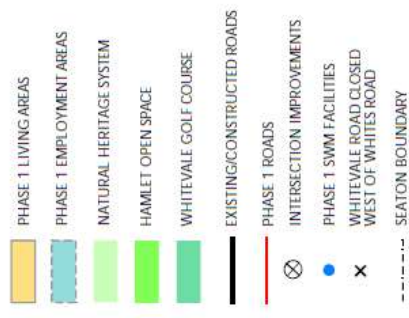


Attachment 'B': Central Pickering Development Plan, May 2006 – Transportation Network



Recommended Road Alignment





The map illustrates the Duffin Greenbelt with three designated sections for the 2021 Horizon. Section 1 (2021 Horizon) is shown in green, Section 2 (2031 Horizon) in yellow, and Section 3 (To be finalized) in orange. The map includes major roads such as Highway 401, Highway 7, Concession Roads 1-5, and various local roads like Brock Road, Whitevale Road, and Taunton Road. It also shows the Green River, Whitevale, and Duffin Heights areas. A scale bar and north arrow are located in the top right corner.

