

**APPENDIX A:
YONGE STEELES CORRIDOR
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

YONGE-STEELES CORRIDOR STUDY PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. STUDY AREA

The proposed study area covers the blocks bounded by Steeles Avenue to the south; Yonge Street to the west; one property south of the Farmer's Market (fronting the south side of Elgin Street) to the north; and Dudley Avenue to the East. In addition, the study area also includes the first block east of Dudley Avenue fronting onto Steeles Avenue. The outline of the study area is shown on Map A.

The Yonge-Steeles intersection is strategically located within the Greater Toronto Area, with potential to evolve into a significant mixed use node. The area is currently served by a variety of surface transit routes. In addition, York Region's recently proposed Yonge Street Transitway, a dedicated busway to be located in the centre of Yonge Street, could provide a catalyst for major redevelopment of the area, particularly on sites located close to proposed transitway stops. At the same time, the Yonge-Steeles intersection and the surrounding area is experiencing development constraints relating to municipal servicing and transportation capacity and availability of parks and recreation facilities.

The study area is characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses. On the blocks fronting Steeles Avenue east of the Yonge-Steeles intersection, the original single detached housing remains in place, the only exception being an older, mid rise apartment building in the north east quadrant of the Yonge-Steeles intersection.

North of the Yonge-Steeles intersection to Meadowview Avenue, the east side of Yonge Street is bordered by a mix of low rise retail and highway commercial uses. Single detached residential properties are located immediately to the east. Generally this portion of the study area is characterized by small lot sizes and fragmented ownership patterns.

North of Meadowview Avenue, two large properties accommodating retail plazas are located north and south of the CN Rail line.

The portion of the Study Area north of Clark Avenue is characterized by older mid-rise apartment buildings. Generally, these uses are well established and may have limited intensification or redevelopment potential.

2. BACKGROUND

In the early 1990's, the Town of Markham undertook a comprehensive review of land use policies in the Thornhill Community, which culminated in the Thornhill

Secondary Plan (OPA 1). This Secondary Plan was adopted by the Town of Markham in 1995 and was approved by the Region of York in 1997 (subject to modifications).

The Thornhill Secondary Plan provides for mixed use residential/commercial/office development on the properties fronting the Yonge Street corridor between Steeles Avenue and the Clark Avenue. Within these general boundaries, properties fronting on Yonge Street between Steeles Avenue and the CN Rail Line (designated Community Amenity Area – Yonge/Steeles), are permitted to develop at a base density of 1.5 fsi, with potential to increase this density to 2.0 fsi (without amendment to the plan) subject to a comprehensive transportation study. The properties fronting Yonge Street north of the CN Rail Line to Clark Avenue (designated Community Amenity Area – Yonge Street Corridor), are currently restricted to a lower maximum density of 1.0 fsi. Both designations encourage grade-related commercial and retail uses along the Yonge Street frontage. The remaining, predominantly residential lands within the blocks bounded by Yonge Street and Dudley Avenue, are designated High Density Housing II, which permits development at densities between 99 and 148 units per hectare.

The block fronting Steeles Avenue east of Dudley Avenue has a low density residential character. The northern half of the block fronting Highland Park is designated Low Density Housing. The properties fronting Steeles Avenue are designated Low Density Housing Special, which, in addition to low density residential uses, permits office uses in low-rise buildings compatible with surrounding residential buildings.

In October 1991, the former Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department convened a meeting of representatives from Markham, Vaughan, North York, Region of York and Metro to discuss mutual concerns regarding the development potential around the intersection of Yonge and Steeles. This led to the formation of an intermunicipal working committee, known as the "Yonge-Steeles Development Area Committee", which was comprised of planning and transportation staff from each of the participating municipalities. Each municipality developed a series of land use scenarios for its respective quadrants. In January 1994 the Committee issued a draft report entitled "The Yonge-Steeles Sub Centre: Recommended Planning Principles". The draft report recommended that development in the Yonge-Steeles Sub Centre must be staged in accordance with the availability of transportation capacity, and recommended a Stage 1 density of 1.5 fsi across the Yonge-Steeles Corridor Study in Markham, based on the transportation capacity available at that time. The study further recommended that any development beyond 1.5 fsi would require a comprehensive transportation study, to confirm the availability of capacity and strategies to accommodate the desired density and land use mix. The recommendations of the intermunicipal working committee were consistent with the policies of the Thornhill Secondary Plan.

When York Region approved the Thornhill Secondary Plan in 1997, several sites within the Study Area were deferred (see attached map), including:

- the blocks bounded by Steeles Avenue, Yonge Street, Meadowview, and Dudley;
- the second block fronting Steeles Avenue East east of Dudley;
- the large block fronting Yonge Street immediately south of the CN Rail line; and,
- the large block fronting Yonge Street immediately north of the CN Rail line.

The first three areas were deferred at the request of the owners of the Centre Point Mall (located at the south west corner of Yonge and Steeles) due to the owners' concerns about possible negative impacts on the Yonge Steeles intersection associated with redevelopment and intensification of these lands. The block north of the CN Rail line was deferred at the request of the owner, who wanted higher development densities on his property. These deferrals remain in place at the present time.

Since the adoption of the Thornhill Secondary Plan, a number of policy documents and guidelines, as well as infrastructure initiatives, have been introduced, which will play an important role in future redevelopment of the Yonge Steeles area. These include:

- *Region of York Official Plan Amendment No. 43 – Centres and Corridors Strategy:* This document expands and updates York Region's Centres and Corridors policies. The objective is to encourage intensification, mixed use development and transit supportive densities along designated regional corridors, including Yonge Street. The plan directs area municipalities to undertake corridor studies to identify opportunities for compact, mixed use, transit supportive redevelopment. The policies establish an average density target of 2.5 fsi along corridors. The amendment also stresses the importance of high quality urban design and the need to integrate new development with existing development to maintain and enhance main streets. Area municipalities are directed to identify "key redevelopment areas", defined as sites that are abutting or adjacent to high priority transit lines.
- *Region of York Transit Oriented Design Guidelines:* Endorsed by Regional Council in September 2006, the guidelines are intended to assist the Region and the Area Municipalities to implement planning for well-designed pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive development, that reflects and supports existing transit-supportive planning initiatives at the Provincial, Regional and local municipal level.
- *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe:* The recently-approved provincial growth plan for the GGH establishes a policy framework for

compact urban growth; sets intensification targets, directs growth to existing urban areas and transit corridors such as the Yonge Street Corridor; limits greenfield development; and promotes compact, transit oriented development patterns.

- *Thornhill Yonge Street Study:* A joint study undertaken by the Town of Markham and the City of Vaughan, which identified redevelopment and streetscape opportunities along the Yonge Street corridor within the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District and adjacent blocks. The southern boundary of the Thornhill Yonge Street study abuts the northern limit of the study proposed in these terms of reference. The Thornhill Yonge Street Study identified key redevelopment sites, identified maximum building heights on these sites, and established a streetscape improvement plan for the study within the context of the proposed Yonge Street transitway.
- *The Yonge Steeles Corridor Public Transit Improvement Environmental Assessment Report:* This EA, undertaken by York Region Transit, recommends a dedicated Bus Rapid Transit corridor along Yonge Street from Steeles Avenue north to Newmarket. The transitway may be upgraded to Light Rail Transit in the future.

Since approval of the Thornhill Secondary Plan, redevelopment activity in the Yonge Steeles Area of Markham has been limited. However, the Town has recently received a major redevelopment application for the lands at the north east corner of Yonge Street and Meadowview Avenue in the Yonge Steeles Study Area. With the anticipated construction of the Yonge Street Transitway over the next decade, staff anticipate that additional redevelopment interest will be generated in this area.

3. STUDY GOAL AND PURPOSE

The Secondary Plan establishes that approval of development proposals for lands within the Yonge-Steeles Corridor shall be subject to the preparation and approval of detailed studies addressing, but not limited to, land use and urban design, transportation and street patterns, servicing infrastructure and community services, including parks. The Secondary Plan provides for the preparation of a Master Plan for the study area, based on the findings of these studies, at the discretion of the Town.

The objectives of this study include:

- To identify a preferred redevelopment/intensification scenario for the lands within the study area, focusing on mixed-use development and appropriate building forms and heights within the context of the Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 43's average density target of 2.5 fsi for the Yonge Street Corridor;

- To provide park and/or recreation facilities suitable for the anticipated population in and adjacent to the redevelopment area;
- To achieve energy efficiency and residential amenity, taking into account height, massing, landscaping and the effects of wind and sun;
- To ensure pedestrian convenience and comfort;
- To ensure a pedestrian and transit supportive street level environment, particularly along Yonge Street and Steeles Avenue frontages of the study area, with appropriate at-grade mixes of uses and building/street frontage relationships;
- To assess existing transportation and servicing infrastructure, and to determine required improvements, including possible alternative “green” technologies, to accommodate the preferred redevelopment scenario for the study area;
- To establish appropriate phasing of development within the context of existing transportation and servicing infrastructure, and planned/required improvements;
- To provide appropriate transition between the redevelopment area and existing low density residential neighbourhoods, and to review existing road patterns in the area in the context of this objective;
- To provide appropriate interface between the redevelopment area and adjoining industrial lands and the CN Rail line;
- To prepare an implementation strategy, including an amendment to the Thornhill Secondary Plan, and the implementing zoning by-law.

The Town is seeking a multi-disciplinary consulting team to prepare a land use and urban design study for the Yonge-Steeles Corridor Study which will address the study objectives set out above.

4. THE STUDY COMPONENTS

4.1 Review study boundaries

Consultant teams will be asked to review the proposed study area boundaries. Specifically, the Town is seeking recommendations concerning whether or not the block fronting Steeles Avenue east of Dudley, and the portion of the proposed Yonge Street corridor north of Clark Avenue, should be retained within the study area and to what extent these blocks should be considered as candidates for

intensification or redevelopment or whether they should remain subject to the existing Secondary Plan policies.

4.2 Land Use and Urban Design Plan

The consultant will recommend a preferred land use and urban design plan for the study area. The intent will be to demonstrate how the study area can evolve into an urban, mixed-use community, consisting of residential, offices, and ancillary retail and other commercial uses, in appropriately-scaled buildings. This component of the study will address the following issues both comprehensively and on a block by block basis within the study area:

- (i) A land use plan indicating appropriate locations for and mixes of land uses within the blocks forming the study area. The scenario should identify anticipated floor areas/residential units for residential, office and retail uses on a block-specific basis; identify recommended locations for these uses; and overall anticipated densities for each block within the context of the Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 43 target of 2.5 fsi average density within the Yonge Street corridor. The land use plan will be used as a basis for evaluating transportation and servicing infrastructure in the study area.
- (ii) An urban design plan illustrating building heights adjacent to Yonge Street and other major roads; building massing and form; orientation of buildings relative to surrounding streets; location and form of parking areas and vehicular access points; and appropriate transition strategies to ensure compatibility with existing low-rise residential neighbourhoods to the east.
- (iii) provision of publicly-accessible parks and recreation facilities, in a form and location suitable for the anticipated residential population;
- (iv) creating a pedestrian supportive environment within the study area and vibrant and attractive streetscapes adjacent to existing roads;
- (v) design guidelines addressing key aspects of the built environment including:
 - Built form and massing
 - Streetscapes and open space
 - Siting and orientation of buildings;
 - Mix of at-grade uses and street facades of buildings;
 - Environmental amenities including energy efficiency, micro-climate, pedestrian amenities and comfort;
 - Strategies for minimizing the visual and physical impacts of parking areas and vehicular access points.

In addition, the recommended planning and urban design strategy must be developed within the context of existing and potential development within the other municipalities adjoining the study area including the City of Toronto and the City of Vaughan, at a sufficient level of detail to satisfy the requirements of the Transportation and Servicing analyses set out below. This will involve, in part, a thorough review of existing planning documents in these municipalities, and an analysis of the resulting transportation infrastructure requirements.

4.3 Transportation

The Yonge-Steeles Corridor Study is located at the intersection of two major roads served by inter-municipal buses and the proposed Yonge Street Transitway.

In addition to the development potential within the Town of Markham, significant intensification potential may also exist within the City of Vaughan and the City of Toronto on lands fronting Yonge Street and Steeles Avenue within the vicinity of the Yonge-Steeles intersection. Close liaison with the City of Toronto, the Region of York, and the City of Vaughan will be crucial during the course of the study, to identify development potential within these adjoining jurisdictions and to ensure that the existing background traffic and future development potential in all three municipalities is accurately reflected in the analysis. Consideration should be given to the extent to which current planning documents in Vaughan and Toronto reflect the recommendations of the previously referenced “Yonge-Steeles Development Area Committee”. The transportation infrastructure implications that may result from discrepancies between the recommendations of the Yonge-Steeles Development Area Committee and current municipal planning documents should also be reviewed at this time.

The transportation analysis will be required to evaluate the impacts of the proposed planning and urban design strategy (plus the development potential in the Cities of Toronto and Vaughan based on their policy documents) on the existing transportation infrastructure. In addition, the transportation analysis will identify the transportation infrastructure improvements that will be needed to achieve anticipated ultimate development levels, including road right of way widths and intersection and transit, cycling and pedestrian improvements, and any phasing of development related to infrastructure delivery and timing.

Given the existing traffic conditions in this area, the transportation study will have a strong focus on transit and alternative modes of transportation (walking and cycling). In this regard, a comprehensive review of existing and projected person travel demand to and from the study area will be examined utilizing the most updated modeling information from both Toronto and York Region. The study will review opportunities to improve pedestrian connections to support transit and other community needs. The study will also identify modal split assumptions for various horizon years. Potential new Cycling routes (dedicated lanes and shared routes) and potential locations for bike racks near transit stations for the study

area will be reviewed to identify opportunities to link with the Town's proposed Master plan. A review of existing transit routes and opportunities to modify or add routes will be undertaken including opportunities and demand for community-based shuttles to provide a link to major transit destinations. The study will also examine the impact of traffic generated by redevelopment on the adjacent low density residential neighbourhoods and recommendations to protect these neighbourhoods from traffic infiltration including but not limited to opportunities for one-way street networks, traffic calming and turn prohibitions.

In addition to the above, the transportation analysis should address the following:

- Consideration of appropriate reductions in parking standards to reflect transit supportive development in close proximity to transit rich routes such as Steeles Ave., Yonge St., and proposed Yonge Transitway stops;
- Potential for on-street parking on Yonge Street to support retail uses;
- Requirement of Travel Demand Measures for new office development to support lower parking standards.

Any proposed reduction in parking standards must be considered within the context of minimizing potential overflow parking within adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

4.4 Servicing

An analysis of existing sanitary sewer, water and storm sewer system capacities will be required, in order to determine any servicing capacity constraints that may affect the implementation and phasing of the preferred Land Use and Urban Design Plan within the Study Area. This area has been known to experience basement flooding during storm events. As part of the servicing component of this study, an overall drainage plan has to be developed within the boundary of the catchment area to address the current capacity constraints for surface drainage, storm sewers and sanitary sewers. Opportunities to retrofit infrastructure and/or add new facilities to provide quantity and quality control for stormwater have to be identified. The impact of redevelopment on downstream watercourses has to be addressed as part of this study. The objective is to identify strategic opportunities and measures to ensure that redevelopment of this area will mitigate and improve the current situation, to the extent possible. This component of the study will also address the municipal infrastructure improvements and their timing to accommodate the land uses and densities proposed in the recommended land use and urban design strategy. This information, together with the transportation analysis noted above, will feed directly into the Phasing and Implementation Strategy for the Study.

4.5 Open Space and Recreation

Alternative schemes for the provision of parks, open space and recreation facilities within and adjacent to the redevelopment area will be examined. The

Study will identify the amount of parks, open space and specific recreation facilities relative to the anticipated resident and employment population in the study area and surrounding neighbourhoods, suitable locations for these facilities, and financial arrangements or other mechanisms needed to realize the required facilities.

The recommendations will seek to achieve an aesthetically pleasing balance between built form and open space and recreational opportunities suited to the new community.

4.6 Other Community Services

The Study will examine the need for other community services (emergency, schools, libraries etc.) arising out of the proposed redevelopment. If such services are needed within the Study area, appropriate sites (or opportunities for combining required facilities within residential or commercial development) will be identified in the land use and urban design strategy. If new community facilities are not justified within the Study area, then the Study will identify existing facilities capable of servicing the area.

4.7 Phasing and Implementation Strategy

The key to success in a large redevelopment area lies in an implementation strategy which will ensure orderly change. The phasing and implementation strategy will address timing and phasing of development, land assembly requirements, criteria for assessing development applications, staging of infrastructure improvements and community services.

It is anticipated that the recommended land use and urban design strategy will require amendments to the Thornhill Secondary Plan. The Consultant Team will be required to prepare draft amendments to the Secondary Plan to implement the recommended land use and urban design strategy and the phasing strategy. The amendment to the Thornhill Secondary Plan will also address a comprehensive list of background studies and issues that must be addressed in support of redevelopment applications.

The Consultant Team will also be required to make recommendations on detailed land uses and development standards, and to prepare a draft zoning by-law amendment for the area.

4.8 Consultation Program

Public consultation and education will play a key role in this study in order to achieve a broad level of public acceptance for the recommended land use and urban design plan. A variety of techniques should be used to convey a realistic

impression of the built community and to facilitate public understanding of the proposed changes, possibly including computer modelling and illustration.

The Consultant will design and be responsible for organizing a full consultation and engagement program, including community information meetings with residents and landowners, regular meetings with a Study Steering Committee (comprising Town staff), meetings with outside agencies and adjacent municipalities and other stakeholders and statutory public meeting(s) for the draft Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment.

5. THE CONSULTING TEAM

The Study requires a multi-disciplinary team to address urban design, planning, servicing and transportation issues.

The team will be headed by a firm or consortium specializing in planning and urban design, with a demonstrated record in the design and implementation of large-scale redevelopment schemes.

The lead firm will identify sub-consultants as part of the proposal and clearly indicate the specific expertise offered to the Study and the extent of their involvement in the project.

6. CONSULTANT SELECTION

As a first stage in the consultant selection process, interested firms are requested to submit a response to a request for qualification. This response should include an outline of the consulting team's general study approach, relevant project experience, and experience of key team members.

Among the consulting teams submitted a response to the RFQ, a short list will be requested to submit detailed proposals. These proposals will address the following items:

- Study work program – content and description of tasks, study timing and timing of study tasks, and details of involvement of team members in the study tasks;
- Relevant experience of the consulting team and direct involvement of experienced team members in the study;
- Comparable project experience, including projects that have been successfully implemented;
- Public consultation process;
- Study budget and deliverables.

The selection of a consultant will be based on the quality of the detailed proposal, and possibly an interview with Town staff. The Planning and Urban Design

Department, through Development Services Committee, will recommend the preferred consultant team.

7. BUDGET, SCHEDULE AND STAFFING

The estimated budget for this study is \$150,000.

We anticipate that this study will begin in January 2007, and be completed by the end of November 2007.

The detailed budget will identify task costs, meeting costs, costs for advertising and public relations, disbursements, contingencies and applicable taxes, plus a payment schedule for each study phase. The work program will detail task timing and sequencing and meeting schedules. The proposal will also identify the role and responsibility of each member of the consulting team, their direct involvement in the Study, and their relevant experience. The proposal will also identify the anticipated extent and schedule of Town staff involvement in the study process.

8. STUDY PRODUCTS

The key products of the study will include:

- Review of all current planning documents, and other relevant studies, within study area and adjacent municipalities
- The planning and urban design strategy and the urban design guidelines report;
- The draft Secondary Plan Amendment;
- The draft Zoning By-law Amendment.

It is anticipated that the following background reports will also be prepared:

- Transportation issues
- Servicing, drainage and watercourse issues
- Open space, recreation facilities and other community services
- Phasing and implementation strategy

Prior to preparation of final reports, one or more draft reports will be prepared for discussion and review by the Study Steering Committee.

9. REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Consultants must submit _____ copies of their response to this request for qualifications to

no later than 4:00 pm on _____.

If you have any enquiries, please contact Mr. Ron Blake, Development Manager
West District, at 477-7000 extension 2600.

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