

CORPORATE CENTRE STREETScape & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN STUDY

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

That Staff initiate the consultant selection process for the “Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan Study” on the basis of the Terms of Reference appended to this report as Attachment No. 1;

That funding for the study be undertaken in accordance with the total funds established in the approved 2002 Operating budget and carried over into the 2003 reserve.

Purpose

To obtain direction from Council to proceed with the “Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan Study” on the basis of the Terms of Reference appended to this report as Attachment No. 1.

Background

The purpose of this project is to produce a Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan for the City of Vaughan.

It is to be an action plan building directly on the 1997 *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report* statement:

The success of Vaughan’s Corporate Centre Node will depend to a large extent on the quality of its exterior environment. This quality will be determined by the combined actions of the public sector, in prescribing the layout and design of the public areas, and the private sector, in developing buildings which give three dimensional form and purpose to the public open spaces they adjoin. A good public realm will be the result of a congenial and reciprocal arrangement between the public spaces and the buildings which bound and shape them.

Basis for the Study

The Vaughan Corporate Centre is one of four regional urban centres identified in York Region’s Official Plan. It is a distinct planning area (Figure 1) under the auspices of the City of Vaughan’s 1998 Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 500, the Vaughan Corporate Centre Secondary Plan. Three land areas define the Corporate Centre based on development potential and existing land-use:

- The Corporate Centre Node;
- Corporate Centre Node Adjacent Lands;
- Corporate Centre Lands West of Highway 400.

The Vaughan Corporate Centre is to be the primary urban centre in Vaughan; more specifically, the Corporate Centre Node is characterized as a ‘downtown’ with a ‘main street’ or avenue. As such it is envisaged to have a pedestrian and transit supportive density of development. In relation to the Corporate Centre Node, OPA 529 identifies a transit right of way in the centre of the Node that will integrate the east-west corridor of Hwy 7, with a north-south, higher order transit system to York University and the Spadina Subway beyond.

The Hwy 7 corridor has been the focus of considerable study because of its functional evolution from a provincial highway to a more local, inter-municipal road. In order to express an urban design vision or intent, Highway 7 is being characterized as *Avenue 7*. The *Avenue 7* concept is developed in *The Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study (2003 draft)* and *The Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study (August 2003)*. These two studies build on and reinforce the urban design vision of the 1997 *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report*.

The *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report* presents a demonstration plan for the development of a regional and city centre as a companion to OPA 500, The Vaughan Corporate Centre Secondary Plan. The demonstration plan is too general to inform and guide the land development process. The lack of a comprehensive plan for the Corporate Centre Node area prevents the City from being able to secure through the Site Plan review process an open space and streetscape system which responds to the planning and design objectives outlined and reiterated in the existing plans and studies listed below.

Existing Plans & Studies

- Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines (December 1997)
- Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 500, Vaughan Corporate Centre Secondary Plan (February 1998)
- OPA 528, Vaughan Corporate Centre Road Network Improvements (March 2001)
- OPA 529, Higher Order Transit Right-of-Way for the Greater Toronto Area and the Vaughan Corporate Centre (March 2001)
- Landscape Master Plan Open Spaces Urban Design Plan (July 2001)
- The Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study (Draft - August 2003)
- The Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study (2003 draft)
- Pertinent Regional (York Region Public Transit [YRPT] for example) and Provincial Studies & Documents

Goals & Objectives

The purpose of the Master Plan is to:

- prescribe the layout and design of the public space within the Corporate Centre Node with connections as required to the greater Corporate Centre: streets, squares, plazas, parks, and so on;
- provide criteria for the assessment of detailed development applications to ensure that they are in keeping with the overall design vision represented by the *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report*;
- devise a strategic implementation plan to guide the funding and construction of the streetscape and open space system in conjunction with development.

Public Consultation

Minimally, the following two groups of individuals are to be consulted:

Stakeholder Consultation Group (SCG):

- consisting of local community and rate-payer association representatives, Corporate Centre landowners and public agencies;
 - The SCG is to participate in the review stages of the process.

The General Public:

- informed about work in progress and offered a chance to provide input at three Plan review stages minimally;
- invited to a presentation of the Final Master Plan.

Conclusion

The Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan will enable the City to secure an open space and streetscape system that responds to the planning and design objectives outlined and reiterated in the City's existing plans and studies through the Site Plan review process. It will also inform future planning studies and policy initiatives in the area. Given the continuing development within the Corporate Centre it is essential that the City be able to communicate its vision for the area to landowners, their representatives and the general public.

The study is expected to be completed in late Fall 2004. Should Council concur with this report, then Staff should be directed to initiate the consultant selection process with the adoption of the 'Recommendation' outlined above.

Attachments

1. Terms of Reference - Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DeANGELIS
Commissioner of Planning

Diana Birchall
Director of Urban Design

City of Vaughan
Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan Study



TERMS OF REFERENCE (11/03)

Introduction

The Vaughan Corporate Centre is one of four regional urban centres identified in York Region's Official Plan. It is a distinct planning area (Figure 1) under the auspices of the City of Vaughan's 1998 Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 500, the Vaughan Corporate Centre Secondary Plan. Three land areas define the Corporate Centre based on development potential and existing land-use:

- The Corporate Centre Node;
- Corporate Centre Node Adjacent Lands;
- Corporate Centre Lands West of Highway 400.

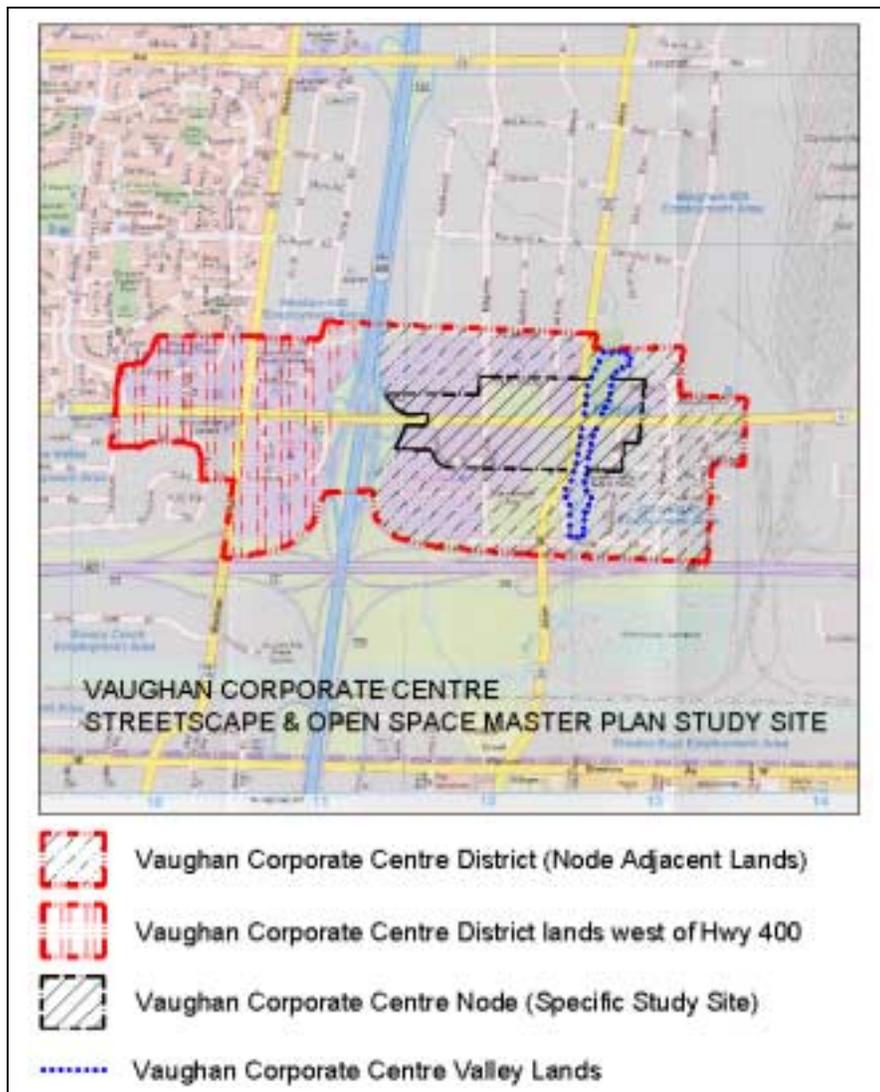


Figure 1

Introduction (con't.)

The Vaughan Corporate Centre is to be the primary urban centre in Vaughan; more specifically, the Corporate Centre Node is characterized as a 'downtown' with a 'main street' or avenue. As such it is envisaged to have a pedestrian and transit supportive density of development. In relation to the Corporate Centre Node, OPA 529 identifies a transit right of way in the centre of the Node that will integrate the east-west corridor of Highway 7, with a north-south, higher order transit system to York University and the Spadina Subway beyond.

To those entering Vaughan from the major Highways 400, 407 and 7, and eventually via the dedicated transit systems from the south and Avenue 7, the Corporate Centre is planned to be a significant entry or gateway to the City. Highway 7 is of primary importance given that it is the major east-west route through the Corporate Centre and it bisects the Corporate Centre Node. Highway 7 has been the focus of considerable study because of its functional evolution from a provincial highway to a more local, inter-municipal road; as such and to express an urban design vision or intent, Highway 7 is being characterized as *Avenue 7*. The *Avenue 7* concept is developed in *The Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study (2003 draft)* and *The Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study (August 2003)*. These two studies build on and reinforce the urban design vision of the 1997 *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report*.

Why a Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan?

The *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report* presents a demonstration plan for the development of a regional and City centre as a companion to OPA 500, The Vaughan Corporate Centre Secondary Plan. The continuing land development process has revealed that the demonstration plan is too general to inform and guide decision-making. Accordingly, and in response to a development proposal for one of the large land ownership blocks, a *Landscape Master Plan Open Spaces Urban Design Plan (July 2001)* was prepared. That plan facilitates discussion and evaluation of the public realm and open space associated with specific development parcels. The lack of such a plan for the remainder of the Corporate Centre means that development proposals have no streetscape vision or open space system to respond to in keeping with the planning and design objectives outlined and reiterated in the existing plans and studies listed below.

Existing Policies, Plans & Studies

- Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines (December 1997)
- Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 500, Vaughan Corporate Centre Secondary Plan (February 1998)
- OPA 528, Vaughan Corporate Centre Road Network Improvements (March 2001)
- OPA 529, Higher Order Transit Right-of-Way for the Greater Toronto Area and the Vaughan Corporate Centre (March 2001)
- Landscape Master Plan Open Spaces Urban Design Plan (July 2001)
- The Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study (Draft - August 2003)
- The Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study (2003 draft)
- Pertinent Regional (York Region Public Transit [YRPT] for example), TRCA and Provincial Policies, Studies & Documents

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to produce a Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan for the City of Vaughan. It is to be an action or implementation plan related to the above-mentioned studies and building directly on the 1997 *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report* statement:

The success of Vaughan's Corporate Centre Node will depend to a large extent on the quality of its exterior environment. This quality will be determined by the combined actions of the public sector, in prescribing the layout and design of the public areas, and the private sector, in developing buildings which give three dimensional form and purpose to the public open spaces they adjoin. A good public realm will be the result of a congenial and reciprocal arrangement between the public spaces and the buildings which bound and shape them.

Master Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Master Plan is to:

- prescribe the layout and design of the public spaces within the Corporate Centre Node with pedestrian and bicycle connections as required to the greater Corporate Centre: streets, squares, plazas, parks, and so on;
- provide criteria for the assessment of detailed development applications to ensure that they are in keeping with the overall design vision expressed by the *Vaughan Corporate Centre Urban Design Guidelines Report*.

More specifically, the Master Plan is to:

- define a system of linked, designed, public spaces consisting of streetscapes and open spaces;
- acknowledge and coordinate designs with proposed YRPT initiatives;
- illustrate those public spaces clearly and appropriately in order to convey design intent to residents, decision-makers, land owners and their consultants;
- establish a rationale and guidelines for building locations, forms, heights and massing in relation to the public space and environmental considerations (wind, shadow, orientation, etc.);
- devise criteria for determining the suitability of a proposed development relative to the open space system;
- devise and document design and construction standards that will ensure physical unity and order throughout the Corporate Centre while accommodating architectural diversity and long term build-out of the area;
- devise a strategic implementation plan to guide the funding and construction of the streetscape and open space system in conjunction with development;
- determine funding for Plan implementation that may include development cost charges as allocated through the City's annual capital budget, conditions of development approval and/or offsetting benefits through a Community Improvement Plan.

The implementation of the Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan is to contribute to the creation of an urban centre that is an attractive, vibrant, civic amenity. The design and implementation of the Corporate Centre public realm plan is to be illustrated with high quality graphics and explained in the Master Plan. The evolution of the Corporate Centre into a great urban place will take time. The Master Plan, itself, is to act as a catalyst and a guide for development - an inspired and inspiring design is expected.

Consultants' Role

The consultant team with a design lead (architect, landscape architect, urban designer) will be multi-disciplinary and structured in recognition of the need to be able to respond knowledgeably to:

- the existing situation and stakeholders; and,
- the requirement that the Corporate Centre Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan is to offer a realistic, detailed, physical design that may be implemented over an extended period of time.
 - A project implementation schedule (priority rather than time) and maintenance regime with associated costs is critical to the Master Plan's acceptance and use.

The consulting team will carry out the project with the input and participation of:

- City staff - urban design, parks, planning, engineering, public works and economic development as required;
- Stakeholders - local community/rate payer association representatives, Corporate Centre landowners, public agencies.

Design Process

The design process is to cover the following stages minimally:

1. **Background, Inventory & Analysis**
 - a. **Review 1**
2. **Conceptualization**
 - a. **Review 2**
3. **Preliminary Master Plan**
 - a. **Review 3**
4. **Draft Master Plan**
 - a. **Review 4**
5. **Final Master Plan**
 - a. **Presentation**

The Review and Presentation phases are to be specified by the consultant. Presentations to the General Public & Council will be required.

Public Consultation

The Consultants are to propose the methods of communication that will involve individuals in the design process most effectively. Minimally, the following two groups of individuals are to be consulted:

Stakeholder Consultation Group (SCG):

- consisting of local community and rate-payer association representatives, Corporate Centre landowners and public agencies;
 - The SCG is to participate in the **Review** stages of the process.

The General Public:

- informed about work in progress and offered a chance to provide input at **Review** stages 2, 3 & 4 minimally.
- invited to a presentation of the **Final Master Plan**.

Products of the Study

- **Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan**

The Master Plan is to include, but is not restricted to:

- design drawings, including plans, sections, elevations, perspectives and details to:
 - depict and explain the proposed urban environment graphically; and
 - inform private property development and detailed design;
- an implementation schedule that includes mechanisms (financial) facilitating the continued evolution and implementation of the various elements of the Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan;
- text and additional high quality graphic material such as photo manipulations and design sketches in a report format to support, embellish and explain design drawings;
- a report describing the study process, analysis, context.

The Master Plan documents are to be:

- state of the art allowing for straight-forward and effective production/reproduction and distribution;
- compatible with Autocad 2004 (drawings), Adobe InDesign and/or Quark Express (report)

Documentation to be provided:

- 15 bound copies of the Master Plan including sheet drawings as required.
- 1 digital print ready copy
- 1 photocopy ready copy
- 1 PDF copy (may be the digital print ready copy depending on the printing process)
- 1 digital copy of all images: jpeg photos, Acad dwg, jpeg/bmp/tif/Adobe graphics

Design Process Schedule & Cost

- March 1, 2004 start.
- November 30, 2004 finish.
- Outline the design process showing study stages and milestones in relation to time, associated tasks, persons and fee rates.

Contract Fee

- The anticipated cost range for this study is \$100,000.00 - \$135,000.00.
- The proposed fee is to be related to design process stages, tasks and persons.
 - Total fee to include fixed fees, GST and reimbursable expenses.

Project Management

The design process will be directed by the City's Project Manager, under the supervision of the Director of Urban Design.

The City will enter into a contract with a Prime Consultant.

- The inclusion, management and compensation of sub-consultants is the Prime Consultant's responsibility.

Conclusion

The Corporate Centre Streetscape & Open Space Master Plan Study will be an action plan to guide and direct the development of the Corporate Centre Node. With that in mind, a design plan that is essentially a manual for building an attractive, vibrant public realm is envisaged. The approach to implementation has to be creative and viable in order to garner the support and participation of land owners in the development of the Corporate Centre. As a result of development taking place over a period of time, the public realm will evolve in phases. The success of that phasing will depend on the strength of the design elements and plan components to communicate a sense of place and design intent as they come together to create a unified, yet diverse, contiguous public realm in Vaughan's Corporate Centre.