

**COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
STEELES AVENUE CORRIDOR – JANE TO KEELE
FILE NO. 15.90**

P.2007.17

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

THAT the Community Improvement Plan for the lands subject to OPA 620, BE ADOPTED.

Economic Impact

The Plan has been budgeted within the Policy Planning Department's 2007 Operating Budget. Development of the lands that are subject to OPA 620 and identified as a Community Improvement Area will have a positive impact upon the City of Vaughan in terms of new development, assessment and job opportunities. The development policies envisioned by OPA 620 will also help to justify the extension of the Spadina subway into Vaughan, with many attendant economic benefits. The CIP will assist the implementation of OPA 620.

Communications Plan

Notification of the availability of the Plan was placed on the City Page in the Vaughan Citizen on May 3, 2007 and a courtesy notice was mailed out to those on the existing OPA 620 circulation list. The draft Community Improvement Plan was made available to the public and was posted on the City's website on May 8, 2007, 20 days prior to the Public Hearing.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the Community Improvement Plan, prepared pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning Act, in order to facilitate the implementation of the development vision and policy framework established by OPA 620.

Background - Analysis and Options

Background

- In October, 2002, Council retained a consulting team led by the firm 'Urban Strategies Inc.' to conduct the Steeles Corridor – Jane to Keele – Secondary Plan Study.
- On May 29, 2006, a Public Hearing was held respecting draft OPA 620, a secondary plan consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Steeles Corridor – Jane to Keele – Secondary Plan Study.
- On June 26, 2006, Vaughan Council adopted OPA 620.
- On October 24, 2006, the Region of York approved OPA 620.
- A number of landowners have appealed OPA 620 to the Ontario Municipal Board since the approval of OPA 620.
- On February 5, 2007, at a Committee of the Whole, a report was presented explaining the intent and requirements of the Provincial legislation in regards to designating lands as Community Improvement Project Areas and the appropriateness of applying this to the subject area of OPA 620.
- On February 12, 2007 By-law Number 54-2007 was passed designating the OPA 620 area as a Community Improvement Project Area.

- On May 3, 2007, notice of public hearing was published in the City Page. On May 8, 2007, the draft Community Improvement Plan for Steeles Avenue Corridor was made available to the public and posted onto the City's website.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Location

The Community Improvement Plan area is bounded by Steeles Avenue on the south, Jane Street on the west, Keele Street on the east, and the hydro corridor on the north.

Existing Uses

From west to east, the lands subject to OPA 620 include the following uses:

- a vacant site that has approval to develop a mausoleum/crematorium
- a stormwater management pond on Steeles Avenue owned by the City of Vaughan
- the United Parcel Service (UPS) distribution facility
- York Region's vacant 5 acre site acquired for a transit terminal/commuter facility
- a vacant parcel owned by the Glen Corporation
- four older employment buildings
- vacant lands owned by Steeles-Keele Investments Ltd., including a recently-built, 4-storey office building on the northwest corner of Keele Street and Steeles Avenue West.

On the north side of the OPA 620 lands is the Hydro One transmission corridor that is owned by the Province of Ontario. South of Steeles Avenue is the York University campus, and Black Creek Pioneer Village.

Provincial Policy

The Province's Places To Grow Plan, 2006, strongly supports development of more compact communities at transit-supportive densities, requiring compact urban form in conjunction with intensification efforts, to be coordinated with transit services and infrastructure. Municipalities are obliged to delineate urban growth centres in their official plans, and to use infrastructure investment to promote intensification. OPA 620 correctly anticipated the direction of Provincial policy through its policy framework which is consistent with and strongly supportive of the Places To Grow Plan.

Regional Official Plan

As the upper tier planning document that provides the framework for achieving the Region's urban structure, the Secondary Plan must conform to the York Region Official Plan (ROP). The ROP currently designates the amendment area as a Regional Corridor. The ROP includes policies in Section 5.4. – "Corridors" encouraging area municipalities to comprehensively examine such areas to provide opportunities for mixed use and higher densities.

In approving OPA 620, York Region advised that OPA 620 is consistent with and supportive of the Region's OPA 43, with the following commentary: "OPA 620 exemplifies the Region's Centres and Corridors policies. The Secondary Plan facilitates the development of higher density office/commercial and residential uses in a compact urban built form and will help support higher order rapid transit infrastructure and, specifically, the extension of the Spadina subway."

Official Plan Amendment 620

The OPA 620 lands are designated as "Transit Core", "Transit Transition", and "Corridor" by OPA 620, and are subject to appeals to the OMB. OPA 620 envisions a compact form of development

that includes high-density residential, office and mixed-use buildings with street-related retail. OPA 620 also provides for a subway station, and associated transit facilities, with a 3500-car parking lot to be located in the hydro corridor to the north. Development will include a grid network of local roads, and a primary east-west road along the north side of the lands, connecting Jane Street to Keele Street. This road may be partially located within the hydro corridor, and will be the subject of a Class Environmental Assessment to be initiated by the City in the near future. OPA 620 permits development densities of 4.0 FSI on and around the subway station, 2.5 FSI within a 10-minute walking distance of the station, and 1.5 FSI at greater distances from the station. South of Steeles Avenue, the secondary plan for York University is now in preparation and is expected to reflect a similar transit-supportive development vision complementing OPA 620.

One of the main objectives of OPA 620 is to provide a high level of support for public transit service by locating the highest densities in close proximity to the subway station on the planned Spadina subway extension. The subway station is located on the north side of Steeles Avenue within the proposed CIPA. Station facilities include a passenger pick-up and drop-off, a bus terminal and commuter parking within the hydro corridor. The environmental assessments for the subway extension (TTC/Toronto and York Region) have been approved. Construction is expected to start in 2008.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS: IMPLEMENTING OPA 620

Within the lands subject to OPA 620, there are a number of issues associated with the presence of existing development, servicing and road infrastructure requirements, land ownership and development phasing, which need to be addressed to enable the transformation of the area.

Under Section 28 of the Planning Act, areas which display any or all of the following conditions may be designated Community Improvement Project Areas:

- inadequate municipal infrastructure, including piped services, roads and streetscapes, public parking facilities and/or stormwater management facilities;
- inadequate community services such as social services, public recreational/cultural facilities, and public open spaces;
- building and/or property deterioration to the extent that it negatively affects the overall image of the area;
- development at densities that are too low to support the planned transit facilities; and
- site contamination levels that require environmental site remediation prior to development.

Section 28 offers municipalities a variety of tools intended to facilitate development and redevelopment in keeping with municipal planning objectives. Under Section 28, municipalities are empowered to engage in the following activities:

- acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement activities;
- construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan;
- sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land and any buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan;
- make grants or loans to the registered owners or the assessed owners to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of developing or rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan;

In addition, effective January 1, 2007, Bill 51 has expanded the scope of this legislation to permit the following:

- Allow municipalities to include new building construction related to energy efficient uses of lands, buildings, structures and facilities within the costs of a Community Improvement Plan;
- Allow municipalities to register grant or loan agreements on the title of the land so municipalities can increase their ability to enforce agreements, and developers can increase their ability to secure upfront financing for their projects; and
- Allow upper-tier municipalities to participate in lower-tier community improvement grant or loan programs that would increase lower-tier capacity to stimulate private sector development activities through their financing programs.

Also, the *Planning Act* now allows upper tier municipalities to adopt Community Improvement Plans for matters which have been prescribed in Ontario Regulation 550/06, to include infrastructure (which includes communication systems, electric power systems, transportation corridors and facilities, waste management and water, wastewater and stormwater works and associated facilities), land and buildings within and adjacent to existing or planned transit corridors that have the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed use development and redevelopment and affordable housing.

The Community Improvement Plan for the OPA 620 lands provides the City with the opportunity to utilize the full array of incentives and other measures afforded under Section 28, to facilitate development in keeping with the new transit-supportive vision of OPA 620.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with Vaughn 2007, Sections 4 (Planning and Managing Growth); Section 3 (Transportation and Transit Infrastructure), and Section 3.2.1, which states: "Support the Region of York and other agencies to ensure higher order transit".

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

The Community Improvement Plan will assist in the implementation of OPA 620, and support public transit ridership on the Spadina subway extension, and on Steeles Avenue, a Regional road and Regional Corridor identified in the York Region Official Plan.

Conclusion

OPA 620 is consistent with Regional and Provincial policies. The Community Improvement Plan will give the City the necessary tools to ensure that the vision and the policies in OPA 620 are implemented.

Attachments

1. Location Map
2. Community Improvement Plan (Mayor and Members of Council ONLY)

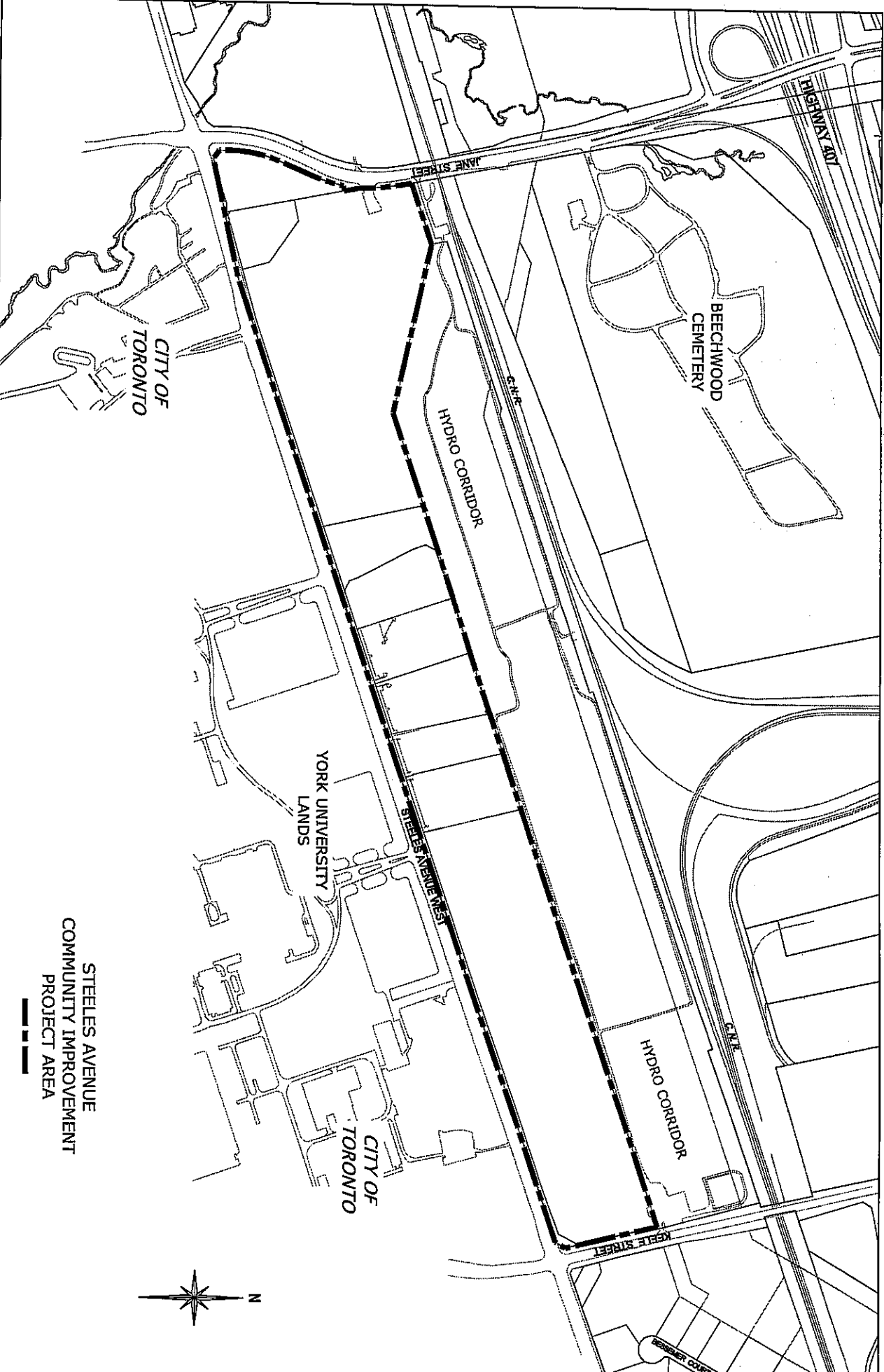
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Respectfully submitted,

JOHN ZIPAY
Commissioner of Planning

DIANA BIRCHALL
Director of Policy Planning



Location Map

Part of Lot 1,
Concession 6

CITY OF VAUGHAN

M:\Projects\Steeles Avenue Corridor Land Use Study\Report Location Map



The City Above Toronto

Policy Planning Department

Attachment

Not to Scale

May 11, 2007

STEELES AVENUE
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT AREA

