

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) MAY 14, 2002

**WOODLOT FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT STUDY (FOCUS RURAL AREA)
GENERAL PLANNING FILE 15.86**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

1. THAT this report and presentation by the Consultant be RECEIVED for information purposes.
2. THAT the draft Focus Rural Woodlot Functional Assessment Study report, dated May 2002 by AMEC Earth and Environmental Limited, BE RECEIVED.
3. THAT the draft report be made available in advance of the public information meeting to be held in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference for the Study.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the status of the City-Wide Woodlot Functional Assessment Study (Focus Rural Area) and a copy of the draft report prepared by the City's Consultant.

Background

On April 2, 2001, Council approved the amended Terms of Reference (originally approved April 17, 2000) and consultant selection for the Woodlot Functional Assessment Study. The purpose of the Study is to assess and evaluate the remaining woodlands of Vaughan which were not originally evaluated as part of the OPA #400 process.

The Functional Assessment Study has focused on woodlands in the City's rural area and five woodlands within the existing urban area. Woodlands within the communities of Carrville, Vellore, and Woodbridge Expansion Area were evaluated in the Background Report to OPA 400. Similarly, the woodlands in the Kleinburg-Nashville communities were evaluated in the Natural Environment Background Report for OPA 601 (Kleinburg-Nashville Community Plan). The five woodlands evaluated in the urban area are within the Woodbridge Community (OPA 240) and the Employment Area (OPA 450). These tableland woodlands were included in the study area as they are in private ownership and planning approvals have not been granted.

A portion of the study area is subject to the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*. The report will be amended to reflect the provisions of the plan, pursuant to the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act* with regard to terrestrial resource identification, significance, and protection. As part of the City's review, the draft report will also be revised to be consistent with the recently released *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*, Ontario Regulation 140/02.

Study Process

AMEC Earth and Environmental Limited was retained to conduct the City-Wide Woodlot Functional Assessment Study. The field work component of the study has been completed, and the draft report has been submitted to the City. Input has been received from York Region and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, which is included in the draft report.

The results of the study are contained in the draft report attached to this report. The report maps the subject woodlands and identifies their functional significance (i.e low, moderate, high).

The Terms of Reference for the study included a Public Information Meeting to be held, at which the consultant will present the findings of the study. Following this meeting, staff will report back to Committee of the Whole with a finalized report.

The Study will provide the functional assessment evaluation required in OPA 600 for the Rural and Employment Areas, where woodlots have not previously been evaluated. This information will assist the City in the review of development applications on sites that contain or are adjacent to woodlots.

The findings of the study would also provide the basis for future actions that the City may choose to implement, aimed at protecting significant woodlots. These actions could possibly include amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, recognition of significant woodlots in future secondary plans, and also guide decisions regarding acquisition. Before proceeding with any of these actions, Council would need to consider the options available and the implications of implementing measures to protect significant woodlots.

Conclusion

The draft report, Woodlot Functional Assessment Study, has been prepared by the City's consultant, AMEC Earth and Environment Limited, and being forwarded to Council to be received. In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Study, a public information meeting is to be scheduled to present the findings of the study. Following the public information meeting, Staff will be reporting back to the Committee of the Whole on the draft report and any further actions required.

Should the Committee concur with this, the recommendation should be adopted.

Attachments

1. Study Area
2. Draft Report--Focus Rural Area Woodlot Functional Assessment Study (Councillors Only)

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Respectfully submitted,

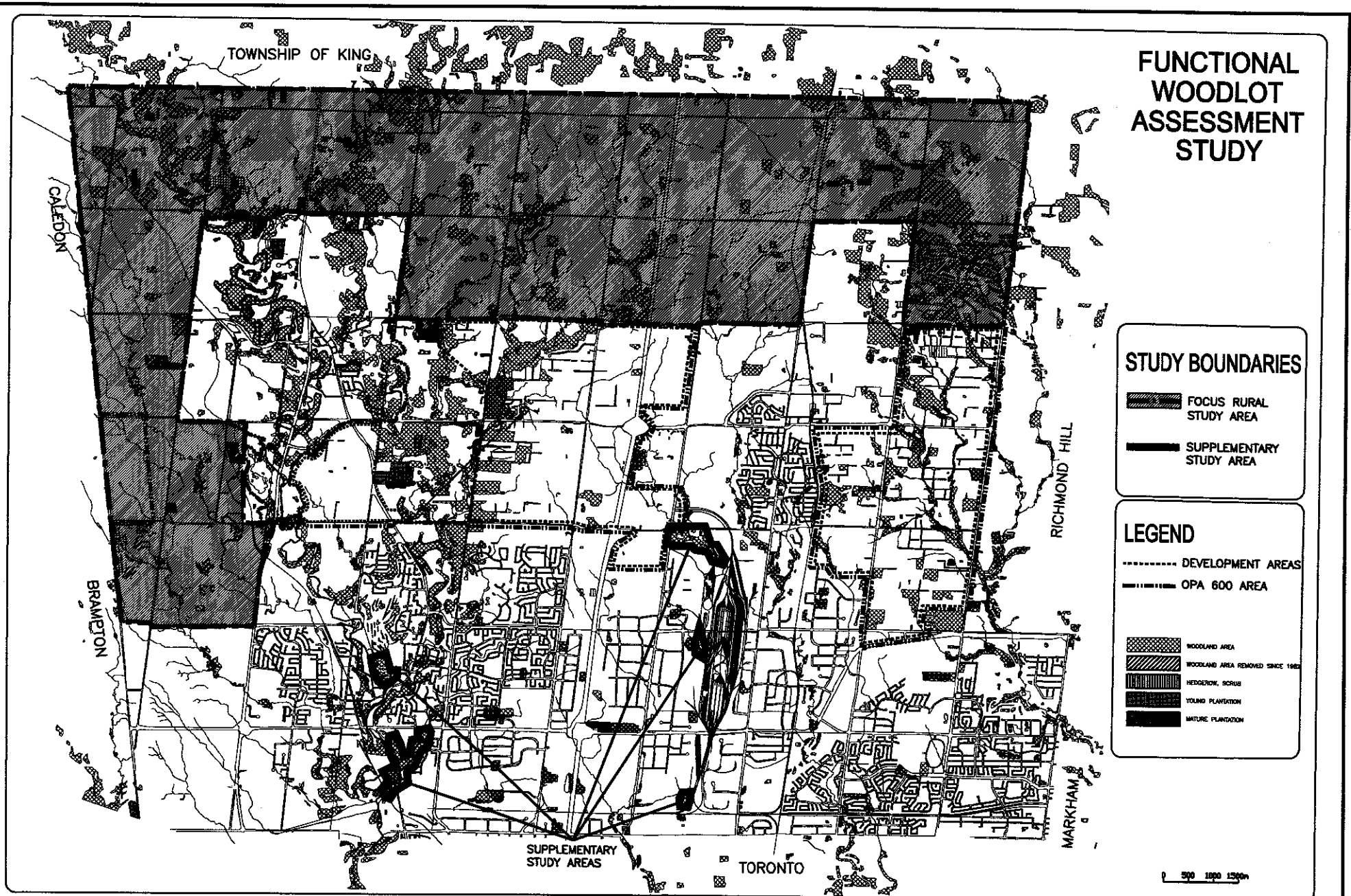
MICHAEL DeANGELIS
Commissioner of Planning

JOANNE R. ARBOUR
Director of Community Planning



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FUNCTIONAL WOODLOT ASSESSMENT STUDY



STUDY BOUNDARIES

-  FOCUS RURAL STUDY AREA
-  SUPPLEMENTARY STUDY AREA

LEGEND

-  DEVELOPMENT AREAS
-  OPA 600 AREA
-  WOODLAND AREA
-  WOODLAND AREA REMOVED SINCE 1985
-  HEDGEROW, SCRUB
-  YOUNG PLANTATION
-  MATURE PLANTATION



APPLICANT:

ATTACHMENT '1'
 FUNCTIONAL WOODLOT
 ASSESSMENT STUDY
 CITY OF VAUGHAN PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FILE #
 15.86
 REPORT #

LOCATION:
 DATE: 03-28-2002
 SCALE:
 NOT TO SCALE