

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE JUNE 17, 2002**

### **STEELES AVENUE CORRIDOR LAND USE REVIEW JANE STREET TO KEELE STREET FILE 15.90**

#### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

That Staff initiate the consultant selection process for the “Steeles Avenue Corridor Land Use Review – Jane Street to Keele Street” on the basis of the draft Terms of Reference, which form Attachment No. 2 to this report;

That funding for the study to be undertaken in accordance with the upset limit established in the approved 2002 Capital Budget (Project 9810 – 2, \$130,000.00); and

That the draft Terms of Reference be finalized subject to final Staff review.

#### **Purpose**

To obtain direction from Council to proceed with the “Steeles Avenue Corridor Land Use Review – Jane Street to Keele Street” on the basis of the draft Terms of Reference, which form Attachment No. 2 to this report.

#### **Background - Analysis and Options**

The primary study area for the “Steeles Avenue Corridor Land Use Review” is bounded by Steeles Avenue on the south and the CN Rail York Subdivision on the north; and by Jane Street on the west and Keele Street on the east. (See Attachment No. 1)

#### **Basis for the Study**

Steeles Avenue is one of the most significant roads in the Greater Toronto Area. In addition to its role as an important traffic artery, it also serves as the boundary between the City of Toronto on the south and the City of Vaughan on the north. As such, the public gains its first impressions of the City of Vaughan when using Steeles Avenue. Therefore, it is important to ensure that development along Steeles Avenue maintains the highest standards possible.

The subject lands are primarily designated “Employment Area” by OPA No. 450. However, permission for greater densities and a wider variety of uses such as retail and residential, may be warranted. This has been recognized by OPA No. 529 (Higher Order Transit – Corridor Protection Study), which adds a policy to OPA No. 450, which allows the City, at a time deemed appropriate by Council, to initiate a land use study for this area.

The lands on the north side of Steeles Avenue, between Jane Street on the west and Keele Street on the east have a number of attributes, which make them unique in the Greater Toronto Area. These include:

- York University is located on the south side of Steeles Avenue, directly opposite the primary study area. York University is one of Canada’s largest universities and it is currently undergoing substantial growth which will see its student and faculty population rise from 45,000 to 50,000 over the next five years;
- In addition to its academic precinct, York University will be developing portions of the campus for other purposes. A secondary plan for York University has been approved by the City of

Toronto, which permits a range of development opportunities on the south side of Steeles Avenue. It is expected that York University will be reviewing its development options along Steeles Avenue, in the near term, to take into account the potential for upgraded transit services to York University. In addition, the City of Toronto is now in the midst of a major Official Plan Review;

- There are number of on-going rapid transit initiatives being considered at this time which, if implemented, will influence the land use and development potential of the primary study area. These include:
  - The Spadina Subway Extension from Downsview Station to a Steeles Avenue Transit/Commuter Gateway Facility (commuter parking lot, bus terminal, subway station) on the north side of Steeles Avenue. The Region of York has just purchased the site for this facility. A subway alignment has been identified by York University through the campus to the Steeles Avenue station. Beyond Steeles Avenue, the City of Vaughan and York Region have preserved a subway alignment into the Vaughan Corporate Centre at Highway 7. Direction is now being sought to prepare the required Environmental Assessment for a subway extension to Steeles Avenue;
  - Recognizing that the subway extension may be a longer-term solution, consideration is being given to a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service that would link the Downsview Subway Station with York University, the Steeles Avenue Transit/Commuter Gateway Facility and the Vaughan Corporate Centre. Such an interim service would build ridership as a precursor to the subway extension.
  - York Region has now selected private sector partner (York Consortium 2002) to initiate a Public-Private Partnership to provide rapid transit services in York Region. A connection to the Downsview Subway Station from the Vaughan Corporate Centre, as identified in the Region's Transportation Master Plan and the Regional Official Plan, is a critical element of the system.
- The provision of transit and transit supportive development in the study area will serve to provide additional justification for the extension of rapid transit services to the Vaughan Corporate Centre, consistent with the objectives of the Vaughan and Region of York Official Plans.
- The primary study area has excellent access to the Provincial Highway System. Full interchanges with Highway No. 407ETR are located one kilometer to the north on both Jane and Keele Streets. A partial interchange with Highway No. 400 is located one kilometer to the west on Steeles Avenue. York Region, in its Transportation Master Plan has identified an upgrade to a full interchange as a project which should be pursued as part of its 5 Year Action Plan.
- The primary study area is unique along Steeles Avenue in that there are substantial amounts of land that remain undeveloped. This provides an opportunity to explore innovative land use and development solutions that might not be available in a purely redevelopment scenario.
- The subject lands are designated "Employment Area" by OPA No. 450. OPA No. 450 was first adopted in 1994 and approved in 1996. OPA No. 450 is primarily aimed at providing for industrial and service uses. While this may still be appropriate, in some areas, other opportunities may be available, as were identified in OPA 529. This could include residential, commercial and mixed-use forms of development. Based on the changing context, a review of the land use policies for this area is warranted. This would also allow for the consideration of more transit supportive policies, as was suggested in OPA No. 529.

The unique locational attributes of the primary study area, its proximity to a growing and evolving York University, the opportunities offered by the prospect of higher order transit and the area's current state of development all reinforce the need to ensure that its governing land use policies are contemporary and pro-active. The convergence of these factors clearly speaks to the need to review and update the City of Vaughan's Official Plan policies and zoning standards for this area.

### Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the study include:

- i. To obtain a detailed understanding of the current character and function of the study area and the forces that will shape its future;
- ii. To assess the potential for additional land uses and options for increased densities;
- iii. To identify any required improvements to the road network and public transit system;
- iv. To establish urban design standards and guidelines, for the public and private realm, which will guide the development of study area and assist in the evolution of a comprehensive and co-ordinated treatment of built form and streetscape in the corridor;
- v. To incorporate the land use, transportation and urban design elements into a comprehensive urban design plan, which will provide the basis for an evolving long-term vision of the area;
- vi. To ensure that such development is pedestrian and transit supportive and will foster the introduction of higher order transit services to Steeles Avenue and ultimately, to the Vaughan Corporate Centre;
- vii. To work with the Region of York, the City of Toronto, York University, the TRCA/Black Creek Pioneer Village and other stakeholders to ensure that Steeles Avenue, between Jane and Keele Streets, evolves into an attractive and functional street, which will enhance the image of the respective municipalities and the university;
- viii. To identify the appropriate means of implementing the vision through such measures as official plan policies, amendments to the zoning by-law, urban design guidelines or by such other means as may be identified in the study.

### Study Process

A three step study process is established by the Terms of Reference.

In the first phase, the consultant will be required to undertake an inventory and assessment of the study area taking into account a number of factors. This includes existing land uses, external influences on future development, constraints and opportunities and economic potential. This would result in a report at the end of Phase 1 that would give a detailed understanding of the study area and the factors that will influence its future.

In Phase 2 the vision for the study area's new planning framework will be developed. It will be based on four linked elements, which will be examined concurrently. These include: Land use and density; transportation and transit; urban design; and on-going public and stakeholder input. The objective will be to integrate the results of the land use, transportation and urban design studies, into an urban design plan for the primary study area, which will illustrate how the area can evolve over a defined timeframe. The urban design plan and the supporting reports will form the basis for new policies, standards and guidelines, which will be implemented in Phase 3.

In the final phase, the recommendations resulting from Phase 2 will be implemented through, but not necessarily limited to, such actions as amendments to the official plan and zoning by-law and Council approval of the urban design guidelines. Preparation of the implementing documents will be the responsibility of City Staff.

### **Conclusion**

Staff are of the opinion that it is now time to initiate this study. As previously noted, the concept of undertaking a land use study of this area was identified in OPA No. 529. A number of factors are now in the process of coming together, which provide the necessary triggers. The primary considerations are the advancements in the planning of rapid transit improvements to this area and the prospect of York University reviewing its land use options on the south side of Steeles Avenue. Therefore it is an opportune time for the City of Vaughan to initiate its examination of this area.

Should Council concur, then the recommendation contained in the "Recommendation" section of this report should be adopted.

### **Attachments**

1. Location Map
2. Draft Terms of Reference

### **Report prepared by:**

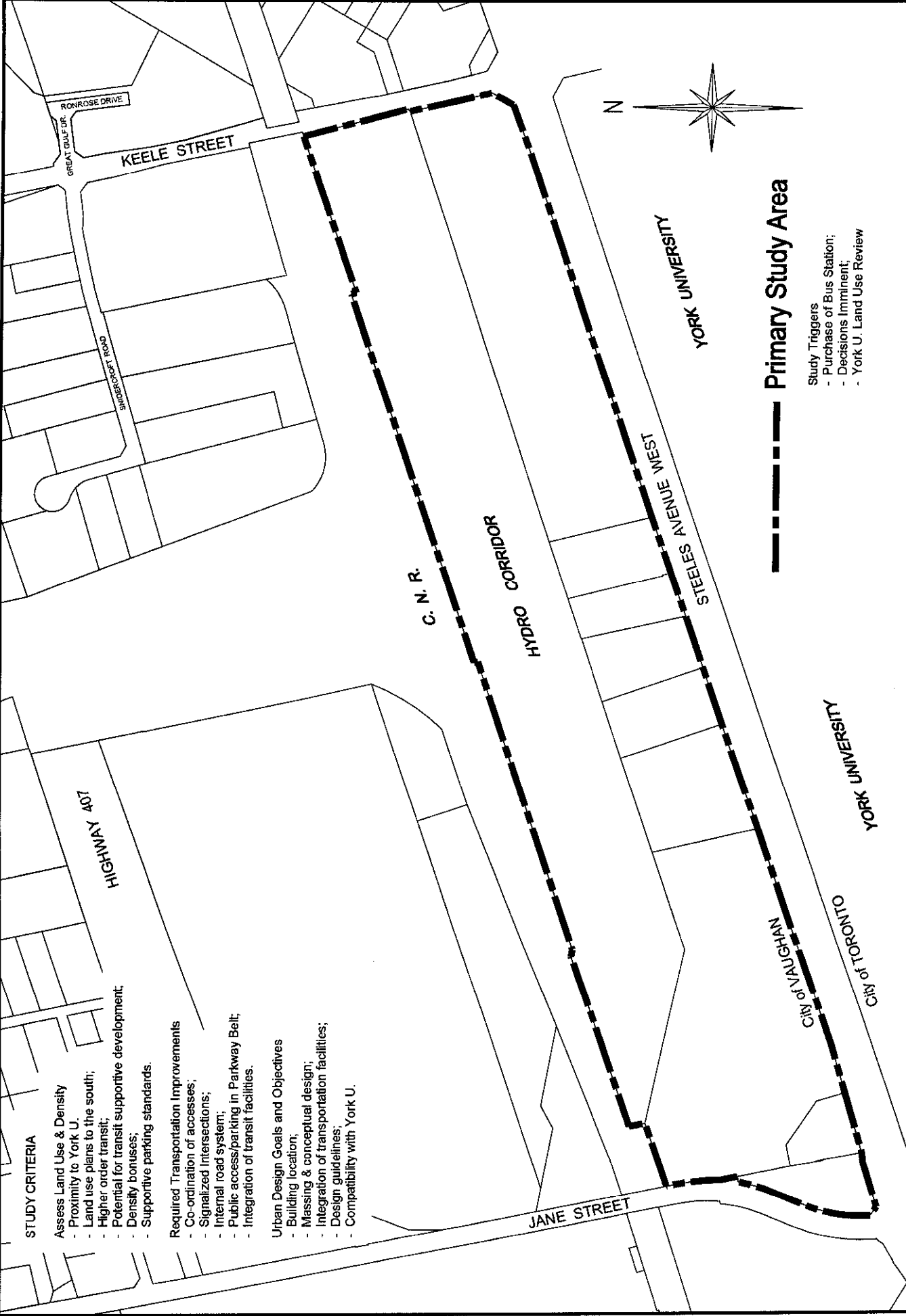
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Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DeANGELIS  
Commissioner of Planning

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**STUDY CRITERIA**

- Assess Land Use & Density
- Proximity to York U.
  - Land use plans to the south;
  - Higher order transit;
  - Potential for transit supportive development;
  - Density bonuses;
  - Supportive parking standards.

**Required Transportation Improvements**

- Co-ordination of accesses;
- Signalized intersections;
- Internal road system;
- Public access/parking in Parkway Belt;
- Integration of transit facilities.

**Urban Design Goals and Objectives**

- Building location;
- Massing & conceptual design;
- Integration of transportation facilities;
- Design guidelines;
- Compatibility with York U.

**Primary Study Area**

- Study Triggers
- Purchase of Bus Station;
  - Decisions Imminent;
  - York U. Land Use Review

**ATTACHMENT '1'  
LOCATION MAP**

CITY OF VAUGHAN

NOT TO SCALE

**STEELES AVENUE CORRIDOR  
LAND USE REVIEW  
PRIMARY STUDY AREA**

LOCATION: LOTS 1-3, CON. 4

DATE: APRIL 10, 2002

## **ATTACHMENT NO. 2**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **FOR THE**

#### **STEELES AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY JANE STREET TO KEELE STREET**

#### **IN THE CITY OF VAUGHAN**

**JUNE 2002**

**DRAFT – June 17, 2002**

#### **The Study Area**

The primary study area for the "Steeles Avenue Corridor Study" is bounded by Steeles Avenue on the south and the CN Rail York Subdivision on the north; and by Jane Street on the west and Keele Street on the east. Consideration will need to be given to a number of external forces that will influence the future of the primary study area. These will include the impact of the planning and development policies of the City of Toronto, the plans of York University, the introduction of public roads within the study area, transit improvements under the auspices of the City of Toronto and the Region of York and the planning policies of the City of Vaughan and York Region, beyond the primary study area.

#### **Goals and Objectives**

- a) To obtain a detailed understanding of the current character and function of the study area and the forces that will shape its future;
- b) To assess the potential for additional land uses and options for increased densities;
- c) To identify any required improvements to the road network and public transit system;
- d) To establish urban design standards and guidelines, for the public and private realm, which will guide the development of the study area and assist in the evolution of a comprehensive and co-ordinated treatment of built form and streetscape in the corridor;
- e) To incorporate the land use, transportation and urban design elements into a comprehensive urban design plan, which will provide the basis for an evolving long-term vision of the area;
- f) To ensure that such development is pedestrian and transit supportive and will foster the introduction of higher order transit services to Steeles Avenue and ultimately, to the Vaughan Corporate Centre;
- g) To work with the Region of York, the City of Toronto, York University, the TRCA/Black Creek Pioneer Village, and other stakeholders to ensure that Steeles Avenue, between Jane and Keele Streets, evolves into an attractive and functional street, which will enhance the image of the respective municipalities and the university;

- h) To identify the appropriate means of implementing the vision through such measures as official plan policies, amendments to the zoning by-law, urban design guidelines or by such other means as may be identified in the study.

## **The Study Process**

### **Phase 1 – Inventory and Assessment of the Current Situation**

The consultant shall undertake an inventory and assessment of the study area taking into account:

- a) Existing Land Uses;
- b) External Influences on future development (e.g policy, land use, transportation)
- c) Architecture and Urban Design;
- d) Policy Structure – Official Plan, Zoning By-law
- e) Constraint Areas including:
  - Environmental (e.g. noise, servicing, soil contamination)
  - Transportation and Traffic, focusing on traffic volumes, intersection capacity, bottlenecks and site access;
  - Existing Land Uses.
- f) Future of existing uses;
- g) Economic Potential;
- h) Identification of Areas of Constraint and Opportunity.

### **Deliverable:**

1. A Phase 1 report that identifies the character of the primary study area in accordance with the above cited criteria.

### **Phase 2 – Developing the Vision for a New Planning Framework**

The new vision for the primary study area will be based on four linked elements, which will be examined concurrently. These include: Land use and density; transportation and transit; urban design; and on-going public and stakeholder input. The objective will be to integrate the results of the land use, transportation and urban design studies, into an urban design plan for the primary study area, which will illustrate how the area can evolve over a defined timeframe. The urban design plan and the supporting reports will form the basis for new policies, standards and guidelines, which will be implemented in Phase 3. The work will be based on, but not be limited to, the following criteria.

#### a) Land Use and Density

The consultant will assess and make recommendations on the potential for additional land uses and increased density options for the study area, while taking into account:

- i) Economic and market opportunities;
- ii) Proximity to a major university;
- iii) The land use plans for the south side of Steeles Avenue in the City of Toronto and as may be proposed by York University;
- iv) The availability of higher order transit services and facilities;

- v) The provision of transit supportive development densities and land use flexibility, particularly within a 700 metre radius of transit stations or terminals, with further supportive densities in the 700 – 1000 metre catchment area of stations;
- vi) Opportunities for density bonusing;
- vii) Parking standards supportive of transit usage; and
- viii) Protection of existing uses that have a long-term commitment to the area.

b) Transportation and Transit

The consultant will assess and make recommendations on the required improvements to the road network and public transit system, while taking into account:

- i) The level of service and improvements as required to meet projected growth;
- ii) Co-ordination of access points to the arterial road system including private accesses to Steeles Avenue, Jane and Keele Streets;
- iii) The location of signalized intersections;
- iv) The development of an internal road network, including opportunities for public road and sidewalk access to commuter parking and development parcels paralleling Steeles Avenue, within or adjacent to the Parkway Belt;
- v) The location of transit facilities and their integration with the connecting public and private road and pedestrian networks;
- vi) The creation of a pedestrian friendly environment throughout the study area;
- vii) Inter-jurisdictional issues. Steeles Avenue is a City of Toronto road, while Keele and Jane Streets are Region of York roads.

c) Urban Design

The consultant will assess and make recommendations on the required urban design criteria, necessary to implement the development of the study area, while taking into account:

- i) The on-going transition of the study area from a suburban area to a transit based urban place;
- ii) Compatibility with the development of the York University lands and Black Creek Pioneer Village to the south and the potential for comprehensive streetscape treatments along Steeles Avenue, Jane Street and Keele Streets and at strategic intersections;
- iii) Treatment of public transit facilities on publicly owned lands (stations, commuter parking, bus stops etc.) and integration with the pedestrian and vehicular systems;
- iv) Detailed elements including:
  - Building locations and setbacks;
  - Building massing and conceptual design;
  - Streetscaping, including street furniture, utility locations, treatment of daylighting triangles;
  - Pedestrian and vehicular access points and circulation;
  - Site planning and organization;
  - Relationships of buildings to adjacent buildings, streets and exterior areas;
  - Corner lot and mid-block designs;
  - Shops, store fronts and entrance locations;
  - Design standards for road rights-of-way;
  - Location, configuration and treatment of parking;
  - Treatment of service areas and fire routes;



- Connections to public open space.

d) Public and Stakeholder Input

In developing the vision, the consultant will be responsible for undertaking a public and stakeholders' consultation process. This process will be documented in the workplan. In addition to the general public, input and co-operation from the following stakeholders will be necessary:

- i) York Region and York Region Transit;
- ii) City of Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission;
- iii) York University;
- iv) The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority/Black Creek Pioneer Village;
- v) Landowners in the primary study area;
- vi) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Hydro One;
- vii) Black Creek Transportation Management Association;
- viii) Ministry of Transportation.

It is expected that a Technical Advisory Committee will be formed to assist in obtaining and co-ordinating the required input.

**Deliverables:**

1. Reports setting out the findings, conclusions and recommendations (including changes to policies and standards) resulting from the land use and density, transportation and transit and urban design studies, taking into account the public and stakeholder input.
2. A report documenting the public and stakeholder participation process;
3. An urban design plan and guidelines illustrating the results of the studies, showing the evolution of the primary study area over an appropriate timeframe.

**Phase 3 – Implementing the Vision**

In this phase, the recommendations resulting from Phase 2 will be implemented through, but not necessarily limited to, the following actions:

- i) Amendments to the Official Plan;
- ii) Amendments to the Zoning By-law;
- iii) Council approval of Urban Design Guidelines;
- iv) Any other measure recommended by the consultant deemed to be appropriate by the City.

Unless provided for specifically in the final report and agreed to by the City, implementation of the recommendations will be the responsibility of City Staff. The consultant will be required to remain available to review the amending documents prior to their adoption/enactment by Council. In addition, the consultant will be responsible for defending its recommendations at the Ontario Municipal Board, should any of the resulting documents be appealed.

**Deliverables**

1. A consolidated study document including all the component elements from Phases 1 and 2.
2. The implementing documents, based on the consultants recommendations, as prepared by City Staff.