

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) FEBRUARY 25, 2003

**CITY-OWNED LANDS
EAST OF PINE VALLEY DRIVE/SOUTH OF HIGHWAY #407
LAND USE REPORT AND REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT TRAFFIC CAPACITY REPORT
LOT 2 AND 3, CONCESSION 6
FILE: 15.52.1**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning and Commissioner of Engineering & Public Works recommend:

1. That this report BE RECEIVED for information purposes.
2. That Staff be directed to submit an application to the Province to request deletion of the subject lands from the Parkway Belt West Plan.
3. That a Public Hearing be scheduled to consider City-initiated applications to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit development of the subject lands for Employment Uses.
4. That Staff be directed:
 - a) to proceed with obtaining either additional right-of-way or fee simple of the necessary lands from Hydro One to provide for the proposed road alignment and intersection at Pine Valley Drive over Hydro One lands;
 - b) to pursue possible use of Hydro One lands for parking and/or storm water management facilities;
 - c) to pursue with the Management Board Secretariat (MBS), Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) and Hydro One, the possibility of using their lands for recreational purposes.
5.
 - a) That a parks and recreation master plan be prepared for the existing woodlot, stormwater management facilities, MBS lands and other lands as may be directed by Council, which addresses the following:
 - passive public recreational uses, such as trails, picnic areas, etc.
 - long-term preservation and management of the woodlot
 - wildlife protection and wetland enhancements
 - environmental education
 - signage
 - integration of these features with the urban design fabric of any future industrial development
 - public access, vehicular and pedestrian, and
 - b) That funds for this master plan be included in the 2004 capital budget deliberations.

Background - Analysis and Options

Location

The City-owned lands are located east of Pine Valley Drive, north of the Hydro One Corridor, south of Highway #407 being part of Lots 2 & 3, Concession 6, City of Vaughan (Attachment #1).

The 26.7 hectares (66 acre) parcel contains approximately 13.8 hectares (34 acres) of potentially developable lands. The remainder of the lands include the Emery Creek Storm Water Pond (a quality and quantity pond for industrial lands north and south of Hwy 407), valleylands, and a 3.5 hectare woodlot. Most of the lands are vacant, and contain six temporary mini soccer fields.

Background

Following the Committee of the Whole meeting of July 2, 1996 (Report no.17, Item 23), Council resolved:

“Any decision on the request of Mr. Carlo Baldassara to purchase 10 acres to be deferred until such time as a comprehensive planning report is completed on the potential for industrial or other higher or better uses of/for the entire 34 acres of developable land and more particularly that the matter of the western access to Pine Valley Drive is resolved. Also, upon completion of the planning and other studies, staff to report back to Council with recommendations as to potential sale or lease”.

Subsequently, Vaughan staff commenced a review of these lands, identifying the primary issues relating to a possible Pine Valley Drive access and/or a connection to Aviva Park Drive. Initially, Staff produced preliminary industrial development concepts for discussion. The Region of York advised that a traffic impact study would be required to address the feasibility of an access servicing these lands, the potential for signalization and recommended for intersection design, such as turning lane requirements.

Vaughan Council, on November 9, 1998, ratified the following Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommendation:

- “1) That the presentation by the Manager of Policy & Special Studies, be received.
- 2) That Staff be requested to pursue signalized access to Pine Valley Drive with MTO for the highest and best use of the lands, being industrial/commercial.
- 3) That Staff discuss with Ontario Hydro (now Hydro One) possible use of their lands for parking and/or storm water management.
- 4) That Staff assess Aviva Park Drive access; and
- 5) That Staff in consultation with Council proceed with interested groups and shareholders after a response is received from MTO and prior to a final decision by Council.”

Land Use Control

a) Official Plan

The lands are designated “Special Complementary Use Area” by the Parkway Belt West Plan. In addition to uses permitted in Section 5.5.1 of the Plan, some further industrial uses are permitted, subject to a site-specific by-law and site plan agreement. The maximum lot coverage is 20%, exclusive of parking. The industrial uses must meet the following criteria:

- a) no obnoxious sounds, odours, vibrations or fumes
- b) maximum of one storey, except offices which may be two-storeys
- c) all uses enclosed except parking
- d) adequate on-site parking which is landscaped, screened and paved

- e) no outside storage of goods or materials
- f) building sited to secure open space character along PVD and Hwy 407
- g) ample landscaping provided in the areas noted above in (f)
- h) protection of wooded areas, hedgerows and trees
- i) creation of new lots is limited

b) Zoning

The lands are zoned PB2 Parkway Belt Complementary Use by By-law 1-88. The uses permitted are recreational, agricultural, cemetery, mausoleum, columbarium or crematorium, golf course, outdoor institutional use, outdoor recreational use and detached dwelling. A zoning amendment is required to permit the industrial uses permitted by the Official Plan.

c) Amendments to Official Plan and Zoning By-law

A Public Hearing is required for consideration of amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law for the redesignation and rezoning of the subject lands for industrial/commercial use. This process can be simultaneous to the application to the Province for deletion of the subject lands from the Parkway Belt West Plan.

Transportation Component

a) UMA Study

UMA Engineering Ltd. was retained by the City in 1997 to complete a Pine Valley Drive Access Study. The focus of this study was to review possible access alternatives to the site and analyze their merits. Royal LePage Real Estate assisted the consultant in the marketability assessment aspects of the access study. The traffic study considered a number of options, including: with and without Pine Valley Drive connection and grade separations of Pine Valley Drive. The study concluded that the only feasible option would be extending Aviva Park Drive through the subject lands to a full-movement intersection with Pine Valley Drive.

In response to the study, the Ministry of Transportation identified a number of geometric design concerns of the proposed intersection at Pine Valley Drive, including: the CNR bridge structure restricting sight distance of northbound traffic on Pine Valley Drive, the stopping sight distance at the proposed intersection, signal warrants, and proximity to the existing Highway 407 ramp.

York Region Transportation and Works Department identified similar concerns, including: the visibility of the traffic signals for vehicles traveling north on Pine Valley Drive, and the operational concerns relating to the close spacing between the bridge and the Highway 407 ramps. The Region requested that further access alternatives be considered.

As a result, UMA Engineering Ltd. completed a supplementary analysis of additional options for providing access to Pine Valley Drive. UMA reconfirmed the original option of extending Aviva Park Drive to connect with Pine Valley Drive between the CN Rail line and the eastbound Highway 407 on-ramp. Subsequently, the Region has provided written approval in principle for this access to Pine Valley Drive.

On March 16, 1998, the Ministry of Transportation indicated that it was prepared to endorse access to the subject lands via an all-moves, signalized intersection at Pine Valley Drive and an extended Aviva Park Drive. This endorsement was contingent upon a further traffic study being submitted, acceptable to MTO, ensuring that this new intersection would function in both the short and long term (when the Hwy 407 transit station is in place), without adversely impacting on the operations of both the Highway 407 ramps and access to and from the transit station. One of the key aspects of the function of new intersections is the limitations on the possible queue length of

the future northbound and southbound left-turn lanes on Pine Valley Drive to the new local road, because of the Highway 407 and CNR bridges.

b) Development Traffic Capacity Report (SRM Associates Inc.)

(i) Original Report

On May 1, 2000, SRM Associates Inc. completed the report "Review of Development Traffic Capacity Report" (RDTCR) to address the following issues identified by MTO:

1. Identify new, development traffic using Weston Road/Aviva Drive access and traffic from existing development using the new Pine Valley Drive access.
2. A traffic signal warrant analysis.
3. Review of traffic signal progression/co-ordination constraints and opportunities given 220m spacing between the new access and Highway 407/Pine Valley Drive eastbound off-ramp intersection.
4. Analysis of the proposed access intersection including future transit station access demand.
5. Verification of field measured stopping sight distance for northbound motorists.
6. Visibility to traffic signal heads for Pine Valley Drive motorists.
7. Timing of the installation of traffic signals.
8. Driver decision/information issues regarding access to Highway 407 via the eastbound on-ramp.
9. Functional design requirements associated with the intersection and in particular, the north/south approaches, e.g. need for acceleration/deceleration lanes or tapers.

At a meeting held on April 1, 2001, Ministry of Transportation staff advised that they required a scaled plan of the proposed road improvements and that trip generation rates be adjusted downward from the conservative rates assumed in the May 2000 report. Subsequently, SRM Associates re-examined a number of assumptions that were assessed in the May 1, 2000 report. On March 7, 2002, SRM submitted a revised RDTC Report that replaced the May 2000 document. Further, utilizing the most recent York Region traffic forecasts, SRM has now updated the March 2002 report to February 2003. The details of this analysis are described below.

(ii) Revised Development Traffic Capacity Report (2003)

The March 2002 RDTCR contained three case scenarios. These were evaluated for traffic impact to assess whether development within the City's zoning framework created adverse traffic impact. Through the refinement of these three cases, in February 2003 two case scenarios were combined to better reflect current zoning. The two scenarios covered a developable land area of 15.8 hectares (39 acres). This is a larger area than is considered to be developable (13.8 hectares, 34 acres), and therefore represents a more conservative estimate than rates likely to be generated by actual development. The proposed development was assumed to generate only a negligible component of pass-by development-generated traffic, notwithstanding the potential for accessory commercial uses.

In summary, the range of uses that would result in acceptable traffic impact are as follows:

- Case 1 (High Scenario) – employment lot coverage of 50%, with a maximum of 5% accessory commercial uses.
- Case 2 (Low Scenario) – employment lot coverage of up to 30%, with up to 30% accessory commercial uses.

These two land use scenarios represent the range of land uses that will result in acceptable traffic operations at the future signalized intersection at Pine Valley Drive. The refinement results differ little from the previous (March 2002) analysis. The existing development on Aviva Park Drive, west of Weston Road, represents as high as 50% lot coverage.

(iii) Conclusions of the Development Traffic Capacity Report

The following are the conclusions of the most recent Development Traffic Capacity Report:

1. Traffic volumes associated with employment land uses up to 50% lot coverage can be accommodated within desired intersection operating parameters without adverse impact to traffic operations on Pine Valley Drive north and south of the proposed intersection. Similarly, employment and accessory commercial land uses (up to 30%) on the 30% of the developable land area without adverse impact to Pine Valley drive can be accommodated.
2. It is now proposed that Aviva Park Drive not interconnect to Weston Road; therefore, the existing development will not add to the traffic generated by the proposed new access to Pine Valley Drive. This change has been made because of MTO requirements.
3. A traffic signal warrant analysis was conducted indirectly through evaluation of the results of the intersection capacity analysis. The levels of service and capacity afforded to the proposed access strongly suggest that proposed development densities cannot be accommodated without installation of a traffic signal control at the proposed intersection on Pine Valley Drive 220m south of the Highway 407 eastbound off ramp intersection.
4. The proposed location of a traffic signal 220m south of the existing ramp terminal intersection will not adversely impact traffic signal progression/co-ordination based on the proposed development density of employment and commercial uses.
5. Operation of the future transit access is independent of the proposed access with respect to intersection capacity. The future transitway access impacts were not introduced as part of the evaluation of the proposed development based on the timing of the transitway proposal, 2021 versus 2011, and the minimal interaction expected between the two sites.
6. Sight distance deficiencies for motorists approaching the site from south of the CN Railway warrants installation of 'traffic signal ahead' warning signs equipped with flashers and a sign tab reading 'Be prepared to Stop'.

7. Sight distance available to left turns existing the proposed site is also insufficient but will be mitigated through the installation of traffic signals concurrent with the first phase of site development.
8. The functional design of intersection improvements required to accommodate the proposed development will be adjusted to eliminate curb land tapers on all approaches, particularly in the vicinity of the Highway 407 on-ramp. The estimated cost of the intersection improvements is \$300,000.

The February 2003 refinements to the RDTCR have been forwarded to Highway 407 ETR, MTO and York Region for review and comment.

(iv) Access to Pine Valley Drive

A redesigned version of the City's existing right-of-way across Hydro One lands appears to be the only option to provide access to the City-owned lands. Staff is in the process of arranging a meeting with Hydro One officials to discuss this option. Staff anticipates that the City will need to obtain either additional right-of-way or fee simple of lands necessary to achieve the required road alignment and intersection at Pine Valley Drive. Once Hydro One requirements are known and, at least, agreement in principle is achieved, City Staff will be in a position to develop detailed plans for the access road alignment (Attach. #2).

Land Use Component

a) Potential Development

Vaughan Council directed "that Staff be requested to pursue signalized access to Pine Valley Drive with MTO for the highest and best use of the lands, being industrial/commercial". The purpose of this component of this report is to evaluate the type and amount of industrial and commercial uses that are both logical and possible for the lands. The limiting factor for any level of development, particularly commercial uses, is the traffic operations of a new signalized intersection of the entrance road at Pine Valley Drive.

The conclusions of the "Review of Development Traffic Capacity Report" support an Official Plan designation of "Prestige Area" and zoning of "EM1- Prestige Employment Area Zone". A site-specific exception would be required to limit the lot coverage and accessory commercial component to satisfy anticipated traffic operations for the new signalized intersection at Pine Valley Drive.

b) Official Plan Amendment 450 (Employment Area Growth and Management Plan)

A "Prestige Area" employment land use designation is normally provided where lands have locational opportunities for activities which require high visual exposure, good accessibility and an attractive working environment such as the subject lands adjacent Highway 407. A wide range of industrial, office, business and civic uses are permitted in the "Prestige Area" designation.

Given its generally high visibility from Highway 407 and Pine Valley Drive, an "Employment Area General" designation is not recommended for these lands. The General Employment uses include a full range of warehousing, storage, operations and transportation uses, including open storage, not considered appropriate in this location.

c) Employment Area Zone (By-law 1-88)

The EM1 Prestige Employment Area Zone, which is an appropriate employment zone category to implement the "Prestige Area" designation of the Official Plan, would permit the following uses as-of-right:

- Employment Use
- Accessory Retail Sales to an Employment Use
- Accessory Office Uses to an Employment Use
- Banquet Hall, in a Single Unit Building
- Bowling Alley
- Business and Professional Offices, not including medical practitioners
- Club, Health Centre
- Convention Centre, Hotel, Motel
- Funeral Home
- Car Brokerage
- Office Building
- Recreational Uses, including a golf driving range and miniature golf course
- Service and Repair Shop.

Given the operational restraints of the Pine Valley intersection, many of these uses could not be accommodated without impeding on its optimal function. Particularly, the high traffic generating uses (such as bowling alley, banquet hall, club/health center, convention center/hotel/motel, and funeral home, would need to be eliminated. A restriction could be placed on the minimum gross floor area of an employment use, to avoid multiple unit buildings. Furthermore, the percentage of commercial uses accessory to permitted uses, would need to be restricted in accordance with the study.

d) Employment Area Land Use Alternatives

Based on the results of the transportation work, basic parameters have been determined upon which a development plan can be prepared. In particular, the location of an intersection of a local access road with Pine Valley Drive is recommended to be in the location of the existing driveway. The local road would approximately follow the current easement across the Hydro One lands, extending into a cul-de-sac over the City-owned lands, with no connection to Aviva Park Drive. The lots should be of significant size to accommodate the larger, single-employment uses.

e) Servicing

Vaughan Engineering has provided the following comments with respect to servicing the subject lands:

The subject lands are located within the service area of Pressure District #5 of the York Water Supply System. The City's requirement for a looped system must be satisfied and detailed water modeling will be required at the subdivision design stage.

A 375 mm sanitary sewer was constructed on Aviva Park Drive to Pine Valley Drive. This sewer can accommodate the subject lands

The subject lands drain to the south. A stormwater management report will be required to address stormwater drainage at a detail design stage. The stormwater management report shall address the conveyance of major and minor flows.

f) Passive Parks and Recreational Uses

The site includes a well-established and healthy woodlot at the southeasterly corner and a naturalized stormwater pond, with both wet and dry features. The pond along with the woodlot has attracted a variety of bird and wildlife species.

As part of the overall development of these lands, consideration should be given to the integration of the stormwater pond and the woodlot with the future urban design fabric of any future industrial development. These features can provide passive recreational opportunities, while ensuring the protection and enhancement of wildlife and the natural environment, as follows:

- passive public recreational uses, such as trails, picnic areas, etc.
- long term preservation and management of the woodlot
- wildlife protection and wetland enhancements
- environmental education
- signage
- use of the MBS/Hydro One corridor land;
- public access, vehicular and pedestrian.

In consultation with Community Planning staff, Parks Department staff suggest that the overall land use plan for the subject lands include the provision for developing a master plan for passive recreation and environmental stewardship of the woodlot, stormwater management pond, MBS lands and any other lands as directed by Council.

Conclusion

This report and accompanying presentation provide a status report of the ongoing review of the development potential for the City-owned lands. Based on the recently completed transportation work responding to MTO's earlier issues, the City is in a position to proceed with the preparation of development options, any negotiations to secure access to the lands, and the applications to amend the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and Parkway Belt West Plan.

Should Committee concur, then the recommendations set out in the "Recommendation" section of this report should be adopted to provide direction to move forward in the this process.

Attachments

1. Location Map - City-owned Lands
2. Intersection configuration - "Aviva Park Drive/Pine Valley Drive

Report prepared by:

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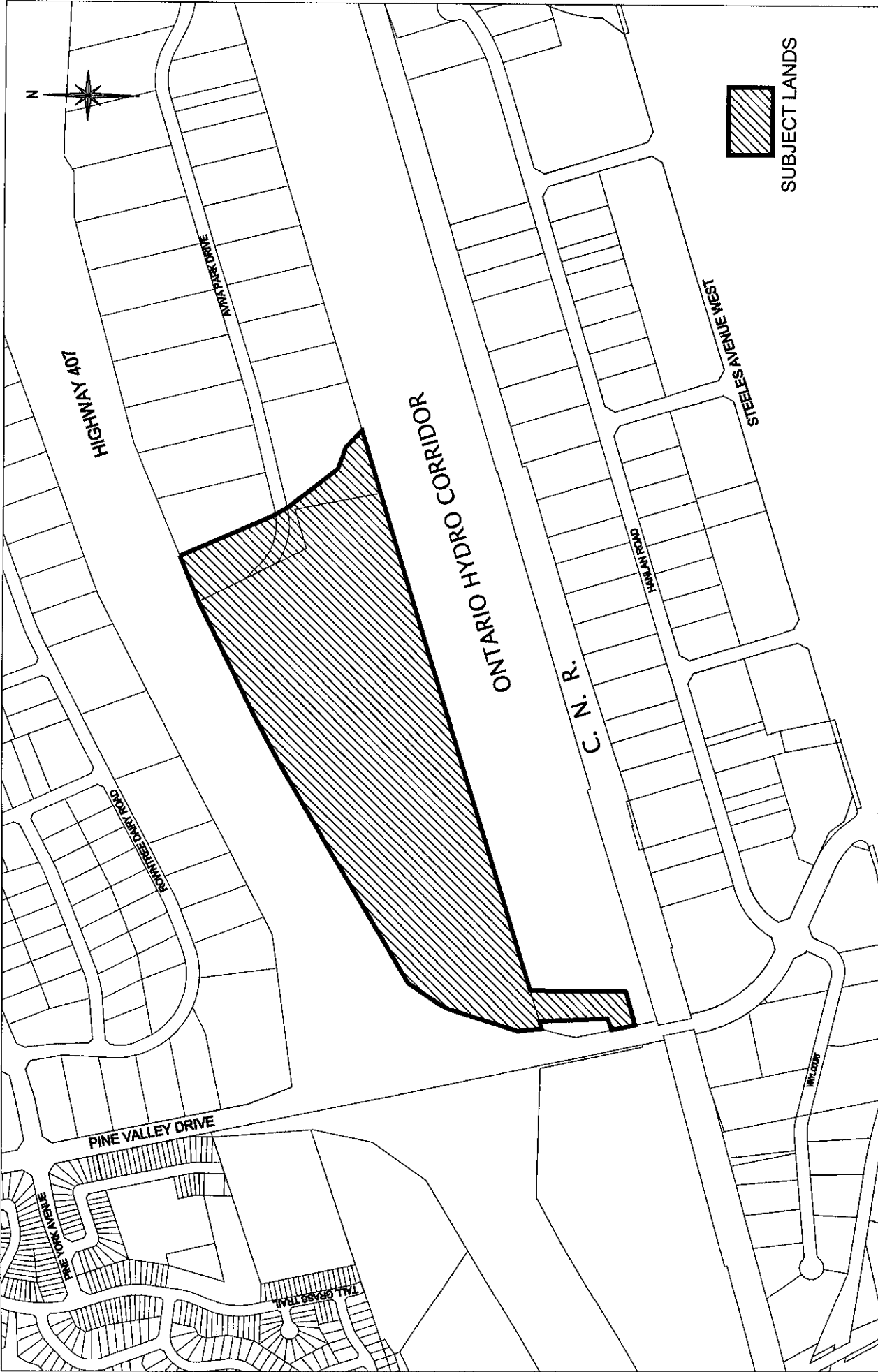
Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DeANGELIS
Commissioner of Planning

BILL ROBINSON
Commissioner of Engineering & Public Works

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Location Map

Part Lots 2 & 3, Concession 6

CITY OWNED LANDS
 PINE VALLEY DRIVE
 SOUTH OF HWY. 407

CITY of Vaughan

Community Planning Department

Attachment 1

FILE No.:
 15.52.1

Not to Scale

February 21, 2003

