

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OCTOBER 18, 2004

PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning in consultation with Councillor Carella recommends adoption of the following resolution:

**WHEREAS** the City of Vaughan is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Ontario, and indeed, in Canada; and,

**WHEREAS** the Government of Ontario has been engaged in a process known as the "GTA North Transportation Corridor" (Highway #427 extension planning and Individual Environmental Assessment) since November of 2000; and

**WHEREAS** the alignment of a future northerly extension of Highway #427 will traverse lands in the City of Vaughan collectively known as the "Vaughan Enterprise Zone"; and,

**WHEREAS** the Vaughan Enterprise Zone has been designated and approved as an "Urban Area" in the Region of York Official Plan on the basis that this area is needed to accommodate the City of Vaughan's Industrial/Employment lands needs to the year 2026; and,

**WHEREAS** the City of Vaughan has only an approximately two (2) year's supply of available employment lands remaining and the 2500 acres located in the Vaughan Enterprise Zone is critical to meeting the short and long term demand for employment land; and,

**WHEREAS** the Province of Ontario, over the last five years, has failed to make significant progress in advancing the Individual Environmental Assessment that will establish the alignment of the Highway # 427; and,

**WHEREAS** the Individual Environmental Assessment process remains stalled at the "Terms of Reference" stage, with the prospect that the completion and approval of the Environmental Assessment may take in excess of five years; and

**WHEREAS** the slow progress of the Environmental Assessment has had a chilling affect on the City's ability to prepare a secondary plan to develop these lands for their intended purpose (the result being that these lands are effectively frozen for the duration of the entire EA process, due to the need to establish the alignment of the highway); and,

**WHEREAS** this situation persists despite the efforts by the City of Vaughan to move the process ahead, including the establishment of the "Highway #427 Extension Committee", comprised of members from the Region of Peel, Region of York, Town of Caledon, and the City of Brampton, as well as Vaughan; and,

**WHEREAS** the recent provincial document, "Places to Grow", released by the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal on July 12, 2004, indicates that the extension of Highway #427 is now a low infrastructure priority of the Government of Ontario, but the connection of major highways to intermodal transportation facilities, like the CP Rail Intermodal Yard, is considered to be a high priority; and,

**WHEREAS** "Places to Grow" identifies a "Major Highway" connection from the current terminus of Highway #427 to the lands in the vicinity of the CP Rail Intermodal Yard.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the Council of the Corporation of the City of Vaughan directs Staff to prepare a Terms of Reference, for its consideration, for a secondary plan land use study for all lands designated

"Urban Area" by Amendment No. 19 to the York Region Official Plan within the Vaughan Enterprise Zone; and,

THAT such secondary plan study shall include a comprehensive transportation analysis component to include the identification of a corridor for protection sufficient to accommodate a 400-series highway and possible future interchanges, for the purpose of extending Highway #427 from Highway 7 to, at least, the CP Intermodal Yard, as envisioned by "Places to Grow"; and

THAT the start date for the secondary plan study be targeted for the first half of 2005;

THAT the City of Vaughan continues to support the Environmental Assessment process for the Highway #427 Extension and requests that the process be restarted as quickly as possible; and

THAT the Ministries of Public Infrastructure Renewal, the Environment, Transportation, Municipal Affairs and Economic Development and Trade of the Government of the Province of Ontario be so informed; and

THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Regional Municipalities of York and Peel, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, the Honourable Greg Sorbara, MPP, Vaughan- King - Aurora, Minister of Finance and Mario Racco, MPP, Thornhill; and,

THAT the resolution on the "Promotion of Industrial Growth", adopted by Council on September 13, 2004, be withdrawn and replaced by this resolution.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this resolution is to initiate a land use planning process for the lands collectively known as the "Vaughan Enterprise Zone" within the "Urban Area" designation approved by the Region of York. Further, it is intended to assist and support the Provincial Government implementation of the "Places to Grow" strategy by providing a means to establish the route of the proposed extension of Highway # 427, at least to the CP Intermodal Yard, thereby ending uncertainty over which lands will be free for future industrial development as originally intended.

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

On September 7, 2004, Committee of the Whole adopted a resolution submitted by Councillor Carella with respect to the "Promotion of Industrial Growth" (Attachment 1). Council adopted this resolution on September 13, 2004.

Subsequent discussions at the "Highway #427 Extension Committee" and staff review of the document, "Places to Grow", released by the provincial government on July 12, 2004, has determined that a more strategic course of action for the City of Vaughan would be to initiate Terms of Reference for a secondary plan land use study for the Vaughan Enterprise Zone. Therefore, the September 13, 2004 resolution should be withdrawn and replaced by a new resolution to consider such a study. If approved, the Terms of Reference should include provision to undertake a comprehensive transportation analysis in support of the land use analysis.

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

Section 2.5 of the Vaughan Vision reads: "Strengthen the City's diversified economic base ... [by promoting] high value added industries.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council; however, the necessary resources have not yet been allocated and approved.

**Conclusion**

Adoption of this resolution will establish a Terms of Reference for a land use study that is intended to determine the appropriate land uses and transportation network, including a future corridor for the extension of Highway # 427, to permit the development of lands in the Vaughan Enterprise Zone.

**Attachments**

1. Adopted Council Resolution, "Promotion of Industrial Growth", September 13, 2004.

**Report prepared by:**

Wayne L. McEachern, Manager of Planning Policy, 8026

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN ZIPAY  
Commissioner of Planning

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NEW BUSINESS – PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

The Committee of the Whole recommends that the resolution submitted by Councillor Carella be referred to staff, in consultation with the Local Councillor, for a further report.

The foregoing matter was brought to the attention of the Committee by Councillor Carella.

*Council, at its meeting of September 13 2004, adopted the foregoing item without amendment.*

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**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – SEPTEMBER 7, 2004**

**PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL GROWTH**

**Recommendation**

Councillor Carella recommends adoption of the following resolution:

**WHEREAS** the Province of Ontario has long proposed to build a 400-class highway in a more or less northerly direction from the west side of the City of Toronto; and

**WHEREAS** a part of the said highway, now designated Highway 427, has been completed from Highway 401 to Regional Road 7, in the City of Vaughan, approximately midway between Regional Road 27 and Huntington Road; and

**WHEREAS** to accommodate the next stage of the said Highway 427 lands have been reserved for a potential highway route---through the block bounded by Regional Roads 7 and 27, and Huntington and Langstaff Roads---by means of a holding by-law or by-laws duly passed by the Council of the City of Vaughan; and

**WHEREAS** these lands (described as a "tulip"), include (1) those reserved for the northern half of an interchange at Regional Road 7 ("the base"), (2) those fronting along most of the south side of Langstaff Road between Huntington Road and Regional Road 27 (the "bloom")---so as to permit the widest possible directional options for the proposed highway beyond Langstaff Road, and (3) a corridor ("the stem") linking the two aforementioned parts of the reserve; and

**WHEREAS** the Honourable David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Province of Ontario, has recently indicated that the extension of Highway 427 is not a priority of the present government; and

**WHEREAS** as a result of this decision, the ultimate route of the extended Highway 427 will not be determined in the foreseeable future; and

**WHEREAS** the failure to determine the ultimate route of the extended Highway 427 effectively precludes the realization of property taxes consequent on the development of all lands currently subject to the aforementioned holding by-law(s) which will **not** be included in the Highway 427 right-of-way once built; and

**WHEREAS** the consequent loss of industrial tax revenues will delay the lifting of the burden of taxation on all other property classes.

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Council of the City of Vaughan---as per Section 36 (1)\* of the Planning Act---hereby amends the applicable holding by-law (or by-laws), to exclude its application to all reserved lands lying outside the extended corridor---that is, all said reserved lands except for that portion of the said reserved lands which would constitute an extension of the corridor ("the stem") from the proposed interchange at Regional Road 7 to Langstaff Road.

*\*Section 36 (1) The council of a local municipality may, in a by-law passed under section 34, by use of the holding symbol "H" (or "h") in conjunction with any use designations, specify the use to which lands, buildings or structures may be put at such time in the future as the holding symbol is removed by amendment to the by-law*

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**Purpose**

To induce the provincial government to decide on the route of the proposed extension of Highway 427 at least to Langstaff Road, thereby ending the uncertainty over which lands within the block bounded by Regional Roads 7, 27, Langstaff Road, and Huntington Road (key map 9C) will be free for future industrial development as they were originally intended.

**Background - Analysis and Options**

Recent statements by the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal indicate that the extension of Highway 427 is not a priority. Indeed, the fact that the terms of reference for the environmental assessment of the extension have not yet been set would seem to indicate that it was also not a priority for the previous provincial government.

As a consequence a considerable portion of the relevant block is frozen in terms of development, in order to accommodate not just the route the highway might eventually take but also all possible routes through the block, most particularly at the northern end of the block.

Yet this block and the ones to the north represent the "jewel in the crown" in terms of our future industrial development, given their proximity to

- (1) adjacent, well-populated residential zones from which potential employees might be drawn
- (2) a major intermodal yard on nearby Highway 50, and
- (3) their easy access to Pearson International Airport via the existing 427 and the GTA via 401

Further delay in the selection of a route for the next stage of the highway---no matter when it is built---will preclude development of prestigious industrial land, and has no doubt already slowed development on lands in the balance of the block. Investors abhor uncertainty, and this uncertainty means the City will not realize the revenue potential of these lands for some time to come.

**Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

Section 2.5 of the Vaughan Vision reads: "Strengthen the City's diversified economic base...[by [promoting] high value added industries"

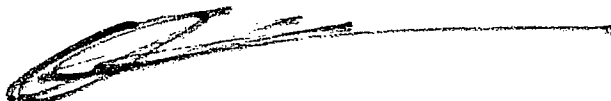
**Conclusion**

Adoption of this resolution will establish the route for the extension of Highway 427 to Langstaff Road, thereby permitting the development of all lands in the current holding zone not needed for highway development.

**Attachments**

None

**Report prepared by:**



Councillor Tony Carella