

**4. THORNHILL YONGE STREET STUDY (2002)
DRAFT OPA AMENDMENT 669
FILE: 19.26**

P.2006.39

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

THAT the Public Hearing for draft OPA 669 BE RECEIVED; and, that the issues identified by the public and Council, be addressed by Staff in a report to Committee of the Whole.

Economic Impact

There is no additional economic impact to the City of Vaughan as the necessary resources have been allocated and approved. The proposed policy changes will permit additional new assessment to the local tax base.

Purpose

To present the draft Official Plan for the Thornhill Yonge Street Study Area, to a Committee of the Whole Public Hearing.

Background - Analysis and Options

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study- 2005

The Study was jointly undertaken by the Town of Markham and City of Vaughan, and initiated in the fall of 2002. The Study was led by Urban Strategies Inc., a leading planning and urban design firm retained by the municipalities. The consultation process included a number of workshops with key stakeholders, including the Town of Markham, the City of Vaughan, the Region of York, the York Region Rapid Transit Consortium, the property owners and the local residents. The following is a list of the open houses and workshops held with the stakeholder group and general community in date sequence:

- Visioning workshop on February 27, 2003
- Presentation to the Stakeholder Consultation Group (SCG) on May 5, 2003
- Public Open House on May 28, 2003
- Business and Commercial Property Owner "round table discussion" on July 3, 2003
- Presentation to SCG on November 27, 2003
- Public Open House on December 4, 2003
- Public Open House on April 27, 2004

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study was completed in four phases:

- Phase 1: Background information gathering and analysis, including the development of transit-way and streetscape design criteria. This phase included the public consultation process to identify and develop goals and expectations for the Study Area.
- Phase 2: Development of alternate urban design and streetscape concepts.
- Phase 3: Development of the draft Master Plan.
- Phase 4: Development of the final report providing a framework for reinvestment and community building.

Special Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 27, 2006

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study was received at the Special Committee of the Whole meeting of February 27, 2006 along with the Staff Report summarizing the recommendations. At the Council meeting which followed on March 20, 2006, Council approved the Staff recommendation to receive the study and to endorse its recommendations as the basis of an amendment to the Thornhill Vaughan Official Plan (OPA 210). In addition, Council directed that comments of the community expressed at the meeting be considered by Staff and that the following written submission of Councillor Shefman be approved:

- “1. That discussions be initiated with the Town of Markham and Region of York respecting the implementation and associated cost-sharing of the Thornhill Yonge Street Streetscape Improvement Program;
2. That Staff be directed to prepare a report to a future Committee of the Whole meeting which:
 - a) establishes a timetable to guide implementation of the Thornhill Yonge Street Plan;
 - b) provides for an annual report to Council on the progress of implementation;
 - c) examines the implications and opportunities for the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District presented by the new Ontario Heritage Act;
 - d) describes a development approval process which will ensure that new development within the Thornhill Yonge Street Study Area will be of the highest quality and complement existing heritage resources; and
 - e) establishes a permanent coordinating body, under the leadership of the City of Vaughan and Town of Markham, to oversee the ongoing implementation of the Thornhill Yonge Street Plan.”

Comments of the Community Expressed at the Special Committee of the Whole Meeting (February 27/06)

Comments expressed at the Public Hearing by Council and residents, and Staff's responses to them, are addressed as follows:

- (i) **“The heights of building structures within the heritage district do not exceed three storeys. Why is the Thornhill Yonge Street Study permitting 5 storey buildings? The study doesn't put enough emphasis on heritage preservation.”**

Staff Response: The Thornhill Heritage District Study (1984) generally recommends that new development be compatible with existing two and three storey buildings within the district. The proposed Official Plan limits development within the immediate proximity of existing heritage structures to three storeys in height, and permits up to five storeys in four areas of the Study Area which are more removed. Any new development will be required to be consistent with the architectural style of the existing structures and compatible with the character of the village.

Given the Region's strong commitment to and investment in improved transit service through the Study Area, and a total absence of new development or redevelopment in the area in the past several years, it is considered imperative to permit a modest increase in permitted heights in the suggested locations as an incentive for redevelopment. Additional density will improve the general economic viability of businesses in the area, including those which are operating out of existing heritage buildings. At the same time, such new development is expected to complement

and enhance the area's heritage resources and character. It should be noted that heritage preservation is regulated through Provincial Policy and the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study document. Proposed OPA 669 respects heritage preservation policy, and seeks to strengthen the vitality of the heritage district. Also, since the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study was undertaken in 1984, it is recommended that it be reviewed and updated to be consistent with the relevant policies of the Thornhill Yonge Street Study, and current heritage policy.

- (ii) **“Elimination of left and right turn lanes on Yonge Street will add to the traffic congestion in the area.”**

Staff Response: The Region's plans for a dedicated transit facility on Yonge Street within the Study Area, will require the elimination of some left turning opportunities; however, the plan provides for signalized U-turns at intersections to provide access and traffic circulation. There are no plans to eliminate existing right-turn opportunities at street intersections.

- (iii) **“Signage within the Study Area should be controlled.”**

Staff Response: The Thornhill Heritage District Study does contain policies respecting appropriate signage for this area and since the Study considered both the Markham and Vaughan portions of the district, these policies are common to both municipalities. The proposed Official Plan contains a policy which requires that signage be incorporated into the building, and be consistent in design with the village character and the most current Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study. A similar policy is included respecting street, park, and path lighting.

- (iv) **“Traffic within the residential area will increase if laneways are built behind the Yonge Street properties.”**

Staff Response: The Thornhill Yonge Street Study explains that the development of a connected network of rear driving laneways is necessary to provide access to commercial parking areas located behind buildings. The integrated parking schemes will ensure that parking is accessible, and will enable people destined for the area's commercial uses to locate their parking conveniently without having to rely on the local street system or Yonge Street. The modest amount of redevelopment expected to result from the Plan does not imply any significant increase in traffic within the Study Area or through adjacent neighbourhoods.

- (v) **“Shadowing and micro-climatic issues have not been addressed in the Study.”**

Staff Response: The Study did not focus on shadowing and micro-climatic issues because the maximum heights, at five storeys, are not much higher than existing three storey buildings, new buildings will be located close to Yonge Street, and existing housing in the area adjacent to the Study Area is located on lots which are relatively large. Therefore, shadowing and micro-climate impacts are expected to be negligible or non-existent. Typically, shadowing and micro-climatic studies are important in the case of high-rise development where impacts can be significant.

- (vi) **“Density bonusing will permit buildings which are too high.”**

Staff Response: The density bonusing option has not been included in the proposed Official Plan. Staff have concluded that any public benefit which could be available to the City would not justify bonusing for additional height or density, as it might compromise the planning and heritage conservation objectives of the Plan.

(vi) “Why did the Study not consider the entire Thornhill Yonge Street Heritage District?”

Staff Response: The Study focused on the commercial core of the Heritage District which is considered to have good potential for intensification. A small pocket of heritage properties fronting on Yonge Street, but located north of the Thornhill Golf Course/valleylands, were not included due to their distance from the core area but would be addressed when the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study is reviewed and updated.

(viii) “How does the New Ontario Act (Bill 60) affect policies related to the Study Area?”

Staff Response: In March of 2005, Bill 60, an Act to amend the Ontario Heritage Act, was approved. The list of changes which the New Act introduces, and the implications and opportunities they might provide with respect to the Study Area, are summarized as follows:

- a. The new Act allows Municipal Councils to prohibit the demolition, removal or alteration of property designated under the Act. This means that all property within the Thornhill Heritage District, and therefore the Study Area, is protected from demolition, removal or alteration unless Council approval is obtained by way of a Heritage Permit. Previously, the owner could wait 180 days before demolishing, or removing a building in the District. This regulation provides for the preservation of heritage structures within the Study Area.
- b. The new Act also states that when a District designation is in effect, in the event of a conflict between a heritage district plan and a municipal by-law, provisions in the heritage district plan would prevail. Therefore, once the Official Plan is approved for the Study Area, if there is a conflict between the District Plan and the OPA, the Heritage District Plan would take precedence. It is therefore extremely important to ensure that the Thornhill Heritage District Plan is reviewed, and updated periodically, and particularly after any relevant study such as the Thornhill Yonge Street Study, is undertaken.
- c. Whereas previously the old Act did not provide for interim control for heritage district study areas, the new Act permits Council to pass a by-law preventing, for one year, the alteration, demolition or removal of property located within an area where a heritage conservation district study is being undertaken by the municipality. A complete list of the changes to the Heritage Act are provided as Attachment # 3 to this report, however the aforementioned changes are most noteworthy with respect to the impact on the proposed OPA.

Organization of this Report

The balance of this report provides an overview of the planning and policy context in which the Thornhill Yonge Street Study was carried out, and summarizes the key policy components of draft Official Plan Amendment #669 which implements the policy recommendations of the Study.

Location

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study is focused primarily on properties fronting onto Yonge Street within the boundaries of the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District. The east side of Yonge Street is under the jurisdiction of the Town of Markham. The Study Area also includes a few businesses on the south side of Centre Street and an apartment building east of Yonge between John and Elgin/Arnold, which were included in the Study due to their proximity to Yonge Street. On the west side of Yonge Street, the southern boundary includes the Thornhill Public School located south of the Elgin/Arnold intersection with Yonge. The northern boundary is the top of the riverbank above the Don River valley just north of the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District.

Existing Uses

The portion of the Study Area located in the City of Vaughan is designated "General Commercial" and "Low Density Residential". The lands are zoned C1-Restricted Commercial, C2-General Commercial, C6-Highway Commercial Zone, and R1-Single Detached Dwelling Residential Zone.

The Planning Context

The Study Area falls under the jurisdiction of the City of Vaughan, the Town of Markham, and the Region of York, and is also subject to relevant Provincial Policy. Within the Vaughan portion of the Study Area, the following municipal/regional policy documents provide direction for new development/ re-development:

- The Provincial (Planning) Policy Statement
- The York Region Official Plan
- OPA #210- The Thornhill Vaughan Community Plan
- The City of Vaughan Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study

Provincial Planning Policy

The recent Provincial Policy Statement (March 2005), together with the Greenbelt Plan (February 2005) and (Draft) Places To Grow Policy document, will shape future municipal policy directives and growth within the GTA. These documents are aimed at maximizing growth opportunities within the urban areas through infill, and building intensification. Higher order transit corridors within urban areas are identified as key areas for intensification and re-development. The draft OPA conforms with Provincial policy.

The York Region Official Plan

The York Region Official Plan establishes a commitment to invest in transit infrastructure, including streetscaping within identified centres and corridors. The Yonge Street corridor is to have a dedicated rapid bus transitway which is scheduled for construction for 2006-2007. The environmental assessment process for this transit improvement is now close to completion. The Region's policy framework supports mixed-use intensification of transitway corridors and centres. The Region recently refined its transit supportive land use policies, density targets and urban design performance standards through OPA #43, which was adopted on December 16, 2004. The draft OPA conforms with Regional policy.

The Thornhill Community Plan (OPA #210)

OPA #210 contains policies for site development within the Village of Thornhill Heritage District supporting:

- Retention of historical buildings;
- Preservation of mature landscape elements;
- Creation or preservation of a landscape buffer between commercial uses and residential uses;
- Development of design guidelines for parking areas and access;
- Pedestrian linkages; and
- Pedestrian access to building entrances from Yonge Street.

OPA #210 makes provision for the Village of Thornhill Heritage District and gives Council the authority to designate a Heritage Conservation District under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The City of Vaughan Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study

The City of Vaughan Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study (1984), includes policies for historical preservation, design guidelines for new development and re-development, and makes recommendations for public infrastructure improvements. The study also includes design guidelines and general site development guidelines that provide recommendations for landscape and streetscape improvements for the Heritage District. Given the time which has elapsed since the completion of the Heritage District Study, and the new recommendations arising from the Thornhill Yonge Street Study, the Thornhill Heritage District Study document should be reviewed and revised to reflect the current policy framework.

Development Applications (OP.05.004 & Z.05.011)

Thornhill Village Plaza Inc. and M4 Developments have jointly submitted Official Plan and zoning amendment applications for the lands located at consecutive lots 7584 and 7610-7616 Yonge Street within the Thornhill Yonge Street Study Area. The proposal is to permit the construction of an 11-storey seniors' condominium building.

The lands are located primarily in the "Mid-Rise Mixed Use" designation, with a small portion at the north end, falling within the "Heritage Main Street" designation. The proposal is contrary to policies contained in proposed OPA 669, and the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan. The condominium development is 6 storeys higher than the maximum permitted height in the "Mid-Rise Mixed Use" designation, and 8 storeys higher than that permitted in the "Heritage Main Street" designation. In addition, the OPA requires commercial at grade, and a more articulated built form than that of the proposed building.

Key Elements of the New "Vision" For Yonge Street

The framework for renewal of the Study Area is based on a vision of creating a vibrant, mixed-use "main street" on Yonge Street, and establishing a balanced range of residential, employment, and social gathering opportunities within the subject lands. The vision and policy framework builds upon established planning principles, municipal, regional and community goals to create:

- A predominance of commercial/retail uses situated along the street comprising specialty niche markets, including food, lifestyle and boutique stores, the ethnic market, neighbourhood and convenience shopping.
- An attractive, high quality, pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive streetscape along Yonge Street comprising a primarily hard surfaced streetscape with in-ground street trees, distinctive pedestrian-scale lighting, streetscape furnishings and treatments, and a 3.5 metre wide raised centre landscape median.
- Transit supportive mid-rise intensification in some sections of the corridor, with maximum heights of 5 storeys, to better address the scale and width of the street, improve street definition, support increased transit use.
- Protection and enhancement of heritage resources and their environs through the redevelopment process aimed at highlighting and celebrating these core assets.
- New public parks, plazas and places for meeting and gathering along the side streets at established destinations including the York Market and Thornhill Public School at the Elgin/Arnold intersection, and at the new transit station at the Thornridge/John Street intersection.
- Building height and massing transitions to ensure compatible fit with existing neighbourhood fabric and to respond to the location and importance of heritage assets along the corridor.

- Small-scale infill projects to complement existing two and three storey developments including infill of the Bell office site, new house form mixed use development in the Lion's Parkette area, and new house form residential developments adjacent to the neighbourhoods at the John Street Transit Node.
- Enhancement and connection of the total open space resource linking planned open space improvements along Yonge Street and the side streets to existing parks, trails, and the neighbourhoods.
- A pedestrian priority zone on Yonge Street which limits the number of private driveway access points from Yonge Street to promote a pedestrian environment, while reducing congestion and left turning movements on Yonge Street.
- Access and parking at the rear of Yonge Street properties to promote shared access and parking solutions.
- High quality buildings and public spaces exemplifying design excellence through the use of specific design guidelines and other criteria.

Land Use Recommendations

The land use recommendations arising from the Yonge Street Study provide the policy basis for draft OPA 669. These recommendations are based on the vision, key planning principles, goals, analysis, and conclusions outlined in the study report. The following land use designations and key principles are included as policies within the draft OPA.

This amendment incorporates the land use and urban design policy components of the Thornhill Yonge Street Study (2005). The land use designations established in this Plan reflect the Land Use Plan from the Study. The principal changes introduced by the Plan are the creation of two new land use designations. A similar land use policy framework is being implemented by the Town of Markham, such that development on both sides will be mutually complementary while recognizing some differences in context.

A. Land Use Designations

1. Mid-Rise/ Mixed Use Designation

The "Mid-Rise /Mixed Use" designation permits buildings at a maximum height of 5 storeys, with maximum net site density of 2.0 Floor Space Index (F.S.I.). The maximum height is also subject to specific urban design requirements.

This designation applies to only those properties where new development is appropriate within the Plan and where designated or listed heritage buildings are not located. A minimum building height of 2.5 storeys is also required for new development. Ground floor, grade-related commercial development is required on Yonge Street, and along public open space/plaza frontages. Residential/ office retail is encouraged for storeys above grade. This designation is introduced to encourage new development in keeping with the vision and intent of the Plan. The height and scale of permitted development is intended to provide an incentive for redevelopment, while respecting the heritage character and scale of valued heritage resources, and proximity to the neighbouring low density residential community. A maximum of five storeys is deemed appropriate in this context, to support transit services and retail businesses.

The following uses may be permitted within the "Mid-Rise/Mixed Use" designation:

- (i) A full range of multiple dwelling types including townhouses, stacked townhouses and apartments;
- (ii) Retail uses;
- (iii) Service uses;
- (iv) Offices;
- (v) Banks and financial institutions;
- (vi) Health and fitness uses;
- (vii) Institutional facilities including community facilities and government services;
- (viii) Day care centres;
- (ix) Commercial schools; and,
- (x) Restaurants.

2. Heritage Main Street Designation

The "Heritage Main Street" designation applies only to those lands where designated or listed heritage buildings are located, and sites where, due to their size and proximity to heritage buildings, only sensitive and complementary urban infill is appropriate.

Within this designation, a maximum height of 3 storeys is permitted, with maximum net site density of 0.75 FSI. The primary intent of this designation is the protection and adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings, rather than encouraging their redevelopment.

The following uses are permitted within this designation:

- (i) Retail uses;
- (ii) Service uses;
- (iii) Offices;
- (iv) Banks and financial institutions;
- (v) Hotels and bed and breakfast inns;
- (vi) Institutional uses, including community facilities and government services compatible with and complementary to the planned function of the designation;
- (vii) Full service restaurants; and,
- (viii) Residential uses on upper floors only, subject to ensuring that the planned function of the lands is maintained, and that the location is appropriate.

3. Low Density Residential and Institutional Designations

Some existing low density residential uses are located within the Plan, fronting onto local streets. The Thornhill Public School is an institutional use located at the intersection of Arnold Avenue and Yonge Street. These properties remain subject to the policies of the Thornhill-Vaughan Community Plan (OPA 210) and the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan.

4. Public Open Space /Plaza Designation

The Plan includes three sites designated "Public Open Space /Plaza", two of which (the Arnold Parkette and Thornridge Drive Parkette), are new additions to the area's public open space supply. The third is the expanded Lions Parkette at Centre Street. All three are community amenity spaces intended to enhance and complement adjacent commercial and neighbourhood uses. The design of these parks will be addressed as part of redevelopment proposals on neighbouring properties.

B. Other General Land Use Recommendations

- (i) The Yonge Street Study Area, should be a vibrant mixed-use area, with a predominance of commercial land uses on Yonge Street, with residential uses encouraged above grade.

- (ii) All development should be street-related in character.
- (iii) The general policy intent of the Heritage Conservation District Plans of both municipalities respecting the enhancement and preservation of significant heritage assets should remain, and be updated, to protect the unique heritage resources of the district.
- (iv) The general commercial and automotive service designations in the Vaughan Official Plan should be eliminated within the Study Area, and replaced by the proposed land use plan. Existing automotive service designations will become legally non-conforming uses.
- (v) A minimum building height of 2.5 storeys should generally be adopted for all new development on Yonge Street within the Study Area.
- (vi) The Urban Design Framework and Urban Design Guidelines articulated in the Thornhill Yonge Street Study (2005) should be incorporated as specific design criteria within the Official Plan Amendment and the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Study (1984).
- (vii) Drive-through facilities or outdoor storage uses will not be permitted,.
- (viii) A special sign by-law will be established to apply within the Study Area.

Urban Design Framework/Guidelines

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study (2005), defines an Urban Design Framework and Urban Design Guidelines which provide specific performance criteria to organize, structure and guide development of the Thornhill / Yonge Street Plan Area in the future. These elements will be used in conjunction with amendments to the policy framework to ensure the creation of a high quality, pedestrian-friendly, and attractive built form environment that is compatible with adjacent neighborhoods and existing heritage resources, and appropriate to the provision of a higher order Rapid Bus Transitway.

The Urban Design Framework establishes requirements to organize, structure and guide the development of primary urban components within the corridor, and also provides guidance respecting more detailed elements of the built environment. The Urban Design Framework establishes policies for the Street Classification/Movement System, the Public Realm, Built Form, the Streetscape Improvement, and General Site Development.

a. The Street Classification/Movement System

The Street Classification System is composed of primary, secondary and local public streets and private laneways, each having a distinct and important role in accommodating pedestrian and other types of movement, as well as defining the character of the public realm.

The Street Movement System focuses on outlining the components of a balanced movement system that will enable Yonge Street to perform many functions without shifting the balance to favour one form of movement over another. The Street Movement System describes in greater detail the components of the functional transportation system (see Appendix II).

b. The Public Realm

Public open spaces include plazas, publicly accessible open spaces, public realm focal points, and streetscapes which are currently or intended to be conveyed into public ownership and developed to create an attractive and connected public realm. Open Space will be acquired through the re-development process and the City's capital improvement programs to enhance the character and amenity of the corridor.

c. Built Form Design Guidelines

Built Form Design Guidelines provide specific recommendations for new building developments as well as enhancements or additions to heritage buildings and their environs. Built Form Design Guidelines articulate elements such as building organization and massing, entry and ground floor treatments, as well as guidelines for building signage and lighting.

d. General Site Development Guidelines

The General Development Design Guidelines developed through the Thornhill Yonge Street Study provide criteria to guide the evolution of private properties within the Study Area. They articulate urban design criteria and recommendations for elements of the urban design plan such as building heights, building envelopes, orientation and setbacks, ground floor area, site landscaping, parking and access, loading and storage.

e. The Streetscape Improvement Program

The Streetscape Improvement Program focuses on the public open space system, including secondary and local streetscape zones, a street tree replacement program, public and private open space, pedestrian/vehicular laneways, parking courts, and open space enhancements of heritage areas.

The design and implementation concepts presented within the Streetscape Improvement Program will be used by Vaughan (as well as Markham, and the Region), to develop a detailed streetscape plan. The objective is to achieve a comprehensive and cohesive image and character for streetscape development over the long term.

The public sector improvements to Yonge Street as described in the Thornhill Yonge Street Study, will occur entirely within the +/-36 m public right-of-way, and should be funded according to the following:

- The Base Case Streetscape Treatment: To be undertaken by the Region of York in consultation with the area municipalities at the time of Rapid Bus Transitway construction.
- Enhanced Streetscape Treatments: To be funded jointly by the Region of York and respective area municipalities.

Provision has been made for an additional 1.8 m private sector component to be added to the streetscape pedestrian zone along Yonge Street, and consideration for an additional 2.5 m easement in isolated areas of the corridor, at the time of development of the Streetscape Implementation Program.

Enhanced streetscape treatments are to occur at the three primary intersections within the Plan Area:

- i. The Elgin/Arnold and Yonge Street intersection;
- ii. The John Street/Thornridge Drive transit node intersection; and,
- iii. The Centre Street/Yonge Street intersection.

Implementation of the Thornhill Yonge Street Study Vision

The following initiatives, listed in the order in which they should occur, will ensure that the vision for the subject lands is achieved.

- (i) Approval of the proposed Official Plan Amendment to guide development in the Study Area as per the land use plan and policies outlined within the Thornhill Yonge Street Study.
- (ii) Designation of the Study Area as a Community Improvement Area under Section 28 of the Planning Act, through a City by-law amendment.
- (iii) Review and revision the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan in co-ordination with the Town of Markham, and ensure that heritage policies are compatible with new OPA policies.
- (iv) Exploration of the potential for a joint City of Vaughan/Town of Markham Architectural and Development Peer Review Committee for all public sector projects, major private sector projects over 929 sq.m (10,000 sq. ft), and all infrastructure projects.
- (v) Organization of meetings for the City of Vaughan, Town of Markham, and the Region of York to establish a joint Yonge Street Streetscape and Transitway Project Management Team to work collaboratively to implement the Base Case Streetscape and Transitway, and other interim and permanent improvements to accommodate the transitway.
- (vi) Review of site plan and rezoning in accordance, to implement the requirements of the new Official Plan Amendment and a revised Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan.

Community Improvement Area

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study, recommended that the Study Area be designated as a Community Improvement Area. This recommendation provides for a number of effective financial tools to implement the Official Plan, under Section 28 of the Planning Act, and permits Council to provide for specific enhancements such as improvements to land, buildings, parking and streetscapes in the designated area. Under the provisions for Community Improvement Projects, the City can provide grants or loans to property owners within the Community Improvement Area to assist in the cost of repairs and improvements. Other tools include direct investment by the City for infrastructure and landscaping improvements, fee waivers, and property tax relief.

It is recommended that a by-law to officially designate the Thornhill Yonge Street Study Area as a Community Improvement Project Area be brought forward for Council approval once the Official Plan Amendment is approved and in full force and effect.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council to encourage land use designations and urban form to support transit usage, and to strengthen the City's diversified economic base by promoting and attracting new retail and commercial development.

Conclusion

The Thornhill Yonge Street Study recommends policy changes to OPA #210-Thornhill Community Plan, and the Thornhill Heritage District Conservation Study to permit increased residential densities, encourage commercial intensification and diversity, and a strong focus on urban design elements to create a special pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive heritage district. Proposed OPA 669 seeks to achieve the Study Vision through land use, urban design, and implementation policies.

Additional recommendations are made by the Study, such as reviewing and revising the Thornhill Heritage District Study, to incorporate relevant recommendations of the Study, and to designate

the Plan Area as a Community Improvement Area. These recommendations will be brought forward to a future Committee of the Whole meeting, as part of the technical report, along with the final version of OPA 669.

Attachments

1. Location Map
2. Proposed Land Use Plan
3. New Ontario Act (Bill 60) Changes
4. Draft OPA 669 – Members of Council ONLY

Report prepared by:

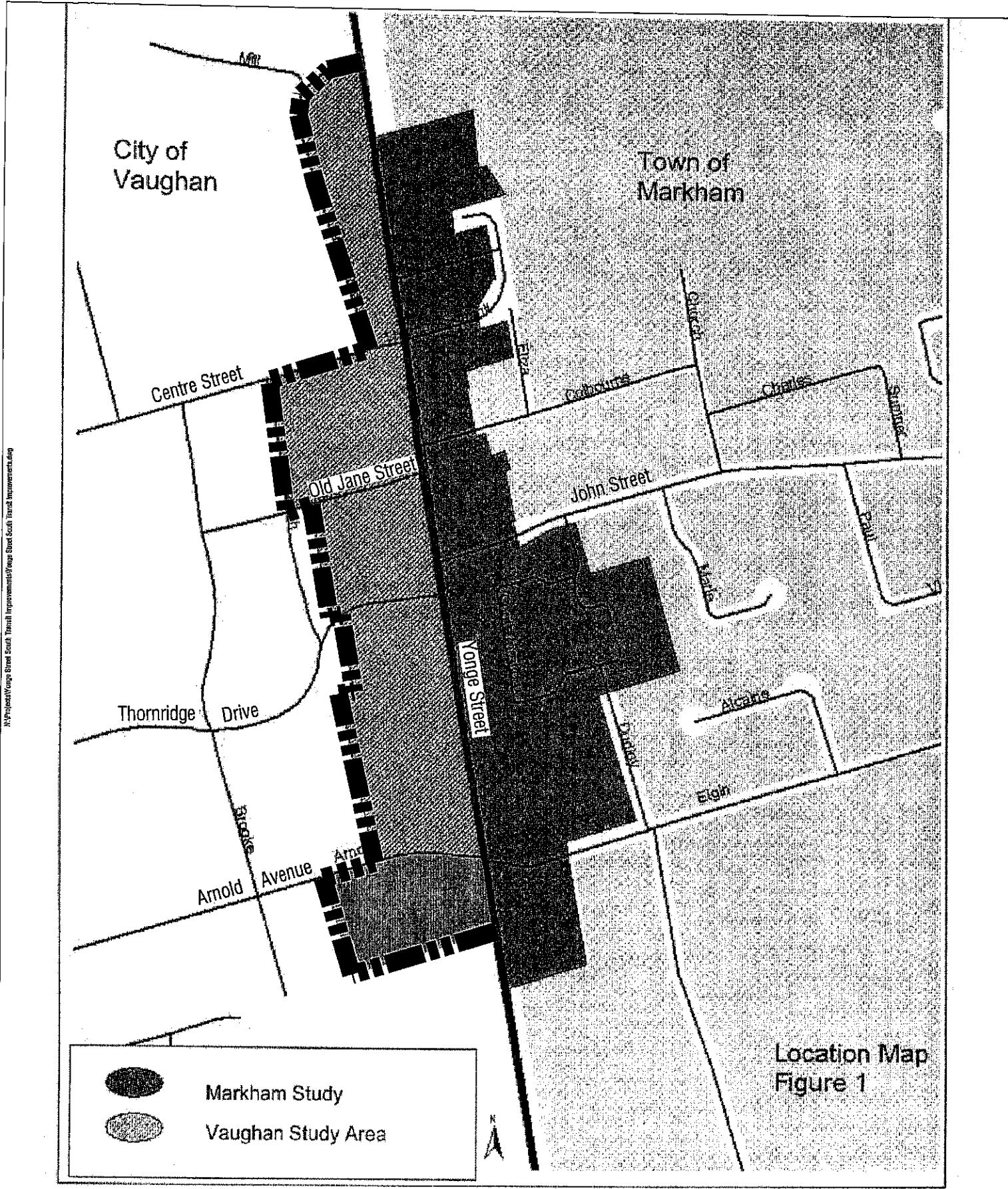
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Respectfully submitted,

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Commissioner of Planning

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Director, Policy Planning/Urban Design


VRF



Location Map
Figure 1


Thornhill Yonge Street Study Area Location Map

Legend

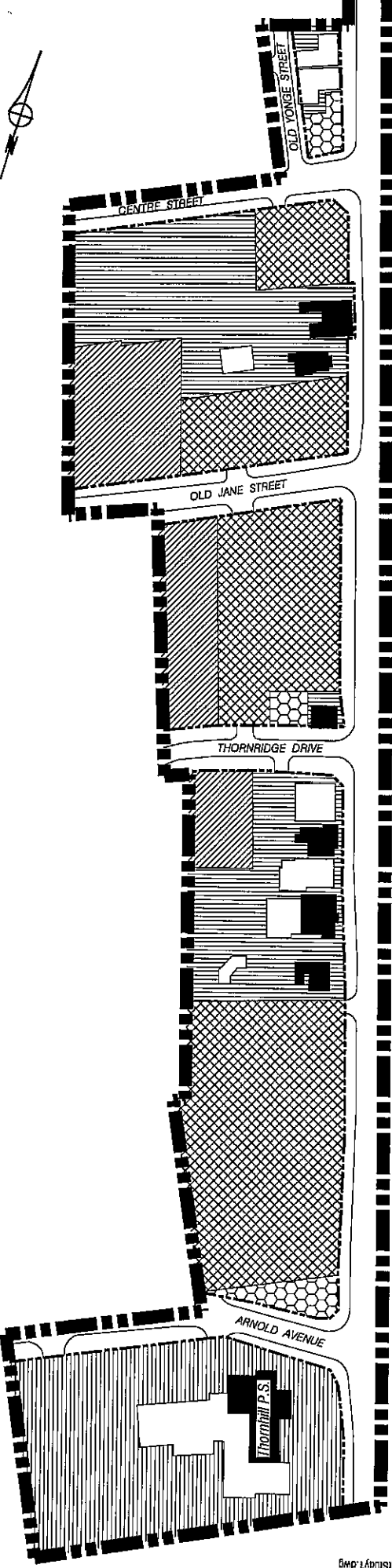


 Markham Study

 Vaughan Study Area












 Lands Subject to OPA 669



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Legend

-  Heritage Mainstreet, 1 - 3 storeys
-  Low Density Residential
-  Mid-Rise Mixed Use
3 - 5 storeys
-  Institutional
-  Open Space/Plaza
-  Significant Heritage Building
-  Study Boundary
-  Property Line
-  Complementary Building

**New Requirements/Provisions under Bill 60
A Bill to Amend the Ontario Heritage Act
Received Royal Assent, March 2005**

**Former Requirements under the
Previous Ontario Heritage Act**

1)
The Minister of Culture may designate property under the Ontario Heritage Act and prevent the demolition or alteration of designated property.
Owners may appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board with regards to the Minister's designation.

No provisions for the Minister under the old Act.

2)
The Minister of Culture may issue a stop work order to prevent the alteration, demolition or removal of any property the Minister believes to have cultural heritage value. This power applies even if municipal council has approved the demolition, alteration or removal of the property.
This would include property designated under Part IV (individual property) or property designated under Part V (property within heritage conservation district).

No provisions for stop work orders under the old Act.

3)
Municipal council may prohibit the demolition, removal or alteration of property designated under the Act. In such circumstances, owners may appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board with regard to the refusal of the demolition or request for alteration by the municipality.
This would include property designated under Part IV (individual property) or property designated under Part V (property within heritage conservation districts).

The old Act allows for designated property owners to demolish designated property/structures after having met certain conditions and having waited 180 days after Council's final refusal of the demolition.

4)
In an area where a heritage conservation district study is being undertaken by the municipality, council may pass a by-law preventing, for one year, the alteration, demolition or removal of property located within that study area.
The right to object to this by-law may be made to the Ontario Municipal Board.

No provisions for interim control for district study areas under the old Act.

5)

Municipalities may pass a by-law establishing standards for the maintenance of designated property.

No provisions for maintenance standards of designated property under the Act.

This would include property designated under Part IV (individual property) or property designated under Part V (property within heritage conservation districts).

6)

Municipal council may pass a by-law delegating employees the power to consent to alterations of property designated under the Act.

No provision for municipal staff approval is provided under the old act.

This would include property designated under Part IV (individual property) or property designated under Part V (property within heritage conservation districts).

Council is required to approve all major changes to designated property at the recommendation of Heritage Vaughan committee. Minor changes (such as paint colour changes) are approved by Culture Staff.

7)

When a district designation plan (under Part V) is in effect and in the event of a conflict between a heritage district plan and a municipal by-law, provisions in the plan would prevail.

No provisions for conflicts in district plan requirements and municipal by-laws.

This would mean that if the design guidelines outlined in the Heritage Conservation District Plan conflicts with the current zoning or Official Plan of the property in question, the District Plan would take precedence.

8)

The Province will establish evaluation criteria for property or sites of heritage significance to be designated under the Act.

No evaluation criteria for sites or property of cultural heritage significance under the old Act.

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9)

The Act now recognizes "Listed Property of Cultural Heritage Value" maintained by the municipality. This would include property of cultural heritage value that is on a listing or inventory of heritage property by the municipality, but not designated under the Act.

This will provide for legal recognition of a municipal inventory or listing of significant heritage property/structures or sites.

No provisions for "inventoried or listed" property of cultural heritage value.

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